

**HYDERABAD**

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 Anne Hathaway speaks about The Idea Of You



**CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD**

Farm	Rs. 128
Retail live	Rs. 150
With skin	Rs. 218
Skinless	Rs. 248
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs. 56

## Grand fete marks Rama Navami

**Spiritual fervour in Bhadrachalam during celestial wedding**

STATE BUREAU  
 Kothagudem

Spiritual fervour gripped the temple of Bhadrachalam as the celestial wedding of Lord Rama and his consort Seetha was performed on a grand note at the historical Sri Seetha Ramachandra Swamy Devasthanam on Wednesday.

The celestial wedding was performed on Sri Rama Navami, celebrating the birth of Lord Rama, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, at Ayodhya in Treta Yuga. Rituals such as Tiruvaradhana, Mangala Sasanam and Abhishekam were performed early in the morning at the main temple.

Later, at 10 am, the festival deities were taken from the main temple to the beautifully decorated Kalyana Mandapam at Mithila Stadium amid chants of Vedic mantras. The priests performed Tiruvaradhana, Vishwak-sena puja and other rituals. In the Abhijit Lagna at 12 pm, the celestial wedding ceremony was performed followed by a colourful talabralu event.

(SEE PAGE 2)



The celestial wedding of Lord Rama and his consort Seetha being performed at the Sri Seetha Ramachandra Swamy Devasthanam on Wednesday. (RELATED REPORTS PAGES 2, 4)

## Ram Lalla anointed with Surya Tilak

AYODHYA

A beam of sunlight fell directly on Ram Lalla's idol at the new temple here at noon on Wednesday, marking the Surya Tilak of the idol on the first Ram Navami since its consecration. Devotees queued up at the temple before the break of dawn. The local administration and temple authorities made special arrangements.



The forehead of Ram Lalla's idol anointed with a ray of sunlight, known as Surya Tilak, at Ram Janmabhoomi Temple. — Photo: ANI

## Political bigwigs spar over CAA, Northeast

**Turned Cong's 'Loot East' policy into 'Act East': PM**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi slammed the Congress, saying the party had adopted the 'Loot East' policy while the BJP had turned it into the 'Act East' policy. He said Tripura has witnessed pioneering transformations under the BJP government. "The Congress had adopted the 'Loot East' policy, while the BJP has turned it into the 'Act East' policy," he told an election rally in Tripura. (REPORT PAGE 7)

**Polls fight between two ideologies, says Rahul**

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi termed the Lok Sabha elections as a battle between two ideologies — I.N.D.I.A bloc "fighting for Constitution" on the one hand and BJP, which wants to "abolish constitution and democracy," on the other. He said if the I.N.D.I.A bloc is voted to power, it will be "a government of ordinary citizens, farmers, labourers and traders." (REPORT PAGE 7)

**Why is Congress silent over CAA, asks Vijayan**

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan again attacked Congress MP Rahul Gandhi over the CAA, asking why is he and his party silent over the issue. "Why is Congress, especially Rahul Gandhi, silent over CAA? Congress should admit that they are on the same page with Sangh Parivar over CAA," he said while addressing a mammoth election rally in Palakkad, Kerala. (REPORT PAGE 7)

## ED raids up 86 times in BJP rule

NEW DELHI

Searches conducted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) under the anti-money laundering law rose by 86 times, while arrests and attachment of assets jumped by around 25 times in the ten years since 2014 compared to the preceding nine-year period, according to official data.

An analysis of the data by PTI for the last 10 years, between April 2014 and March 2024, against the nine years from July 2005 to March 2014, presents a picture of the federal agency's "intensified" action under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The PMLA was enacted in 2002 and implemented from July 1, 2005, to check serious crimes of tax evasion, generation of black money and money launder-

**Arrests and attachment of assets jump by 25 times in 10 years since 2014 compared to preceding 9-yr period**

ing. While opposition parties have alleged that the ED's action in the last decade was part of the BJP-led Central government's "oppressive" tactics against its rivals and others, the union government and ruling party have asserted that the agency is independent and its investigations were purely based on merit and under the mandate to act against the corrupt. The ED booked 5,155 PMLA cases in the last 10 years as compared to 1,797 complaints or Enforcement Case Information Reports. PTI

## First phase of LS polls tomorrow

NEW DELHI

Campaigning ended on Wednesday for 102 Lok Sabha seats in 21 States and UTs, which will go to polls in the first phase on Friday, with top leaders of the BJP-led NDA and I.N.D.I.A bloc making a last-gasp effort to woo voters.

Eight Union Ministers — Nitin Gadkari, Kiren Rijju, Sarbananda Sonowal, Sanjeev Baliyan, Jitendra Singh, Bhupendra Yadav, Arjun Ram Meghwal and L Murugan — two former CMs — Biplob Kumar Deb (Tripura) and Nabam Tuki (Arunachal Pradesh) — and former Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan (Telangana) are among those in fray. In 2019, the UPA won 45 of these 102 seats and the NDA 41. Six of these have been redrawn as part of the delimitation exercise. PTI

## Cong misusing police to stifle dissent: BRS

**Lodges complaint, plans to raise issue in rallies**

STATE BUREAU  
 HYDERABAD

The BRS is intensifying its protest against the Congress government in the State, alleging misuse of power to stifle dissent and harass opposition party workers, especially those active on social media platforms.

In a complaint lodged with the Director General of Police (DGP) on Wednesday, the BRS raised concerns over the alarming trend of filing illegal cases against its leaders and activists, alleging an orchestrated effort to silence criticism. The BRS has taken up the issue seriously and plans to raise it throughout its poll campaign, after party president and Leader of Opposition K Chandrashekar Rao highlighted the atrocities of the police against party activists and obstructing them from coming to the Praja Ashirvada Sabha held at Sulthanpur in Andole constituency of Medak district on Tuesday.

Chandrashekar Rao condemned the actions of the police, saying they were acting as puppets of the ruling Congress. He pointed out that when the BRS was in power, there were no attempts to suppress opposition voices and freedom of speech was upheld. He

**Police are acting as puppets of Congress. When BRS was in power, there were no attempts to suppress Oppn voices...**  
 — K CHANDRASHEKHAR RAO, BRS chief

called for impartiality and transparency in police actions and demanded the withdrawal of false cases against BRS workers. He also warned that the BRS was closely monitoring the situation and would take appropriate action if the police continued to obstruct the party's activities.

Chandrashekar Rao called for an inquiry into the arrest of social media activist Salvaji Madhava Rao in Karimnagar and urged the DGP to ensure fair and impartial investigations into the cases involving BRS members.

In its complaint on Wednesday, the BRS cited the incident of an attempted murder on Madhava Rao by Congress MLA Adluri Lax-

man, allegedly orchestrated by rowdy sheeter Sogali Tirupati. The BRS said Tirupati targeted Madhava Rao for his outspoken criticism of the Congress MLA from Karimnagar district. The party also said false cases, including SC and ST atrocity charges, are being fabricated against its members to silence them. The party demanded the withdrawal of false cases filed against Madhava Rao and to initiate action against police officials for filing false cases.

The BRS also alleged that the Congress government was misusing the police and targeting opposition leaders, particularly those affiliated with the BRS. Criticism of government policies, especially on social media, was met with swift retaliation in the form of police cases, including bind-orders and intimidation tactics. Party workers were being subjected to undue pressure, threats and harassment. The party pointed out the over enthusiasm being displayed by some police officers and warned against such behaviour by the police, terming it unacceptable in a democratic society.

The BRS said some police officers were trying to impress their political bosses by harassing opposition party members. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Dubai deluged



**RECORD-BREAKING RAIN:** Debris floats through an SUV abandoned in floodwater in Dubai, UAE, on Wednesday. Heavy thunderstorms lashed the region on Tuesday, dumping over a year-and-a-half's worth of rain on the desert city-state in a span of hours as it flooded portions of major highways and the international airport. — Photo: AP

## Heat peaks at 42.3°C in Hyd, rains cool off city



Traffic makes way through a light shower in Madhapur after the mercury hit the season's high of 42.3°C. — Photo: Anand Dharmana

CITY BUREAU  
 Hyderabad

Several regions in Hyderabad on Wednesday experienced this season's highest of 42.3°C, while several districts in Telangana experienced the hottest day of the year at 44.8°C. However, the maximum temperatures of 42°C in Hyderabad peaked at around 2 pm on Wednesday, making way for extensive cloud cover and sporadic showers, which

brought much-needed respite to the people. Scattered spells of rain were reported from JNTU, HITEC City, Madhapur, Gachibowli, Tolichowki, Shaikpet, Kismatpur, Rajendranagar and Shamshabad, much to the relief of the residents, who have been struggling with soaring temperatures for the past one week. The sporadic showers, however, lasted 10-15 minutes but brought down the day-time temperatures immedi-

ately. The next two days will continue to remain difficult for people in Hyderabad and the districts as the IMD and Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS) have given a forecast that temperatures in Hyderabad will be close to 42°C, while in districts it will be 45°C.

Meanwhile, according to the India Meteorological Department-Hyderabad (IMD-H), in terms of rain, March was the driest in recent years. (SEE PAGE 2)

## Indian woman in Pak fights for kids' custody

ISLAMABAD

Farzana Begum, an Indian national from Mumbai, is currently in Pakistan fighting for the custody of her children, has refused to return to her native country, stating that her children's lives are in danger.

Farzana Begum married a Pakistani citizen, Mirza Mubin Elahi, in Abu Dhabi in 2015. The couple came to Pakistan in 2018 and have

two sons aged seven and six. Farzana's case gained public limelight after she allegedly tortured her husband over a dispute regarding the custody of her sons and some properties in the name of her sons.

She rejects her husband's claims that he divorced her, stating: "If he has divorced me, there must be a certificate. Mine and my children's lives are in danger over property dispute." IANS