

# CM choice lies with AICC if Cong returns: Sridhar Babu

Legislative Affairs Minister stresses discipline, seeks resolution of internal party issues

KOLISHETTY  
VENKATESHWARLU  
HYDERABAD

LEGISLATIVE Affairs Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu on Tuesday stated that the All India Congress Committee (AICC) will take the final call on the Chief Ministerial post if the Congress party comes back to power in Telangana in the next elections.

Referring to remarks by Roads and Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy backing Jayaprakash Reddy for the TPCC chief post, Sridhar Babu described them as personal opinions. He reiterated that decisions regarding party leadership positions rest solely with the High Command. Speaking



informally with mediapersons at the Assembly premises, Sridhar Babu clarified that if the Congress retains power, the AICC will decide the next leader.

Addressing internal matters, he suggested that TPCC

President Mahesh Kumar Goud should resolve issues involving senior leader Jeevan Reddy and persuade him to remain in the party. He expressed hope that Jeevan Reddy would stay, emphasising that the Congress values

his long-standing contribution. The minister noted that the process for filling nominated posts is currently underway, while the allocation of portfolios remains the prerogative of the Chief Minister.

He also called upon former Chief Minister Chandrashekar Rao to attend Assembly sessions, describing him as an experienced leader whose suggestions would be valuable.

Criticising the previous Bharat Rashtira Samithi government, Sridhar Babu alleged that arrears amounting to Rs 15,000 crore owed to retired employees were left unpaid and are now being portrayed as liabilities of the current administration. He

added that pending Assembly floor committees would be constituted soon.

On the issue of Ippa Puvvu liquor, raised by Jadcherla MLA Anirudh Reddy, he termed the idea commendable. He accused the BRS of limiting its activities to social media, stating that if the trend continues, the party risks losing relevance in the Assembly. Sridhar Babu further alleged that the BRS deliberately avoided fielding a Rajya Sabha candidate due to a lack of confidence in its MLAs. He claimed that the opposition party is attempting to weaken Congress as it gains strength across the state through various welfare initiatives and political expansion.



Komatireddy Venkat Reddy



T Jagga Reddy

## If Jagga Reddy becomes TPCC chief, Cong will win 100 MLA seats: Minister Komatireddy

Komatireddy Venkat Reddy appeals to High Command to appoint Jagga Reddy as TPCC chief

- Says Jagga Reddy commands mass following
- He enjoys widespread popularity in Telugu states

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ROADS& Buildings Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy on Tuesday asserted that if a mass leader like TPCC working president T Jagga Reddy is appointed as Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president, the party is certain to win 100 MLA seats in the next Assembly elections.

Interacting with media persons in the Assembly lobbies on Tuesday, Venkat Reddy described Jagga Reddy as

a leader with deep grassroots connections. The Minister strongly backed Jagga Reddy's elevation to the top party post. He said Jagga Reddy enjoys widespread popularity across both Telugu states and has the ability to mobilize support at all levels of the party. Drawing comparisons with veteran leader late P Janardhan Reddy (PJR), the Minister noted that Jagga Reddy commands a similar mass following. He emphasized that Jagga Reddy is capable of uniting leaders and party workers alike, from the grassroots to the top leadership.

Venkat Reddy appealed to the Congress High Command to seriously consider appointing Jagga Reddy as PCC president, stating that the current political scenario

demand a leader of his stature. The Minister reiterated that Jagga Reddy's leadership could significantly boost the party's prospects in all elections.

Jagga Reddy had earlier been a contender for the TPCC post, including during the appointments of Revanth Reddy and Mahesh Kumar Goud. During that time, Jagga Reddy had himself expressed interest in taking up the top post and openly appealed to the Congress High Command to appoint him as the TPCC chief.

With Komatireddy Venkat Reddy and other senior leaders now backing Jagga Reddy for the TPCC president post, it remains to be seen how the Congress High Command responds to the growing demand within the party ranks.

# KTR seeks SIT probe into missing file on six guarantees

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BRS working president KTR on Tuesday demanded that the Government form a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate a missing file pertaining to providing legal status to the six guarantees signed by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy in the first cabinet meeting.

The BRS leader launched a sharp attack on the Congress-led Telangana government over the Governor's address in the Assembly, alleging that the administration had eroded the credibility and sanctity of the constitutional process by failing to honour its own promises. Participating in the discussion on the motion of thanks to the Governor's Address, KTR said that a Governor's address carries immense importance as it reflects the policy direction and commitments of the ruling government.

However, he alleged that the present government had



BRS working president KTR speaking in the House on Tuesday demanding that the government form a Special Investigation Team to investigate a missing file pertaining to six guarantees

reduced it to a mere formality devoid of accountability. Recalling the first Governor's address of the Congress government, he noted it was publicly stated that the six guarantees would be given legal status and that the Chief Minister had even signed a file to that effect. KTR questioned what had happened

to that file and demanded answers. "Where is the file signed by the CM? If such an important document has disappeared, a SIT must be constituted immediately to trace it," he demanded.

He further argued that if a file signed by the Chief Minister himself had no value, the public could not trust the

administration. He remarked that every declaration made by the leader today carries zero value, accusing the Congress of failing to deliver despite claims that guarantees would be implemented within 100 days. "The Congress said each family would benefit to the tune of Rs 2.5 lakh. Even after over two years, can the government show a single family that has received such benefits?" he asked. He also alleged that false statements were being made in the House and urged the Speaker to ensure accountability, adding that the legislature must uphold truth. KTR alleged that the state administration had deteriorated over the past 28 months, accusing the government of mounting debts, financial mismanagement, and prioritising political propaganda over development.

He claimed that all that remains today are debts, dues, diversions, commissions, and bulldozer politics.

**Calls for accountability over missing file on key poll promises**

He ridiculed the government for spending Telangana's resources on political campaigns in other states while failing to secure funds from the Centre. "You go to Delhi not to secure funds but to offer them," he said.

He pointed out that Telangana, once among the fastest-growing states, was now witnessing a slowdown in revenues, including GST and vehicle registrations, attributing this to negative policies.

He further alleged that industries and IT employment were declining, dismissing investment summit claims as propaganda. He stated that Telangana itself bears the traces of KCR, which cannot be removed. Apart from making women crorepatris, he insisted the government should provide Rs 2,500 to women as promised. Finally, he accused the government of neglecting farmers and failing to ensure campus safety, warning against arrogance in power.

## Govt Whip Adi Srinivas to file complaint against KTR over luxury watch claims

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GOVERNMENT Whip Adi Srinivas on Tuesday said he would lodge a formal complaint with the Assembly Speaker against KTR, accusing him of spreading false propaganda regarding the cost of his wristwatch. Addressing the assembly media point, Srinivas alleged that a malicious and poisonous campaign was being carried out against him through social media platforms, including WhatsApp, with claims that he was wearing a luxury watch worth Rs 90 lakh. He clarified that the watch in question was a Michael Kors product and not a high-end Rolex, as falsely claimed by his detractors.

Srinivas further alleged

that the misinformation was aired on a platform identified as Dig TV and described the campaign as a deliberate attempt to defame him in violation of Assembly norms. He stated that he would meet the Speaker to file a complaint against KTR for orchestrating this propaganda. The Congress leader also claimed that the smear campaign was being run from outside the country and was aimed at undermining his efforts to expose alleged irregularities linked to the BRS. He asserted that he would not be intimidated and would continue to raise issues concerning the opposition.

Supporting Srinivas, Government Whip Ramachandru Naik accused KTR of deliberately targeting lead-

ers who actively participate in Assembly proceedings. He challenged the BRS leadership to substantiate their claims, dismissing the allegations as baseless. Naik further alleged that similar campaigns had earlier been carried out against other Congress leaders, including Seethakka. Meanwhile, Narekhal MLA Vemula Veeresham also criticised KTR, accusing him of misleading the public and using pink media to spread false narratives.

He demanded that the BRS leader withdraw his remarks against Adi Srinivas and issue an apology. The controversy has added to the ongoing political war of words between the ruling Congress and the opposition in Telangana.

# Harish Rao alleges ₹18,000 crore HAM road scam

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ALLEGING a massive scam worth Rs 18,000 crore in the name of HAM Roads, BRSLP deputy leader Harish Rao on Tuesday demanded that the government immediately cancel all current tenders. During an informal interaction with the media in the Assembly lobbies, he called for fresh tenders to be issued and a judicial inquiry conducted by a sitting judge of the High Court. The BRS leader specifically demanded the government scrap mobilisation advances given to contractors, alleging that the 10 per cent advance allows around Rs 1,800 crore to be released upfront. He



claimed this money is likely to be diverted for elections in other states, describing the situation as a Dhanayagnam.

Harish Rao alleged that a large-scale plan is being executed to loot thousands

of crores through commissions. He pointed out that while national highway tenders across the country usually go 20 to 30 per cent below the estimated cost, these specific tenders are going 15 to 20 per cent above, creating a 50 per cent variation. He raised serious doubts over the fact that tenders were cleared through departmental committees instead of receiving COT approval. Furthermore, he noted that the mobilisation advance has been increased from the previous 3 per cent to 10 per cent.

The BRS leader highlighted that technical bids for 24 out of 34 tenders have been opened, with 16 tenders seeing participation from only two bidders. He

alleged this clearly indicates a pre-arranged cartel or ring formation where contractors have colluded to quote higher prices. Rao also claimed that in Panchayat Raj works, tenders have already been pre-decided and distributed among specific companies. He noted that a previous 5 per cent ceiling on excess tender value has been removed, allowing for unlimited escalation. Companies such as Civite, Sarala, Brinda, and BVSR were named as part of the alleged cartel.

Harish Rao criticised the government for failing to repair potholed roads and pay contractors for completed works while allegedly facilitating this massive financial irregularity.

# Ponguleti dubs KTR 'brand ambassador' of dictators

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REVENUE Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Tuesday lashed out at the BRS MLA KT Rama Rao alleging that he was the brand ambassador for dictators and said that because of this arrogance his party lost successive elections.

The Minister intervening in a discussion on the motion of thanks to the Governor in the Assembly on Tuesday said that the BRS member was showing arrogance. He said that the BRS had lost every other election. On the defection of MLAs, Srinivasa Reddy said that the defections were first encouraged by the BRS itself.

Several Ministers inter-



vened to counter the comments of KTR during the discussion. When the BRS leader said that the government was aiming to create one lakh women as crorepatris, it will be \$100 trillion economy, the Finance Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said that the government had fixed a target of making one lakh women as crorepatris in five years and during the last

two years, they had spent Rs 57,000 crore giving interest free loans. Responding to this, KTR said that he would resign if the figures were correct.

Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka, along with Ministers Duddilla Sridhar Babu and Danasari Anasuya (Seethakka), responded to the points raised by BRS leader KTR regarding the promise to turn women into millionaires. Minister Seethakka suggested that women both within 'your family' (referring to Kavitha) and in society at large should be allowed to grow and prosper.

Legislative Affairs Minister D Sridhar Babu said that while the previous BRS government left pending interest subsidies on loans

amounting to Rs 3,000 crore, the current Congress government was now clearing those dues. He questioned why the BRS party was not participating in the programme for the distribution of interest-free loans.

Minister Danasari Anasuya (Seethakka) announced that the government disbursed Rs 57,000 crore in various forms of loans availed through the Stree Nidhi and Bank Linkage schemes. She further informed that, specifically under the interest-free loan category, funds amounting to Rs 1,121 crore were released to date. She criticized the previous BRS government, accusing it of deceiving women by failing to pay the Rs 3,000 crore in pending interest subsidies.



## BACK TO BASICS

A man collects dry branches along the roadside at Srinagar Colony in Hyderabad on Saturday, as the shortage of LPG cylinders forces households to fall back on firewood, even in today's tech-driven era

Photo: Srinivas Setty

## Speaker advises BRS to challenge defection ruling in higher court

HYDERABAD: SPEAKER Gaddam Prasad Kumar on Tuesday suggested that BRS members should challenge his decision regarding defection petitions against their party MLAs in a higher court if they felt aggrieved. The defection issue surfaced during the discussion on the motion of thanks to the Governor's address when BRS member KT R was speaking about alleged attacks on party work-

ers during recent elections. The Speaker intervened, advising KT R against using newspaper clippings for discussions in the House and urged him to move past mud-slinging tactics to utilise the given opportunity effectively.

Responding to the Speaker, KT R noted that while the party respects the Chair, a BRS MLA had contested on another party's ticket. The Speaker countered by com-

paring his role to a judge, stating that if a judgment is unsatisfactory, the aggrieved party should approach a different court. He criticised the BRS for levelling allegations without thoroughly reading his judgment and appealed for a decrease in such questioning. He clarified that he had refrained from addressing the media despite the comments made against his decision.

The BRS leader maintained his individual respect for the Speaker, acknowledging their friendship, but asserted his right to question the decision as a member. He argued that in a democracy, questioning is a fundamental responsibility. KT R concluded by affirming that the BRS would definitely challenge the ruling in the High Court. This exchange highlights the growing tension over legislative defections and the procedural boundaries within the Assembly as both sides defend their respective constitutional and democratic mandates.