

STATE

BRS win will be people's victory, says Kavitha **page 5**



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Siddaramaiah's son's video clip sparks controversy **page 8**

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26 killed as fire guts Chinese mining firm's building **page 9**

'Regional parties will call shots'

KCR says Modi government will fall short of majority in 2024 Lok Sabha polls, paving the way for a coalition govt



BRS president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao at the Praja Ashirvada Sabha in Boath on Thursday.

STATE BUREAU
HYDERABAD

The BRS juggernaut will not stop with a victory in the Assembly elections, but will go on to emerge triumphant in the 2024 Parliament elections as well, especially at a time when regional parties are all set to play a pivotal role in shaping national politics, BRS president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao said here on Thursday.

Stating that regional parties would become crucial in the formation of the next coalition government at the Centre after the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Chandrashekhara Rao reiterated that parties with regional roots and a grasp of regional is-

Man held with bullets near CM's meeting venue

MEDAK: A man, who was moving suspiciously with two bullets, near Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao's public meeting in Narsapur of Medak was taken into custody on Thursday. He was identified as Aslam of Raikode in Sanagreddy district. He is being questioned about where he got the bullets from. But police found no weapons in his possession. Aslam was taken into custody before the Chief Minister landed in Narsapur.

issues would decide matters in the days to come. "The future belongs to regional parties. The Modi government will fall short of the required majority in the 2024 elections, paving the way for a coalition government. By winning both the Assembly and Parliament elections, the BRS can exert influence in Delhi and protect our rights," Chandrashekhara Rao said at the Praja Ashirvada Sabhas in Adilabad and Boath.

The Chief Minister, who said the Congress was attempting to revive the middlemen system and encourage rampant corruption, jeopardising the progress of agriculture and farmers in Telangana, said this was evident from the manner in which Congress leaders were terming expenditure of agriculture a misuse of tax revenue.

He also criticised the Congress for treating minorities as

a vote bank without addressing their socio-economic development during its 58 years of governance.

He compared the BRS government's commitment to minority welfare, citing an expenditure of over Rs 12,000 crore in the last decade with that of the Rs 2,000 crore spent during the previous Congress regime of 10 years. Quality education was also being provided to poor students from

minority communities through residential institutions. "Telangana is a model State for the entire country where Hindus, Muslims and Christians celebrate every festival together. We will ensure that Telangana remains a secular State as long as I am alive," he said, adding that notwithstanding the efforts of both the Congress and the BJP, the BRS would form the government in Telangana after December 3.

Dubbing the Congress and BJP as two sides of the same coin, Chandrashekhara Rao slammed the BJP-led Centre for discrimination towards Telangana in the allocation of medical colleges and Navodaya schools. (SEE PAGE 2) (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 4)

TN Gov returns 10 Bills

NATION | PAGE 08

Israel signals wider ops in Gaza

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Proteas choke, Australia in final

SPORT | PAGE 10



CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

| | |
|---------------------|---------|
| Farm | Rs. 97 |
| Retail live | Rs. 119 |
| With skin | Rs. 173 |
| Skinless | Rs. 196 |
| Egg Rates (12 eggs) | Rs. 68 |

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New UGC norms for PG courses

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Students can soon pursue a master's degree in a discipline that is unconnected with their undergraduate specialisations, provided they clear entrance tests.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has come out with a new curriculum and credit framework for PG, which provides flexibility for students to switch from one discipline to another. In addition to the existing two-year master's programmes, the Commission introduced one-year master's courses.

As per the new framework for PG programmes approved by the Commission in its meeting held on November 3, students who qualify UG with a double major can opt for master's programmes in either of the two subjects of the major. In

addition, students who qualify UG with a major and minor will be eligible to pursue either major or minor(s) subject in the master's programme.

"The new framework allows students to do their master's in any stream they choose as a major or minor in their UG programme. They can also pursue a master's degree in a discipline that is unconnected with their UG specialisations, provided they demonstrate competence by qualifying in an entrance test such as CUET-PG," UGC Chairman Prof M Jagadeesh Kumar said on Thursday.

The UGC enabled students, who completed a four-year UG, three-year UG, two-year PG or five-year integrated programmes in STEM subjects, to be eligible for admissions into ME, MTech and allied areas. (SEE PAGE 2)

After power, K'taka ryots face 'bride' crisis

S SANDEEP KUMAR
Hyderabad

Can the matrimonial prospects of a young farmer be dependent on the party in power? For those who believe the answer is no, look at the situation of young farmers in Karnataka and Telangana.

At a time, when techies and even corporate executives are quitting lucrative jobs and taking up farming in Telangana, many young farmers in Karnataka are setting out on padayatras to highlight their plight of not getting brides for themselves.

Since farming is not considered a lucrative profession in Karnataka, the demand for would-be grooms, who are farmers, is dipping, they say. These padayatras are gradually

becoming a regular feature in Karnataka. One such padayatra was conducted by young farmers aged 30 and above in February from Malavalli taluk in Mandya to Male Mahadeshwara in Chamara-janagar district. Now, a similar padayatra is being planned in Mandya next month. This time, it will be from Mandya to Adichunchanagiri Mutt, covering nearly 70 km. The purpose is to seek 'divine intervention' and create awareness among the

people on the crisis they were facing.

The reason for many young farmers not getting married, according to them, was the reluctance of brides' families to marry their daughters to farmers as the latter were 'stuck' in rural life without much of an income. Many are of the opinion that young farmers do not get hefty packages and their profession is not secure.

Girimallu, a young farmer from Mandya, was quoted in media reports as saying: "The State government should announce an action plan to ensure Bride Bhagya for the youth engaged in farming..." The second edition of the march is being planned by bachelors in Mandya in December. (SEE PAGE 2)

2,290 candidates in fray for elections

STATE BUREAU
Hyderabad

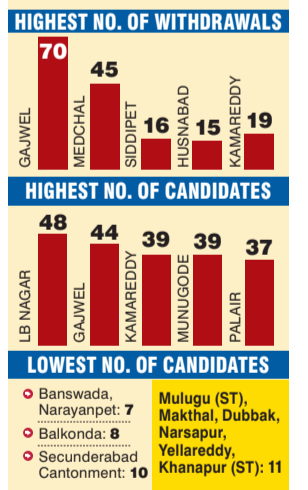
As many as 2,290 candidates are in the fray in 119 constituencies for the November 30 elections in Telangana.

A total of 2,898 valid nominated candidates were identified by election authorities after scrutiny. Of them, 608 withdrew their nominations on Wednesday, the last day for withdrawals.

Accordingly, now 2,290 candidates are contesting from different political parties and as Independents. Among all the constituencies, there are 48 contenders in the LB Nagar constituency — the highest in the State. Banswada and Narayanpet have seven contenders each — the lowest.

The highest withdrawals of 70 nominations were from the Gajwel con-

Final count



EAM raises Khalistan issue with UK leaders

LONDON

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar has raised India's long-standing concerns about pro-Khalistan extremism in the UK during his meetings with the country's top leaders, stressing that they should be on guard against the misuse of freedom of expression and speech.

India's concerns regarding pro-Khalistan extremism in relation to the safety of its diplomats in the UK

Biden calls Xi 'dictator' again

WOODSIDE (CALIFORNIA)

US President Joe Biden has once again called his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping a "dictator", just hours after they met for the first time in more than a year and held candid and productive discussions to revive bilateral ties.

"Well, look, he is (a dictator)," Biden told reporters in response to a question when reminded about the similar remarks he had made about Xi early this year. (SEE PAGE 2) (RELATED REPORT PAGE 9)

Excess screen time making children prone to myopia

CITY BUREAU
Hyderabad

Exposure to excessive and unregulated screen time is making children vulnerable to myopia (nearsightedness) — a type of refractive error — researchers from LV Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI) said on Thursday.

Without any proactive measures, projections indicate that in two decades, 48% of children in urban India will have myopia, a looming public health cri-



Bear in mind

- **BELOW 2 YEARS** Should not be exposed to any screen
- **2-5 YEARS** 1 hr of supervised screen time per day
- **6-10 YEARS** Less than 2 hrs a day

CHILDREN MUST BE ENCOURAGED TO FOCUS ON OBJECTS 20 FT AWAY TO RELIEVE EYE STRAIN

- At least **60 minutes** outside time for children
- Maintain **15-inch** distance, **60-degree** angle while reading
- Ensure well-lit environments to prevent eye strain

faculty in seeing the black-board clearly, frequent headache and eyestrain, and squeezing or squinting of the eyes are signs of refractive errors."

Regulating the time spent in front of TV and other screens will help reduce myopia risks. "Undiagnosed and untreated refractive errors can lead to delayed milestones in children and affect their academic performance," says Dr Ramesh Kekunnaya, head of Child Sight Institute, LVPEI.