

It's Birla vs Suresh

In race for LS Speaker's post



Om Birla files nomination as NDA candidate

NEW DELHI, June 25 (PTI)

KOTA MP Om Birla on Tuesday filed nomination for the post of the Lok Sabha Speaker as an NDA consensus candidate, a position he held in the previous House.

JD(U) leader and Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh told reporters here that Birla's

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NEW DELHI, June 25 (PTI)

BJP's Om Birla will fight it out with Kodikunni Suresh of the Congress for the Lok Sabha Speaker's post after efforts to reach a consensus between the Government and the Opposition failed on Tuesday.

The voting will take place on Wednesday.

Both Birla and Suresh filed their nominations as NDA and I.N.D.I.A. bloc candidates, respectively.

Birla served as Speaker in the previous Lok Sabhas as well and if he wins he would be the first person to get the post for the second term in 25 years. Before filing his nomination, Birla also met Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He has returned to the Lok Sabha for the third time from Kota in Rajasthan.

Suresh, an eight-time MP from Kerala, said it is not about winning or losing, but about a convention that Speaker will be of ruling party and Deputy Speaker will be of Opposition.

"Last two Lok Sabhas, they denied us Deputy Speaker's post because they said you are not recognised as the Opposition. Now we are recognised as the Opposition. Deputy Speaker post is our right. But they are not ready to give us. Till 11.50 we were waiting for reply from



Union Home Minister Amit Shah with other NDA leaders during the nomination filing in support of BJP MP Om Birla for the post of Lok Sabha Speaker, in New Delhi, on Tuesday. (PTI)

Rahul Gandhi to be Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha

NEW DELHI, June 25 (PTI)

CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi will occupy the post of Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and a letter about the decision has been sent to Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab.



The decision on Rahul Gandhi's appointment as the Leader of Opposition was made after a meeting of the floor leaders of the I.N.D.I.A. bloc at Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge's residence. "Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson (Sonia Gandhi) wrote to Pro-tem Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab, informing him of the decision to appoint Rahul Gandhi as the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha," senior party leader K C Venugopal said.

Government's side but they did not give any reply," he told reporters.

Union Ministers Rajiv Ranjan Singh and Piyush Goyal said it was wrong on the part of Opposition to put conditions and Rajnath Singh told them that the issue can be discussed when time comes for election of deputy speaker.

The Opposition, however, wanted the post immediately and the NDA would not agree to such conditions, the two ministers told reporters.

Earlier in the morning, Congress leader K C Venugopal and DMK's T R Baalu walked out of Defence Minister Singh's office, refusing to endorse NDA candidate Birla without being offered the Deputy Speaker's position.

Venugopal said the BJP refused to give a commitment on offering the deputy Speaker's post to the Opposition.

Union Ministers Amit Shah and J P Nadda besides Singh tried to persuade Opposition leaders to endorse the NDA nominee but in vain.

Sources said over 10 sets of nominations were filed in support of Birla's candidature, including from Prime Minister Modi, Union ministers Shah, Singh and Nadda, and BJP allies like TDP, JD(U), JD(S) and LJP (R).



Will support Govt's choice if Deputy Speaker post given to Oppn: Rahul

NEW DELHI, June 25 (PTI)

CONGRESS leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said the Opposition will support the Government on the Lok Sabha Speaker's choice if the convention is followed and the Deputy Speaker's post is given to the Opposition bloc.

He also said that

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Moving towards 8% growth, RBI to focus on inflation: Das

RBI Guv's Statement Rules Out Rate Cuts In Near Term

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said that the country is at the threshold of a major structural shift in its growth trajectory and is moving towards an annual growth of 8% in a sustained manner. He said that such a growth outlook gives RBI the space to 'single-mindedly and unambiguously' focus on inflation.

While Das's economic outlook is the most optimistic it has been in recent years, the message — coming on the back of a cautionary observation on credit growth outpacing deposits — rules out any near-term interest rate reduction.

Das also said that the central bank's nowcasting team is projecting that growth in Q1FY25 could be higher than the 7.3% projected by the monetary policy committee. Supporting the higher growth forecast was the continuation of the Q4FY24 growth momentum in Q1FY25, a pick up

'No Room For Wrong Moves'

“In cricket, you play one shot very badly, but you can play the next shot very well. But chess is one game where if you make one wrong move, you can lose the game. It is like that in the battle against inflation. We cannot afford to make any wrong move

Shaktikanta Das | GOVERNOR, RBI



in rural consumption, favourable monsoon and a rise in external demand.

On inflation, Das said that after spiking in the wake of the Ukraine war, inflation in India has improved from 7.8% in April 2022 to 4.7% in May this year, thanks to measures taken by RBI and govt. He said maintaining a 4% inflation target is crucial as this level supports a healthier economy and financial system.

“But inflation is moderating at a slow pace. We are still at 4.7%, within striking distance of 5%. One severe weather event and vegetable prices may go up and we will be at 5%. So, we must navigate our path towards the 4%

inflation target with clear and unambiguous focus and commitment to bring down the inflation to 4%. There cannot be any wavering; there cannot be any distractions at this stage,” said Das.

Das likened RBI's current inflation battle to a game of chess in which there can be no wrong moves. “In cricket, you play one shot very badly, but you can play the next shot very well. But chess is one game where if you make one wrong move, you can lose the game. It is like that in the battle against inflation. We cannot afford to make any wrong move,” said Das.

Pointing out the 8.3% average growth in the last

three financial years, Das said that last year, India contributed 18.5% to global growth, with the IMF projecting a further increase. He said that the growth was driven by structural reform, which included GST, bankruptcy laws, and a flexible inflation-targeting regime under the RBI's monetary policy.

Das expressed confidence about achieving 7.2% growth this year despite facing risks such as weather events, geopolitical conflicts, global trade fragmentation, and financial sector volatility. On the positive side, global growth is improving, with the IMF projecting a 3.2% increase for this year and the next. On the debate over which sector should drive growth, Das said that India's growth story must be multi-sectoral, driven by manufacturing, services, agriculture, and exports. “As a large economy, it cannot rely on a single sector for growth. The growth story has to be sustained by multiple sectors,” said Das.

PM assures Kazakh of India's support to SCO summit

New Delhi: Kazakhstan Prez Kassym-Jomart Tokayev spoke to PM Modi and congratulated him on the successful conduct of the largest democratic exercise in the world and his re-election for the third consecutive term, said govt.

Kazakhstan will host the SCO summit next week, which the PM is not himself attending this time. Modi, however, assured him of India's full support and expressed confidence that Kazakhstan's leadership would greatly contribute to the furtherance of regional cooperation. TNN

Amid Agniveer review, Army rolls out phase-II of recruitment process

New Delhi: Army has announced phase II of Agniveer recruitment process. "This phase marks a significant milestone in the Army's efforts to transform its requirements procedures and ensure a seamless and efficient selection process for aspiring candidates. It is free, fair, and transparent so all candidates are advised not to approach any type of tout," PRO defence, Guwahati said, reports ANI.

Agnipath recruitment scheme

was rolled out in June 2022 for short-term induction of personnel with the aim of bringing down the age profile of the three services. Under the scheme, recruitment of youths between the age bracket of 17-and-half years and 21 for four years is done with a provision to retain 25% of them for 15 more years. The recruitment process involves two phases, the first being an online written examination and the second being the recruitment rally.

Recently, a group of secretaries from 10 key ministries were tasked to review the scheme. They were asked to suggest ways to make the armed forces recruitment programme more attractive. The scheme became a key election issue in the poll campaign with opposition parties, especially Congress, vowing to revoke it, if voted to power. The panel of secretaries is expected to give a final presentation to PM Narendra Modi. TNN & AGENCIES

Modi likely to visit Russia for annual summit next month

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi is likely to visit Moscow next month for the India-Russia annual summit, the highest institutionalised dialogue mechanism between the two countries. While an official announcement is awaited, both sides are exploring dates in the second week of July for the proposed day-long visit. July 9 is one of the dates being considered.

If the visit happens, and with no other foreign visit scheduled for PM in the next few weeks, it may also turn out to be Modi's first bilateral visit since the inauguration of his third consecutive term in office earlier this month. Previously, he has chosen to visit countries in the neighbourhood after assuming office.

The visit will take place days after the SCO summit in Astana, which Modi has decided to skip this time. It will also be his first visit to the country since Russia invaded Ukraine in Feb 2022. PM is expected to visit Russia again later this year for the Brics summit.

While 21 such annual summits have taken place so far alternatively in India and Russia, this will be the first time Modi will travel to Russia for the same since 2019. The summit couldn't take place in 2020 because of Covid-19 but President Vladimir Putin did come the next year for the 21st summit, although only for a few hours. Modi was expected to travel to Russia for the next summit in 2022 but that summit never materialised amid increasing global uncertainty and Russia's preoccupation with the Ukraine war. A Putin aide was quoted as saying Tuesday preparations are on for the visit.

India and China remain the only major countries to have not explicitly condemned Russia for its actions in Ukraine. Russia said last week it has finalised a draft logistics agreement for intensifying military exchanges but India has remained silent on the issue.

Jaishankar meets Chinese envoy, discusses ties, stabilisation

NEW DELHI, June 25 (PTI)

EXTERNAL Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Chinese ambassador Xu Feihong on Tuesday with a focus on bilateral relationship and the “common interest” in its “stabilisation and progress”, amid continuing strain in India-China ties over the lingering border row in eastern Ladakh.

Jaishankar also separately met envoys of New Zealand and Sri Lanka.

“Received Ambassador of China Xu Feihong this evening. Discussed our bilateral relationship and our common interest in its stabilisation and progress. Wished him a successful tenure,” the External Affairs Minister said on ‘X’.

Xu arrived in Delhi on May 10 after the position of Chinese ambassador remained vacant for nearly 18 months, the longest such gap in over four decades. The envoy presented his credentials to President Droupadi Murmu on May 31 along with a number of newly-appointed foreign envoys. Following his meeting with Jaishankar, the Chinese ambassador said he was looking forward to working with the Indian side to push forward the development of China-India relations towards the “right direction”.



External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and New Zealand High Commissioner Patrick John Rata during a meeting in New Delhi. (PTI)

“Honored to call on External Affairs Minister @DrSJaishankar today. We exchanged views on China-India relations and other issues of common interest,” the envoy said on ‘X’.

“Thanks for his best wishes. Look forward to working with the Indian side to push forward the development of China-India relations towards the right direction,” he said.