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BCCI extends David's contract **page 8**



EVERY VOTE COUNTS

3.26 crore voters all set to decide Telangana's future today as country's youngest State goes to polls

STATE BUREAU
 HYDERABAD

After electrifying campaigning that bordered on the acerbic by stars of the political arena, the stage is now set for the most important star in the democratic setup — the voter — to head to the polling booth on Thursday to decide Telangana's future. The State will have about 3.26 crore voters lining up in front of 35,655 polling stations to choose their representatives from 2,290 candidates in 119 constituencies.

While the ruling Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) looks to retaining power and as many MLAs as possible from its current strength of 104 in the Assembly, its main rival is the Congress, which looks to increasing its tally from five, while the BJP hopes to build on its existing strength of three. The AIMM currently has seven MLAs.

The Election Commission of India's (ECI) arrangements for polling include 1.85 lakh polling personnel and 22,000 micro observers to monitor the polling process. Security will be provided by a total of 45,000 personnel from the State, 3,000 from other departments, 50 companies of the Telangana State Special Police (TSSP) and 375 companies of the Central Paramilitary Forces.



Officials carrying EVMs and other poll-related material ahead of voting, at Nizam College in Hyderabad. — Photo: Anand Dharmana

About 23,500 home guards from neighbouring States will also be on duty.

Polling will be held from 7 am to 5 pm in 106 constituencies and from 7 am to 4 pm in 13 Left Wing Extremism (LWE)-affected areas. A total of 72,931 ballot units or EVMs have been arranged, of which 59,779 will be deployed at polling

stations. The rest will be kept in reserve.

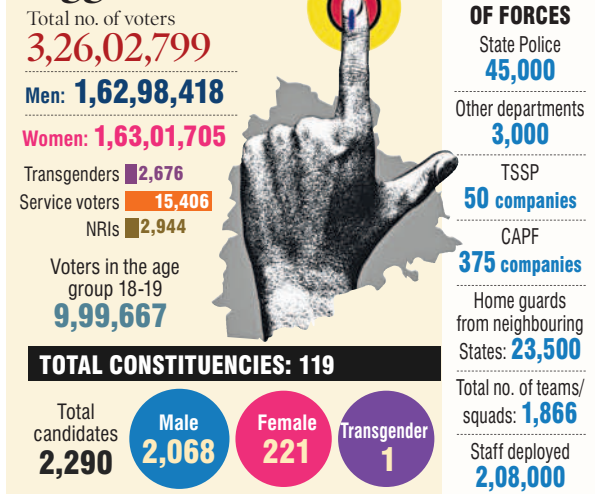
Telangana has a total of 3,26,02,799 voters, including 1,62,98,418 men, 1,63,01,705 women and 2,676 transgender. There are 15,406 service voters and 2,944 NRI voters. The number of voters in the age group of 18-19 is 9,99,667. A total of 2,290 candidates, including 221 women and one transgender,

are in the fray. According to officials, four EVMs will be used at each polling station in the LB Nagar constituency, which has the highest number of candidates at 48. Nine constituencies will have three EVMs at each of the polling stations. Three EVMs will be deployed at polling centres in Kamareddy, where Chief Minister K Chandrashekar

Rao and TPCC president A Revanth Reddy are among 39 candidates.

While the BRS is contesting all 119 seats on its own, the Congress has set aside one seat for the Communist Party of India. The BJP has fielded candidates in 11 constituencies and left the remaining eight for Pawan Kalyan's Jana Sena Party, the Bahujan Samaj Party is also

Bigger Picture



DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES
 State Police: 45,000
 Other departments: 3,000
 TSSP: 50 companies
 CAPF: 375 companies
 Home guards from neighbouring States: 23,500
 Total no. of teams/squads: 1,866
 Staff deployed: 2,08,000

Drones to check poll malpractice
 HYDERABAD | PAGE 04

Nawaz acquitted in graft case
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ENTERTAINMENT PAGE 10

Spirit of character

Fatima portrays Indira Gandhi in Sam Bahadur



CHICKEN RATES IN HYDERABAD

Farm	Rs. 86
Retail live	Rs. 108
With skin	Rs. 157
Skinless	Rs. 178
Egg Rates (12 eggs)	Rs. 68

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No one can stop CAA: Shah

KOLKATA

Home Minister Amit Shah asserted on Wednesday that the Central government will implement the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and no one can stop it.

Addressing a big rally here to launch the BJP's Lok Sabha campaign, Shah launched a blistering attack on Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the issues of appeasement, infiltration, corruption and political violence, alleging she has "destroyed" the State. Banerjee has been opposing the CAA due to her support to infiltration, he asserted, adding that a State with so much infiltration cannot develop. He urged people to throw out her government by electing the BJP in the next Assembly polls in 2026 and asked them to lay its foundation by supporting the party in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

He said, "Give so many seats to the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls that Modiji

“Mamata Banerjee is opposing CAA due to her support for infiltration... A State with so much infiltration cannot develop — AMIT SHAH, Union Min

says I have become PM due to Bengal." The Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress won the last Assembly polls by "rigging" but the BJP jumped to 77 seats from zero, he said, calling upon the people to end the TMC's alleged misrule of corruption, infiltration and political violence by electing a government conducive to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's agenda of development.

The syndicate run by the Trinamool Congress, Shah

alleged, is not letting huge sums of money sent by the Modi government reach the State's poor. He cited figures to assert that the Centre's funding for the State through various schemes has risen many times under the BJP than the Congress-led UPA, of which Banerjee was also a member.

Lauding the turnout at the rally, he said this indicates the people's mood and claimed that the BJP will come to power with a two-thirds majority in the State in 2026. The BJP's performance in the State in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls will create the foundation of its win in the Assembly polls, he said.

Turning to the contentious CAA issue, he said Banerjee has been opposing it but it is a law of the country and no one can stop its implementation, which has been in limbo as the Central government is yet to frame its rules amid the Opposition's strong stand against the law. Parliament passed the law in 2019. PTI

India backs resolution on Golan Heights

UNITED NATIONS

India has backed a UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution demanding that Israel withdraw from the occupied Golan Heights, a territory the Jewish nation captured from Syria in the Six-Day War of 1967.

India was among the 91 countries that voted on Tuesday for the resolution that declared Israel's occupation of the territory a "stumbling block" to a "just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region." New Delhi's vote for the resolution reaffirmed its support for the Arab cause in the conflicts involving Israel, after having abstained — likely for the time — on a resolution backed by Palestine. It cited its failure to condemn the massacre inflicted on Israel by Hamas on October 7 as the reason for abstaining. PTI

'Silent voters will deliver landslide win for BRS'

KTR optimistic of party winning key seats



BRS working president and IT Minister KT Rama Rao during a blood donation camp held on the occasion of Deeksha Diwas, in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

BRS OBSERVES DEEKSHA DIWAS

HYDERABAD: The BRS cadres held blood donation camps, distributed fruits to patients and organised social service activities, marking Deeksha Diwas on Wednesday.

With the Model Code in force, the celebrations were organised in a subtle manner and restricted to only social service activities. Deeksha Diwas is celebrated in Telangana every November 29 to

commemorate the commencement of the indefinite hunger strike undertaken by BRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao on the day in 2009, which led to the Centre's decision to grant statehood for Telangana.

BRS working president KT Rama Rao recently asked the party cadres to observe the day by participating in social service activities. (SEE PAGES 2, 3)

Licked water dripping from rocks, says rescued worker

RANCHI

Anil Bediya, one of the 41 labourers rescued from a collapsed Uttarakhand tunnel after 17 days, survived the ordeal by eating muri (puffed rice) and licking water dripping from rocks.

The 22-year-old hailing from Jharkhand had a close brush with death after a portion of the Silkyara tunnel on the Brah-makhal-Yamunotri national highway in Uttarakhand collapsed early on November 12. "Loud shrieks punctuated the air... We all thought we



The workers, who were trapped in the Silkyara tunnel, before they were rescued, in Uttarkashi. — Photo: ANI

would be buried inside the tunnel and lost all hope during the first couple of days," Bediya said. "It was a nightmarish ordeal... we

licked water dripping from rocks to quench our thirst and survived on muri for the first 10 days," Bediya, who is now recuperating

at a Uttarakhand hospital, said. All 41 workers rescued from the tunnel were airlifted to AIIMS-Rishikesh where they underwent a health check-up. He hails from Khirabeda, a village on the outskirts of Ranchi which saw 13 people going to Uttarkashi on November 1 in search of greener pastures. Little did they know what fate had in store for them.

Luckily, only three of the 13 were inside the tunnel when the disaster struck. Fifteen of the 41 workers hail from Jharkhand's Ranchi, Giridih, Khunti and West

Singhbhum, where people have erupted in joy after the trapped workers were rescued on Tuesday evening. "Our first hope of survival kindled when the authorities established contact with us after nearly 70 hours," Bediya recounted. Two of their supervisors asked them to drink water dripping through the rocks.

"We had no other option but to relieve ourselves inside the tunnel. When we heard voices of people communicating with us from outside, hope replaced our desperation," Bediya said. (SEE PAGES 2, 5)

cent votes in 2018, while the BJP got 37 per cent in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. He was optimistic that the BRS would win several key constituencies, including those where top Opposition leaders are contesting. "These elections are to score a hat-trick win and make K Chandrashekar Rao our Chief Minister for the third term," he said with optimism. He said certain surveys were published to mislead the public but asserted that the credibility of Chandrashekar Rao to deliver majority of his promises, unlike opposition parties like Congress, was sure to help the BRS. (SEE PAGE 2)