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 Academy empowers children with karra samu



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 Kenya puts tax plan on hold, toll climbs to 22
 President says he won't sign finance Bill that led to nationwide protests



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 India look to beat England to seal final berth

In a nutshell

ACB traps SI for graft
NAGARKURNOOL: ACB sleuths laid a trap and caught Veldanda SI Ravi Goud after he allegedly demanded Rs 50,000 for releasing an accused in a case of theft of mining materials. The SI asked the accused to hand over the amount through a mediator. But the counsel of the accused approached the ACB, who laid a trap and caught the SI while he was receiving the bribe. The ACB was also interrogating another person.

2 Zika virus cases reported in Pune
PUNE: Pune reported its first two cases of Zika virus infection this year, an official said. A 46-year-old doctor and his teenage daughter have tested positive for the virus. Assistant Health Officer at Pune Municipal Corporation Rajesh Dighe said, "A 46-year-old doctor and his teenage daughter, who live in Erandwane of Pune city, were found positive for the virus. Both were discharged from hospital." ANI

3 suspected JeM terrorists killed
BHADERWAH/JAMMU: Three terrorists, suspected to be affiliated with the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit, were killed in a gunfight that lasted for more than six hours in a forest area in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Wednesday, police said. A policeman was also injured in the gunfight that broke out at Bajaan village in Gandoh around 9.50 am amid cordon-and-search operation. PTI

YSRCP leader arrested
NARASARAOPETA: Andhra Pradesh Police on Wednesday arrested YSRCP leader P Ramakrishna Reddy after the High Court dismissed his anticipatory bail plea in a case over his alleged attack on a TDP polling agent who questioned him for smashing an EVM. On polling day, May 13, former Macherla MLA Ramakrishna Reddy barged into a polling station and smashed an EVM. PTI

CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm.....	Rs. 110
Retail live.....	Rs. 132
With skin.....	Rs. 191
Skinless.....	Rs. 218
Egg Rates (12 eggs).....	Rs. 69



Richa Chadha signs comedy film
 Actor decides not to take long maternity break

Om Birla Speaker again

Opposition stresses need for "impartiality", hopes its voice will be heard



Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla conducts the proceedings of the House during the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and LOP Rahul Gandhi greet each other as they accompany Birla to the chair. — Photos: ANI (REPORTS PAGE 7)

PTI
 NEW DELHI

NDA nominee Om Birla was elected Speaker of Lok Sabha for a second consecutive term by voice vote on Wednesday, capping days of intense battle on the issue with the Opposition in a rare move proposing its own candidate.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who moved the motion for Birla's election as Speaker, lauded the balance he showed in maintaining decorum of the House during his previous term. Several opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Akhilesh Yadav, congratulated Birla, stressing the need for "impartiality" and hoping he would allow them to raise the voice of the people and not apply his restraint orders only to Opposition Benches.

Treasury and Oppn Benches run the House together, the strength of Indian democracy is in listening to everyone...

— OM BIRLA, LOK SABHA SPEAKER

Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab made the announcement of Birla's election after the Opposition, which had forwarded the name of eight-term Congress MP Kodikunnil Suresh as its candidate, did not press for votes to the motion.

This is the fifth time that a Speaker will serve beyond the tenure of one Lok Sabha. It is also amongst the few occasions that an election became necessary for a post conventionally decided by consensus. His first day in the chair saw the House being adjourned. While op-

position members vociferously protested inside, BJP members held a demonstration outside Parliament House, raising slogans and demanding an apology from the Congress for Emergency. Earlier in the morning, after the election, Modi and Leader of Opposition Gandhi escorted Birla to the Speaker's chair. Gandhi also shook hands with Modi before escorting him.

In his address, the first in the 18th Lok Sabha, Modi said Birla's work as a parliamentarian should be an inspiration for new Lok Sabha members. He said Birla

presided over a golden era in Lok Sabha history with a number of historic decisions taken in its previous term.

Gandhi said the Opposition would like to function "often and well" and added that it was very important that cooperation happens with trust. "The Opposition would like to assist you in your work. I am confident you will allow us to speak in the House," he said. Gandhi also pointed out that the Opposition this time represents significantly more voices of the Indian people than last time.

Birla (61), the BJP's MP from Kota, has risen through the ranks of the party. He said: "Treasury and Opposition Benches run the House together, the strength of Indian democracy is in listening to everyone, and running the House with everyone's agreement." PTI

Julian Assange returns home

Plads guilty to leaking US military secrets



WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange gestures after landing at RAAF air base Fairbairn in Canberra, Australia. — Photo: AP

CANBERRA

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange returned to his homeland Australia aboard a charter jet on Wednesday, hours after pleading guilty to obtaining and publishing US military secrets in a deal with Justice Department prosecutors that concludes a drawn-out legal saga.

The criminal case of international intrigue, which had played out for years, came to a surprise end in a most unusual setting with Assange (52) entering his plea in a US district court in Saipan, the capital of the

Northern Mariana Islands. The American commonwealth in the Pacific is relatively close to Assange's native Australia and accommodated his desire to avoid entering the continental US. Assange was accused of receiving and publishing hundreds of thousands of war logs and diplomatic cables that included details of US military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He raised his fist as he emerged from the plane and his supporters at the Canberra airport cheered from a distance. (SEE PAGES 2, 9)

CBI arrests Kejriwal, court sends him to 3-day custody

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday sent Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to the CBI's custody for three days after the central agency arrested him in a corruption case related to the alleged excise policy scam.

Special Judge Amitabh Rawat passed the order on an application moved by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which formally arrested Kejriwal after obtaining permission from the court. "The CBI's application is allowed for three days. The accused be produced before 7 pm," the judge said.



The application seeking Kejriwal's arrest was moved by the CBI after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader was produced before the court from the Tihar jail, where he was lodged in judicial custody in a money-laundering case linked to the excise "scam" being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

Kejriwal will remain in CBI's custody until his custodial interrogation in the corruption case comes to an end, which can go on for a maximum of 15 days. If he fails to secure bail in both the cases being probed by the CBI and ED, he will go back to judicial custody once his police remand ends in the present case.

The court, on June 19, extended Kejriwal's judicial custody in the money-laundering case till July 3. In the application seeking the AAP leader's custody, CBI told the court that he was required to be quizzed for unearthing a larger conspiracy in the matter. (SEE PAGES 2, 7)

Congress govt eyes Medigadda dunes

ANIL KUMAR
 Hyderabad

After blaming the previous BRS government for constructing the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, the largest of its kind in the world, and calling it a waste of money, the Congress government here appears to have an eye on the sand dunes at the Medigadda barrage to make some money.

The barrage, a crucial part of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, which has been the focal point of a major political controversy in the State, is likely to become a crucial source of revenue for the Congress government, with plans being chalked out to generate over Rs 800 crore from the sand that could be extracted from the Medigadda barrage. Since water was released downstream

Plans being chalked out to generate over Rs 800 crore by auctioning sand dunes that have formed at the barrage

from the barrage after three of the pillars sunk, huge sand dunes accumulated in the upper part of the project. The State government is now reportedly planning to auction these sand dunes. It is learnt that the Telangana Mineral Development Corporation Limited (TGMDCL) has been asked to auction 14 sandblocks located in the Medigadda barrage. An official of the corporation confirmed that talks about auctioning the dunes were on at the higher level. (SEE PAGE 2)

Medicos call off protest

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

The Telangana Junior Doctors Association (TJUDA), which was leading the indefinite medical strike in teaching hospitals and had temporarily paused protests on Wednesday, has called off their stir following successful talks with Health Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha in the evening.

The Health Minister, along with senior health officials, held detailed discussions over the demands raised by TJUDA. With the State government according an administrative sanction of Rs 204.85 crore to take up the construction of hostels in teaching hospitals, the junior doctors called off their stir.

The State government has sanctioned Rs 204.85 crore for the civil works for medicos. (SEE PAGE 2)

RISKY JOB



A worker plastering the inside of a manhole with cement on a busy road in Hyderabad on Wednesday. — Photo: Surya Sridhar

Hyd housing realty market dips

SRUTHI KURUGANTI
 Hyderabad

The residential real estate market in Hyderabad experienced a significant downturn in the second quarter of 2024.

The latest report by PropEquity, a real estate data analytics firm, reveals a significant drop in both new launches and sales during the April-June quarter of 2024. Among the nine major cities — Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Pune, Navi Mumbai and Thane — Hyderabad experienced the steepest quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) decline in housing sales, with 36 per cent drop.

In Q2 2024, 15,016 units were sold, compared to 23,595 units in Q1 2024. New



The city experienced the steepest quarter-on-quarter decline in housing sales, with a 36 per cent drop.

residential launches in Hyderabad also saw a significant decrease, with 11,603 units launched — a 19 per cent decline from the previous quarter (Q1 2024). Compared to same period last year (Q2 2023), Hyderabad experienced a 36 per

cent decrease in new residential launches, dropping from 18,232 units launched to 11,603 in Q2 2024. Regarding sales, it saw 20 per cent YoY decline, with 18,757 units sold in Q2 2023 against 15,016 in Q2 2024. (SEE PAGE 2)

Woman dies as car chased by leopard overturns

STATE BUREAU
 Nizamabad

A woman died and her husband was critically injured when their car overturned while trying to escape from a leopard chasing them at the Yellamma Kunta suburb of Muggal mandal in the district late on Tuesday.

According to reports, the couple saw a leopard coming from the bushes and accelerated the car. The speeding vehicle hit the footpath and overturned. The woman, Lalitha, died on the spot, while her husband Prabhakar Rao suffered critical injuries. Locals shifted him to a nearby hospital for treatment. Police have registered a case.