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'Roy raped, murdered doc while she was asleep'



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India, Maldives ink currency swap deal

It will help the archipelago nation overcome foreign exchange reserve issues



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T20I series: Mayank Yadav to focus on consistency

In a nutshell

4 of family killed in road accident

SANGAREDDY: Four persons of a family died in a road accident after an RTC bus, belonging to Karnataka, rammmed their bike on the Zaheerabad-Bidar road at Ganeshpur in Nyalkal mandal on Monday. The deceased have been identified as Gunelli Siddam (59), his daughter Biradar Renuka (35), her husband Biradar Jagannadham (41) and their son Vinay Kumar (12). Further details are awaited. The bodies were shifted to a government hospital in Zaheerabad for a post-mortem examination. The Haddanur police have registered a case.

Rs 120 cr cocaine seized in Gujarat

GANDHIDHAM: Ten unclaimed packets containing 12 kg of cocaine, valued at Rs 120 crore in the international market, have been recovered from a creek area near Gandhidham town in Gujarat's Kutch district, police said on Monday. A preliminary probe suggested that smugglers might have hidden the contraband near the creek to avoid getting caught, Kutch-East division Superintendent of Police Sagar Bagmar said. This is the third major drug recovery from the same creek area in one year. **PTI**

Six killed in WB coal mine blast

KOLKATA: At least six people were killed and three others injured when explosives kept in a truck went off in a coal mine in West Bengal's Birbhum district on Monday, police said. The explosion occurred when detonators were being transported in the truck for planned blasts at the Gangaramchak and Gangaramchak-Bhadulia coal mines, an official of the West Bengal Power Development Corporation Ltd said. The family of each of the deceased would receive a compensation of Rs 32 lakh, officials said. **PTI**

CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm.....	Rs. 114
Retail live.....	Rs. 136
With skin.....	Rs. 197
Skinless.....	Rs. 224
Egg Rates (12 eggs).....	Rs. 72

MURKY MISSION MUSI

Project awarded to firm mired in scandals

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Despite mounting public outrage and criticism from the Opposition, the State government is moving forward with the Musi Riverfront Development Project and has awarded the consultancy contract to a consortium led by Meinhardt Singapore Private Limited.

The selection of this firm, which has been embroiled in several controversies, has raised serious concerns about transparency and accountability in the execution of the Rs 1.5 lakh-crore project. In an official order issued on October 4, Principal Secretary for Municipal Administration and Urban Development M Dana Kishore confirmed the awarding of the contract for 'aggregate master planning' to a consortium that includes Meinhardt Singapore, Cushman & Wakefield India and RIOS Design Studios. The consultancy fee is set at Rs 166 crore, agreed upon at a 'negotiated offer price' — a move that has drawn sharp criticism for the lack of transparency in the tendering process.

The government's decision to bypass global tenders for such a high-profile project has added fuel to the fire. The

order raised eyebrows as it did not clarify the criteria used for selecting the Meinhardt-led consortium or the justification for the 'negotiated offer price'. The absence of global tenders for such a massive project has only fueled further suspicion. "Why was there no open tender for a project of this magnitude? What criteria were used to select this particular consortium?" questioned a senior BRS leader.

— BRS SPOKESPERSON
CHIEF MINISTER REVANTH REDDY IS PUSHING FORWARD WITH A TAINTED COMPANY THAT HAS LEFT A TRAIL OF FINANCIAL SCANDALS ACROSS SOUTH ASIA. TELANGANA'S TAXPAYERS DESERVE BETTER

The controversy is further amplified by Meinhardt's troubled track record. The firm is currently under investigation in multiple countries for its involvement in various scams. In India, the Anti-Corruption Bureau of Jharkhand is probing irregularities in the appointment of Meinhardt as a consultant for the Ranchi sewerage drainage project, dating back to 2005. The Comptroller and Auditor

General also had flagged anomalies in Meinhardt's work on that project, while courts questioned the firm's eligibility. Meinhardt was also entangled in Pakistan's infamous Creek Marina scam. In 2023, the country's Federal Investigation Agency registered a case against Meinhardt's owners and senior officials for their alleged role in a multi-billion-rupee residential project scandal. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

KTR slams CM for ignoring people's welfare

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Monday criticised Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy for prioritising the Musi Riverfront Development Project over people's welfare and development. He said the CM was claiming that the State was drowning in debt while simultaneously initiating grand programmes such as the Musi project with Rs 1.5 lakh crore. "Every day, Revanth Reddy keeps crying about the State's mounting debts on one hand, but is undertaking costly initiatives like the Musi Riverfront project, which is not necessary for many," he said, questioning the reasoning behind the State government's plans.

Taking to X, Rama Rao listed out numerous poll promises of the Congress government, which remain unfulfilled even after 10 months. He questioned how the government planned to fund the Musi project while claiming to have no funds to implement crucial schemes such as the crop loan waiver and Rythu Bandhu. "How come the government has funds for Musi project, but not for social security pensions, DA, salaries to sanitation and contract workers, medicines in hospitals, chalkpieces and other stationery in schools, fishlings and sheep distribution, and other schemes," he asked.

Congress tries to float counter-narratives

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

Clearly stung by the mounting criticism against HYDRAA demolitions and eviction of residents for the Musi project, the Congress government has set in motion attempts to build a counter-narrative even while sticking to the two initiatives.

Hitherto, it was only Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy who spoke eagerly about the project and the demolitions, with statements from most of his Cabinet colleagues being tepid statements. However, with the high command reprimanding the State leadership for the approach, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Monday came out in support of the demolitions, stating that there was no personal agenda behind the HYDRAA demolitions or the Musi evictions. Trying to build an eco-friendly image for the government, he said the only agenda was to save lakes for future generations. He also tried to counter the charges by opposition parties, saying they were making baseless allegations, misleading the people and creating apprehensions on the Musi project. Addressing a press conference, Bhatti Vikramarka even

made a PowerPoint presentation on encroachments of lake areas. Interestingly, the statistics he presented were only from 2014 to 2023, obviously with a political motive against the previous government.

Neither did he make any mention on how the previous government had changed the situation when most lakes across the State were dry in 2014 to how they were brimming with water in 2023. Instead, he said the area of water bodies within the Outer Ring Road was about 3,586.12 acres and the encroached area since 2014 was about 386.71 acres.

"If this continues, there will be no lakes left in Hyderabad. That's the reason HYDRAA demolitions are being taken up," Vikramarka claimed.

However, when asked about the government's plans for identified encroachments in lakes within the ORR, including for Hussain Sagar and those abutting Necklace Road, his reply was evasive and people should suggest what had to be done. "If people and opposition parties do not want lakes to be protected and desist from the Musi Riverfront project, so be it," he said, also insisting that one should note that a beginning was made. **(SEE PAGE 2)**

J&K, Haryana counting today

CHANDIGARH/JAMMU/SRINAGAR

Political parties and leaders wait with bated breath as the counting day is finally here in Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir.

The BJP is confident of retaining power for a third term in Haryana and the Congress, which is out of power for 10 years, is more than hopeful of making a comeback when the results are announced on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, in Jammu & Kashmir, the Congress and its alliance partner National Conference, People's Democratic Party (PDP) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are the main stakeholders in the keenly watched Assembly election that comes five years after the erstwhile State was bifurcated into the union territories of

Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh.

As political parties assessed their chances, the administration in both States was busy on Monday finalising arrangements, including security.

According to Election Commission, a three-tier security setup has been put in place at all counting centres in Jammu & Kashmir, which has long been a stress point and witness to repeated instances of terrorism, insurgency and infiltration from across the border. In Haryana too, three-tier security arrangements have been made at counting venues.

Counting of votes in both Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir begins at 8 am. **PTI**

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Israeli strike kills 10 in Lebanon

RE'IM

As Israelis and most of the world mourned a year since the October 7 attack, Hamas celebrated its surprise cross-border strike by firing a barrage of rockets at Tel Aviv, underscoring its resilience after a year of war and devastation in Gaza.

Lebanon's Hezbollah also fired new barrages. In



Lebanon, an Israeli strike killed at least 10 firefighters. Meanwhile, the Israeli military said it will soon launch operations on Lebanon's southern coast, telling residents to stay off the beaches and fishermen off the sea for a 60-km stretch along the Mediterranean. **AP**



Smoke rises from destroyed buildings after an Israeli airstrike in Choueifat, southeast of Beirut, Lebanon. — Photo: AP **(REPORTS PAGE 9)**

American duo bags Nobel in medicine

STOCKHOLM

The Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine was awarded on Monday to Americans Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun for their discovery of microRNA, tiny pieces of genetic material that alter how genes work at the cellular level and could lead to new ways of treating cancer.

The Nobel Assembly at the Karolinska Institute, which awarded the prize, said the duo's discovery is "proving to be fundamentally important for how organisms develop and function". "Their groundbreaking discovery revealed a completely new principle of gene regulation that turned out to be essential for multicellular organisms, including humans," the assembly said.

Ambros performed the research that led to his prize at Harvard University. He is



AMERICANS VICTOR AMBROS, GARY RUVKUN DISCOVERED MICRORNA, TINY PIECES OF GENETIC MATERIAL THAT ALTER HOW GENES WORK AT THE CELLULAR LEVEL AND COULD LEAD TO NEW WAYS OF TREATING CANCER

currently a professor of natural science at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Ruvkun's research was performed at the Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, where he's a professor of genetics, said Thomas Perlmann, secretary-general of the Nobel Committee.

Ambros and Ruvkun, the assembly explained, were initially interested in genes that control the timing of

different genetic developments, ensuring that cell types develop at the right time. To do that, they studied two mutant strains of worms commonly used as research models in science. The scientists set out to identify the mutated genes responsible in these worms and what their role was. The mechanism they ultimately identified — the regulation of genes by microRNA — has allowed organisms to evolve for hundreds of mil-

Airshow deaths: Rs 5L ex gratia for victims' kin

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Monday said the turnout for the October 6 IAF airshow here far exceeded expectations and acknowledged that people were highly inconvenienced and assured better arrangements for similar events in the future.

The State government said over 15 lakh people gathered on Sunday to witness the event, while it had expected approximately 15 lakh to attend. Expressing anguish over the death of five persons due to the scorching sun and various underlying causes, Stalin said their deaths were an irreparable loss for their families. He said he would authorise to release Rs 5 lakh to the kin of each of the five deceased. **PTI**

2 Chinese nationals killed in Pak blast

KARACHI

Two Chinese nationals were killed and 17 people injured in a suicide attack by a Baloch insurgent group that targeted a convoy of Chinese workers near Pakistan's busiest airport here late on Sunday.

The explosion near the Jinnah International Airport also killed the suspected suicide bomber. The attack comes less than two weeks before the SCO's summit to be held in the national capital.

The banned Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for the attack, saying the blast was a suicide attack targeting a convoy of Chinese engineers and investors leaving the airport. The attack occurred less than a mile from the airport's main ter-

Banned Baloch Liberation Army claims responsibility for suicide bombing near Jinnah Int'l Airport in Karachi

minal. Authorities briefly suspended all traffic going to the airport. The Chinese nationals were working at the Port Qasim Electric Power Company on the outskirts of the city and returning home when their convoy was attacked. A small vehicle was used to carry out the suicide attack. The Chinese Foreign Ministry said: "The Chinese side has requested Pakistan to get to the bottom of the incident swiftly and hunt down the perpetrators." **PTI**

Report: 85% of cryptocurrencies not worth a cent

NEW DELHI

About 85 per cent of the world's cryptocurrencies are worth less than one cent, according to a report on Monday.

The total number of cryptocurrencies has been floating between 8,500 and 10,000, with new tokens being launched every time a bull run in the crypto space begins.

Currently, the total number of cryptocurrencies remains at a high of 9,861. However, most of them have little or practically no value. As per data analysis by AltIndex.com, 85 per cent of all cryptocurrencies circulating in the market are worth less than one cent. It also showed 9,525, or 96 per cent of all coins circulating in the crypto space, are worth less than a dollar. **IANS**