

# Grads must reject corrupt regimes of TRS, BJP: Uttam

- Reddy expresses confidence in Congress winning the upcoming MLC elections for two graduate constituencies
- Criticises CM KCR for failing to fulfill his 2014 electoral promise of one lakh jobs till now
- Says TRS government lured jobless youth in 2018 Assembly elections by promising them Rs 3,016 dole per month
- Ridicules the BJP government at the Centre for neglecting Telangana in the Budget
- Questions why BJP leaders not affectionate towards Ram Mandir in Bhadrachalam

## HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) President N Uttam Kumar Reddy has expressed confidence that the Congress party would win the elections for the Mahabubnagar-Rangareddy-Hyderabad and Khammam-Warangal-Nalgonda graduates' constituencies of Telangana Legislative Council.

He was addressing a press conference at Gandhi Bhavan on Monday after officially handing over B-forms to the Congress can-



TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy along with G Chinna Reddy and Ramulu Naik addressing a press conference in Hyderabad on Monday

didates - former minister G Chinna Reddy (Mahabubnagar-Rangareddy-Hyderabad) and ex-MLC Ramulu Naik (Khammam-Warangal-Nalgonda). He said that the party has picked highly efficient, able and committed leaders as its candidates for MLC polls. "Chinna Reddy holds a PhD degree in Agriculture and is known for his honesty and simplicity. He has been serving the people selflessly without having expectations. Ramulu Naik was born into a poor family and came up in his life after hard struggle. He played a key role during the Telangana movement. Chinna Reddy and Ramulu Naik are highly capable of serving the people, especially in addressing the needs of gradu-

ates, including employees and jobless youth," he added.

The TPCC Chief said that the educated youth must unitedly defeat the corrupt and unethical regimes of TRS and BJP. Criticising Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu, he said that the promise, made in 2014 elections, of filling one lakh vacant posts in government department remained unfulfilled. "The Pay Revision Commission, in its recent report, has disclosed that over 1.91 lakh posts were lying vacant in various departments. He said the delay in the recruitment process has deprived thousands of students, who participated in the Telangana movement, from getting a government job. TRS

government lured jobless youth in 2018 Assembly elections by promising them Rs 3,016 dole every month. However, this promise was not fulfilled even now. KCR has been openly cheating the jobless youth ever since he came to power in June 2014. Revision of pay scales was long overdue. Further, the new PRC has disappointed the employees by recommending a fitment of mere 7.3 per cent. Employees be given a fitment of not less than 43 per cent," he added.

Uttam Kumar Reddy said that the BJP Govt at the Centre has been doing injustice to Telangana since the beginning. He said Telangana remained neglected in the Union Budgets since 2014. Further, he said that the promises which were made under Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act were yet to be fulfilled. He ridiculed Telangana BJP President Bandi Sanjay's attempts to incite communal hatred in the state. "BJP leaders often talk about Ram Mandir. We are also Hindus and we are not against the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. But why BJP leaders are not showing similar affection with Ram Mandir in Bhadrachalam? Why is the BJP government trying to give away temple lands to private parties?" he asked.

Uttam Kumar Reddy appealed to the people to elect Congress candidates to restore morality in politics and democracy in Telangana.

## SEC urged to banish anti-social elements from Kuppam

- TDP chief in a letter to the poll panel points to attempt on life of Congress leader Suresh Babu in Pacharlapalli village
- Demands release of TDP sarpanch candidate and other leaders in Avulavaripalem village in Krosuru mandal of Guntur district

## HANS NEWS SERVICE MANGALAGIRI

TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu on Monday demanded the State Election Commission (SEC) to take step to banish troublemakers and outside miscreants from the villages in Kuppam Assembly constituency in order to ensure a free and fair panchayat election.

Naidu said that on February 14, an attempt was made on the life of District Congress Committee (DCC) president Suresh Babu at Pacharlapalli village in Gudupalle mandal by a miscreant with knife. The attacker has attacked four other people also when they were trying to protect Suresh Babu. The Opposition leaders were being attacked with an ulterior plan to demoralise them in the panchayat elections, he alleged.

Naidu said that the State Election Commission (SEC) should act swiftly and ensure that the gram panchayat elections being held on February 17 would be conducted peacefully in a free and fair manner. For this, additional protection forces shall be deployed and all the non-bona fide outsiders should be sent out of villages in Kuppam Assembly segment. Simultaneously, inquiry shall be conducted into the presence of anti-social elements and miscreants in villages and action be taken against the culprits.

In a separate statement, Naidu condemned the arrest of the TDP sarpanch candidate along with some others in Avulavaripalem village in Krosuru mandal in the Guntur district on false charges and demanded their immediate release.

# HC suspends SEC order on delivery vehicles



## AMARAVATI

IN a major relief to the state government, the Andhra Pradesh High Court on Monday suspended the State Election Commission (SEC) Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar's orders restricting rice door delivery service during the ongoing elections.

The court said the State Election Commission (SEC) cannot stop the government from using mobile delivery vehicles to supply food to the people.

Earlier, the SEC ordered that the government cannot use these mobile vehicles for a period of four weeks, in view of the ongoing rural local bodies' elections.

The SEC personally examined a delivery vehicle to see if these vehicles will allegedly exert any influence on the polls as they would fan out across the nooks and corners of the villages, carrying ration rice for beneficiaries.

Many decisions of Ramesh Kumar are being challenged in the court by the state government and there seems to be no end to the bickering between the state and the SEC.

Earlier, he issued a gag and home confinement order on panchayat raj minister Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy which was also suspended by the court but

- Says the State Election Commission can't stop vehicles supplying food to the people
- The SEC earlier suspended ration door delivery vehicles for 4 weeks in rural areas in view of Model Code

## Kodali Nani's house motion plea posted to tomorrow

- HC seeks video clippings of Minister's comments
- To appoint a senior advocate as amicus curiae to assist in this case

## AMARAVATI

THE AP High Court posted the hearing on house motion petition filed by civil supplies minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao (Nani) to Wednesday, February 17.

It may be noted that the State Election Commission (SEC) issued show-cause notice and a gag order on him for his remarks on the commission as well as State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar last week. The SEC also directed the Krishna district SP to register a case on the minister.

In this regard, the minister with some riders.

The court is also poised to hear a case on civil supplies minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao, against whom the SEC ordered a

filed House motion petition. When the advocates of the both the parties explained their stand to the court, the court observed that the case should be examined in detail and posted the next hearing to Wednesday. The court said that it would appoint a senior advocate as amicus curiae to assist in this case. It ordered the petitioner to submit necessary video clippings. The court also directed the advocate of SEC to submit video tapes of the minister's comments by Wednesday.

The SEC advocate appealed the court to take action after examining the video clippings of the minister's press meet. He said that the minister used objectionable language towards the SEC.

The court observed that it cannot decide on the case without examining the video clippings of the minister's press meet.

The commission has already successfully completed two phases of rural local bodies elections, even as two more are due.

## 56,448 pilgrims have darshan at Tirumala

### Common pilgrims availing offline free darshan token have to wait for days for darshan

## TIRUPATI

THE highest number of 56,448 pilgrims had darshan of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala on Sunday while the common pilgrims availing the free darshan off line SSD tokens have to wait 3 days for darshan with the rush remaining unabated.

TTD is issuing 22,000 of offline SSD tokens for free dar-

shan against 25,000 special entry tickets of Rs 300 daily for darshan. This apart, ticket holders of various Arjitha sevas (virtual), donors including Srivani Trust donors and also Supatham and VIP break. With the pilgrim rush steadily picking up, the SSD tokens for darshan on Tuesday and Wednesday were already exhausted while tokens for dar-

shan on February 18 up to evening 6 pm slot were also over when reports last came in on Monday.

According to TTD sources the details of the pilgrims who had darshan of Lord in the last three days are 48,846 on February 12 which jumped to 54,134 on February 13 and further increased to 56,448 on February 14.

## FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE

# Agri Minister buoyed by potato yield in own farm

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

## HYDERABAD

HOW about practising before preaching? Exactly this is what the Agriculture Minister, S Niranjan Reddy, seems to be following. The Minister who was irked with the hike in potato prices in recent times had decided to encourage farmers in State cultivate potatoes. But before approaching the farmers, the Minister first wanted to cultivate potatoes in his own farm in Wanaparthy on experimental basis. Soon, he planted potato crop in one-fourth of an acre and ended up gaining reasonably good harvest.

The jubilant Minister is now planning to approach farmers and share his experience backed with agriculture department's feedback, which had said that the land and climate in Telangana were as good as other States where potatoes are being cultivated.

As the potatoes have consistently demand all-round the year, the fluctuation in prices would be minimal and help farmers gain profits, the Minister said,

- Niranjan Reddy gets satisfying yield from one-fourth of acre
- Wants to encourage Telangana farmers take up cultivation of potatoes which has demand all-round the year



adding that on an average a farmer can get a maximum yield of 100 to 120 quintals per acre. "When it comes to prices, the rate per quintal in the market would be around Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,200. Sometimes, it might even touch Rs 2,000. The farmers will gain revenues of Rs 1 lakh per acre after deducting the investment," he said.

Niranjan Reddy said that potatoes were one of the vegetables with the highest consumption rate. But, the cultivation of the crop is not preferred in southern States for reasons un-

known. Along with Telangana, all the southern States have to heavily depend on potato supplies from north and this demand can be addressed if farmers here take up potato cultivation, he opined.

Investment to cultivate potatoes in an acre comes to about Rs 45,000 and the crop comes to harvest in 85 to 90 days after the plantation. But, if the time frame goes beyond 90 days, then the yields would be more, the Agriculture Minister said, hoping that farmers in the State take up potato cultivation.

## Sharmila to launch party in May or July

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

## HYDERABAD

FORMER AP Chief Minister Y S Rajashekara Reddy's daughter Sharmila is making fast political moves aiming to launch her political party in Telangana. Soon after returning from Bengaluru on Monday, she held a meeting with a select group of leaders and intellectuals here. Sharmila is likely to announce the launch of her political outfit on May 14--the day YSR assumed CM's office in 2004--or on July 8--her father's birthday. She is likely to announce some major decisions on those days.

Earlier, she planned to float the party in April. But the AP CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's sister deferred the plan as she wanted to hold a series of meetings with YSR supporters to ascertain the political situation in Telangana.

Leaders said that Sharmila will take more time to launch the party. After the by-poll to the Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency and elections to two graduate constituencies and seven municipalities, including Warangal and Khammam corporations, she would plunge into action.

## BJP to fly in party bigwigs for Nagarjunasagar bypoll

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

## HYDERABAD

THE Bharatiya Janata Party, which had shocked the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi with its performance in Dubbaka bypoll and in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections, has shifted its focus to Nagarjunasagar and planning to hold huge public meeting by February end by inviting its national leaders.

The party, which had gone aggressive after Dubbaka bypoll, is now targeting the Sagar constituency where it has little presence. However, the party leaders are hopeful of repeating Dubbaka and GHMC victory in the forthcoming bypoll to Sagar constituency.

While the party had already initiated the exercise to gain foothold in the district, it had also recently taken up protest on tribal issues, including tribal lands in Gurrampodu, which had led to a tense situation with police even lathi-charging the protestors. The tribals here make up 40 per cent of the electorate and are crucial in deciding the fate of candidates.

According to State BJP president Bandi Sanjay, the party would soon have a huge

- Plans to hold huge public meeting by February end
- Despite dismal presence, party hopeful of winning the seat

public meeting, possibly by February end, in Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency. The party would be bringing in senior leaders, including Union Ministers from New Delhi to campaign, as it did for Dubbaka and GHMC polls.

Sanjay said that the party would win the Sagar bypoll along with two council seats going for polls in March, adding that all key leaders would campaign for the party candidates. Meanwhile, the party has decided to appoint one in-charge for every 50 voters who would be in constant touch with them and ensure they vote for the saffron party.

## BJP seeks NMDC lifeline for VSP

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

## NEW DELHI

A delegation of the Andhra Pradesh BJP unit led by its president Somu Veerajulu and comprising former Union minister D Purandesawari, former MLA P Vishukumar Raju and MLC P V N Madhav met Union minister for steel, Dharmendra Pradhan here on Monday and urged him to revisit the decision to privatise the RINL (Visakhapatnam steel plant). They said a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of the plant would reveal that it would be an excellent profit-making unit which had also an emotional connect with the Telugus.

Meanwhile, in his three-page letter to Dharmendra Pradhan, Veerajulu said the government should instead work out an agreement between NMDC (National Mineral Development Corporation) and Vizag Steel for supply of iron ore from NMDC at cost-to-cost basis or cost-plus marginal profit basis for next five years. Capital should be infused through IPO (public issue) which would give real valuation of RINL and the Union government should provide sovereign guarantees to raise unsecured loans, he urged.

All options to pursue the revival of RINL should be undertaken instead of condemning the plant to privatisation on the basis of its losses now, he



AP BJP president Somu Veerajulu, BJP AP co-in-charge Sunil Deodhar and party leaders meet Union Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at Udyog Bhavan in New Delhi on Monday

added. Recalling the long fight Visakha Utku-Andhrula Hakku in the past and the sacrifices made by the people of Andhra, the state BJP president said the plant was the biggest public sector unit in entire south India. It had brought a metamorphic development in the entire three backward districts of north Andhra Pradesh.

The plant had witnessed an investment of Rs 4,950 crore in three decades but the Centre had secured Rs 43,0990 crore in return and the AP state government got Rs 8,565 crore till 2020 in the form of various taxes and duties. That apart, the Vizag Steel had immensely helped in uplifting the living conditions and dignity of thousands of families from socially deprived communities. The overall development of the backward districts became pos-

sible in Andhra Pradesh abutting Odisha borders.

He said Visakhapatnam Steel Plant was initially envisaged with an installed capacity of 3 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) in 1992 and subsequently expanded to 7.3 MTPA without any budgetary support from the Centre. All this was despite the fact that the RINL was disadvantageously positioned compared to its rivals vis a vis access to captive iron ore mines thus incurring an additional expenditure of Rs 5,000 per tonne production.

The plant had a land bank of 20,000 acre and losing such a treasure was ill-advised, he argued. More than 60 villages had to be evacuated to acquire land in the past, he said to buttress his point.

Other office bearers of the AP Unit of the party too are signatories to the letter.