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**More staff in US consulates: Eric Garcetti** **page 14**



## Housing for all is top priority, says KCR

**Chief Minister promises food processing industries in all mandals across State**



Huge crowd gathered at BRS Praja Ashirvada Sabha meeting addressed by party president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao in Nalgonda on Monday.

STATE BUREAU  
HYDERABAD

BRS president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao on Monday said housing for all and establishment of food processing industries across Telangana would be the top priorities of the BRS government during its third term. Apart from food processing units in every mandal, the focus would be on the construction of double-bedroom houses, houses under the Gruhalakshmi scheme and also housing sites for the needy.

"The BRS will ensure that every family without a house of their own will get one in the next five years," he said at the Praja Ashir-

### On agenda

**ABOLITION OF ANNUAL RENEWAL FEE FOR FITNESS CERTIFICATION OF AUTO-RICKSHAWS**

- Waiver of pending crop loans
- Merger of TSRTC with State government and regularisation of RTC employees' services
- Dalit Bandhu on saturation mode in Manakondur constituency
- Completion of Brahmanavellamla project in Nakrekal constituency
- Supply of water from Kaleshwaram project through Basvapur reservoir to Ramannapet mandal



### LIKENS 'BHOOMATHA' TO 'BHOOMETHA'

**HYDERABAD:** Lashing out at the Congress, BRS president and Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao said on Monday that Congress leaders were conspiring to abolish the Dharani land registration system and replace it with what they called 'Bhoomatha', which was nothing but their conspiracy for 'bhoometha', to facilitate land encroachments. While Dharani had simplified the land management and registration system, 'Bhoomatha' would only complicate it, he said.

vada Sabha meetings in Manakondur, Station Ghanpur, Nakrekal and Nalgonda constituencies on Monday. Stating that the food processing industries would im-

prove employment opportunities for local youth and ensure remunerative prices to farmers for their crops, the Chief Minister also promised to abolish the fee for an-

nual renewal of fitness certificates issued to auto-rickshaws, providing much relief to over five lakh auto-rickshaw drivers. Telangana was the only

State to waive tax on auto-rickshaws, he added.

"The merger of the TSRTC with the State and regularisation of the RTC employees also will be completed after the Assembly polls. It got delayed as the Governor did not give her consent," he said. Chandrashekhar Rao said Telangana suffered for 58 years in erstwhile AP and had become synonymous with drought, power and water crisis, hunger deaths, migration for livelihood, suicides of weavers and farmers, debts and other issues. After the BRS came to power, it addressed each issue in a phased manner, with a focus on agriculture, health, irrigation and other essential facilities. (SEE PAGES 3, 4)

## Is there a raging battle for Muslim votes?

A narrative is tossing around on social media and political discourse that Muslim votes are going to be split between the BRS and the Congress in the current Assembly elections unlike in 2018 when Muslims overwhelmingly voted for TRS (now BRS).

The Congress story goes like this: "Muslims want to support Congress because Rahul Gandhi will take on Modi in the Lok Sabha elections next year. Muslims voted for Congress in Karnataka elections recently and they are going to do it here in Telangana now."

But is it really so? What do the Assembly elections here have to do with Lok Sabha polls in 2024? Is it that the Congress is aping the BJP slogan of "Double Engine Sarkar" by telling Muslim (and other) voters to elect their party here now to pave the way for Congress Sarkar at the Centre next year? Do the Congress leaders believe that the prevailing situation for the minorities in Telangana is similar to what they faced in neighbouring Karnataka State under BJP rule? The minorities — both Muslims and Christians — were disgusted with the BJP government in Karnataka because they were harassed by Sangh activists on the ground and affected by negative, anti-minority policies of the saffron regime.

As Telangana braces for Assembly polls, there is a focus among political ana-

lysts on the "minority factor" in these elections, especially the voting behaviour of the Muslim community. The Congress leaders claim that the "Muslim vote" is crucial in 40 to 45 constituencies of the 119 in the State. They say that Muslim voters have "decided" to back their party, inspired by the Minority Declaration and manifesto promises on the one hand and their "affection" for Rahul Gandhi on the other. As the saying goes, the taste of pudding is in eating.

It is obvious that minority voters play a significant role in the elections. Minorities account for 14 per cent of the State's electorate — 12.7 per cent Muslims and 1.3 per cent Christians. Every 8th voter in the State is a Muslim. Minorities are spread across all the 33 districts of the State, with a huge concentration in Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Vikarabad, Nizamabad, Sangareddy, Adilabad, Nirmal, Mahbubnagar, Kamareddy and Karimnagar districts. Muslims account for 50 to 90 per cent of the electors in seven Assembly constituencies (all represented by AIMIM), 15 to 50 per cent in 22 ACs, 10 to 15 per cent in 13 ACs, 5 to 10 per cent in 42 ACs and 2 to 5 per cent in the remaining 35 ACs.

There is a clamour among Congress leaders to garner Muslim votes in most of the minority-dominated constituencies. (SEE PAGE 4)

**NEWS ANALYSIS**  
SYED AMIN JAFRI

**MINORITIES ACCOUNT FOR 14% OF THE STATE'S ELECTORATE — 12.7% MUSLIMS AND 1.3% CHRISTIANS. EVERY 8TH VOTER IN THE STATE IS A MUSLIM**

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**ENTERTAINMENT**  
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Will showcase different aspects of the actor's oeuvre



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## KTR challenges Congress to prove claims on jobs



IT Minister KT Rama Rao interacts with job aspirants at Ashok Nagar in Hyderabad on Monday.

STATE BUREAU  
Hyderabad

Stating that a job calendar would be declared soon after coming to power, BRS working president KT Rama Rao said that following appeals from job aspirants, the number of Group II jobs would be increased and notifications would be issued accordingly.

Interacting with job aspirants and students preparing for different competitive exams in Ashok Nagar and those from different universities here on Monday, Rama Rao assured to convene a special meeting with students at 10 am on December 4 to discuss all issues connected with recruitment

exams. He challenged Congress to prove its claims on job recruitment in the Congress-ruled States with statistics. The Telangana government already filled 1.62 lakh government jobs after issuing notifications for 2.30 lakh jobs, he said.

Opposition parties, especially Congress, did not have the moral right to criticise the BRS government over job recruitment. During its rule, the Congress filled only 1,000 jobs annually in the united Andhra Pradesh, while BRS filled nearly 10,000 jobs a year, he said.

No State government could match the Telangana government in filling government vacancies. The

Congress, which was muddling on the BRS government, should explain to the students about recruitments done in its States with statistics, he said, urging students to understand the Congress' hidden agenda over recruitment for deriving political mileage.

The job aspirants appreciated Rama Rao for conducting the meeting and said though the State government issued notifications for recruitment exams, there was a lot of unrest among them over the way the exams were being conducted. They appealed to the Minister to increase the number of posts, especially Group-II. (SEE PAGE 4) (RELATED REPORTS PAGE 5)

## Don't 'pick and choose', SC tells Centre on judicial appointments

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday flagged the issue of "pick and choose" by the Centre in clearing the collegium's recommendations for transferring High Court judges and said this does not send a good signal.

The court observed that of the 11 names of judges recommended by the collegium for transfer, five have been transferred but six are still pending — four from the Gujarat High Court

and one each from the HC of Allahabad and Delhi.

A Bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia said of the recently recommended names for judgeship in High Courts, eight have not been cleared and some of these judges are senior to those who have been appointed. "As per my information, you have issued transfer orders for five judges. For six judges, you have not issued. Four of them are from Gujarat. Last time also, I had

said this does not send a good signal," Justice Kaul told Attorney General R Venkataramani.

Observing that the government is following a "pick and choose" policy regarding the names recommended by the collegium for transfers, the Bench said, "Just look at it. What is the signal you are sending?" The Bench was hearing two petitions, including one alleging a delay on the Centre's part in clearing the names. PTI

## AP: 35 fishing boats gutted

VISAKHAPATNAM

A fire broke out in a jetty area here in which at least 35 fishing boats were gutted, even as the police launched a hunt for 10 to 15 persons who allegedly partied in one of the boats, officials said on Monday. The fire broke out around 11.30 pm on Sunday in a boat owned by Balaji in zero jetty and was doused by 4 am on Monday, officials said. However, no death or injury was reported in the accident, the officials further said. PTI

## Rescuers push wider pipeline through rubble

UTTARKASHI

Rescuers on Monday pushed through a six-inch-wide pipeline through the rubble of the collapsed Silkyara tunnel, a breakthrough that will help them supply larger quantities of food and possibly allow live visuals of the 41 workers trapped inside for eight days.

Earlier, a four-inch existing tube was being used to supply oxygen and items like dry fruit and medicines into the section of the tunnel beyond the



An official interacts with people involved in the rescue operation in Uttarkashi on Monday. — Photo: ANI

rubble of the collapsed portion of the under-construction tunnel on the

Char Dham route in Uttarakhand. National Highways and Infrastructure

Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) director Anshu Manish Khalkho called it the "first breakthrough" at the site.

**DRDO robots**  
"We have sent the pipe 53 metres to the other side of the rubble and the trapped workers can hear and experience us," he said. Drones and robots from the Defence Research and Development Organisation have also been brought to the site to look into the possibility of other escape routes for the trapped men. (SEE PAGE 4)