

3 ANDHRA VILLAGES LEAD RAINWATER REVOLUTION

- Murugummi, Marella and Thangella boost groundwater with over 260 water structures, storing nearly 30 lakh cubic metres
- Community-driven efforts like pond revival, rooftop harvesting, crop planning lifted agriculture, dairy, and livelihoods for 5,900 residents
- Murugummi won 2nd-best panchayat at Water Awards 2024; Marella and Thangella also earned honours

NEW DELHI

THREE villages from the coastal district of Prakasam in Andhra Pradesh have emerged as models of water resilience through community-led rainwater conservation initiatives implemented under the 'Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari' campaign, the Jal Shakti ministry said on Thursday.

The ministry noted that villages such as Murugummi, Marella, and Thangella have significantly improved groundwater availability, strengthened livelihoods and reduced distress migration through sustained community participation.

Highlighting the outcomes, the ministry said that Murugummi saw the



construction of 71 water conservation structures with a cumulative storage capacity of about 8.11 lakh cubic metres, providing protective irrigation to 264.5 hectares of agricultural land. In Marella, 53 such structures were developed with a cumulative storage capacity of around 10.04 lakh cubic metres, enhancing agricultural sustainability across 220.5 hectares, it

said, adding that renovation of community ponds and tanks contributed an additional 5.95 lakh cubic metres of storage capacity.

Thangella recorded the construction of 71 water conservation structures with a storage capacity of about 5.89 lakh cubic metres, supporting irrigation across 185.3 hectares, while the revival of traditional water bodies added around



A water conservation structure in Marella

3.98 lakh cubic metres more, the ministry said.

The initiative has improved groundwater levels, benefiting around 5,900 people by enhancing access to water for domestic and agricultural purposes, the ministry said in a statement. Earlier, these villages faced acute water scarcity due to erratic rainfall, declining groundwater levels and frequent borewell failures, adversely affecting agriculture and livelihoods, it said.

The ministry said the situation began to change with active community mobilisation through gram sabhas, door-to-door awareness campaigns, Kalajathas (traditional folk theatre), workshops and field demonstrations. Farmers, women, youth and local institutions collectively adopted practices such as water budgeting, crop planning and groundwater sharing, fostering a strong sense of ownership, the statement added. Adopting a ridge-to-valley approach, the villages implemented a range of rainwater harvesting and conservation measures to capture, store and recharge rainwater, including percolation tanks, farm ponds, staggered trenches, rooftop rainwater harvesting systems and the rejuvenation of community ponds. It also led to enhanced agricultural productivity, increased milk production supporting dairy activities, restoration of soil moisture and reduction in distress migration as livelihood opportunities improved, the statement said. Murugummi village was conferred the second-best village panchayat award at the sixth National Water Awards, 2024, while Marella was among the top 30 villages, and Thangella was nominated for national recognition, it added. (PTI)

War of words erupts as Atchanna targets Jagan, YSRCP hits back

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

A fierce political confrontation erupted after agriculture minister K Atchanna made allegations against YSRCP chief Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, triggering a strong and emotional rebuttal from senior YSRCP leader Botcha Satyanarayana.

Addressing a press conference, Atchanna claimed that even leaders within former chief minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy's own party such as Botcha Satyanarayana, in the past, raised suspicions about Jagan Mohan Reddy's role in his father's death. He alleged that Jagan was driven by an unrestrained ambition for power and would "stop at nothing" to become chief minister. The minister further revived past political controversies, accusing Jagan of amassing wealth during YSR's tenure between 2004 and 2009 by leveraging his father's position. He also questioned Jagan's conduct during the period when YSR's helicopter went missing in September 2009, demanding clarity on his whereabouts at that critical time.

Atchanna also alleged that even before YSR's death was officially confirmed, efforts were allegedly underway to mobilize support for Jagan's elevation as chief minister. He also referred to attacks on a private company establishments following allegations



Minister K Atchanna speaking to media at the Secretariat on Thursday



YSRCP MLC Botcha Satyanarayana addressing a press conference in Visakhapatnam

made at the time, and later political developments involving individuals linked to the same corporate group. In a further escalation, the TDP leader drew parallels with the murder of Y S Vivekananda Reddy, suggesting a pattern of political ambition overriding relationships, remarks that added fuel to the already intense political confrontation.

Reacting strongly, YSRCP senior leader and Leader of Opposition in Legislative Council Botcha Satyanarayana lashed out at Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and the TDP, accusing them of resorting to "cheap and disgraceful politics" for political mileage. Satyanarayana turned emotional while recalling YSR, visibly moved as he condemned the remarks. "Is this the level of politics? Don't they feel ashamed?" he said, alleging that the ruling party was deliberately making provocative statements to divert attention from the positive discussions around the MAVIGUN (Machilipatnam-Vijayawada-Guntur) proposal put forward by Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Satyanarayana asserted that the aggressive response from TDP leaders indicated political insecurity. "The intention is clear - divert the MAVIGUN debate and indulge in personal attacks. There is nothing beyond that," he said.

He also criticised the repeated references to the late YS Rajasekhara Reddy, calling it inappropriate to drag a leader who passed away 15 years ago into current political battles. "Political discourse should have limits. Using deceased leaders for gain reflects the fall in standards," he said.

Rejecting the allegations, Satyanarayana maintained that leadership discussions after YSR's death were natural and that several senior leaders at the time had proposed Jagan's name. He said there were still witnesses who could testify to those developments.

The YSRCP leader further accused TDP ministers of holding frequent press conferences to make "baseless and inflammatory" statements instead of focusing on governance. "If you work well, people will support you. Let the public decide," he added.

TTD plans expansion of Srivari Seva, ranking system for sevaks

PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI
TIRUPATI

TIRUMALA Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) executive officer M Ravichandra announced plans to expand the Srivari Seva programme and introduce a ranking system for Srivari Sevaks based on their performance, enabling them to serve in key areas of the temple, including the sanctum surroundings. Speaking to The Hans India, the EO said the initiative aims to strengthen volunteer services and improve pilgrim management across temples.

The EO said that, as sug-

- EO Ravichandra says higher-ranked volunteers may serve in key temple areas, including sanctum surroundings
- The Seva to be linked with nearly 27,000 temples under endowments dept
- Focus is on accommodation facilities for middle-class devotees in Tirumala

gested by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, the Srivari Sevak system will be expanded by linking it with nearly 27,000 temples under the endowments department. Volunteers will be engaged in various services such as regulating pilgrim queues during special occasions, assisting devotees, and even performing small ser-

vices like preparing flower garlands.

Based on their dedication and performance, sevaks will be assigned ranks, and higher-ranked volunteers may be given opportunities to serve in important locations within the Tirumala temple.

Ravichandra also said TTD is focusing on improv-



TTD executive officer M Ravichandra

ing accommodation facilities for middle-class devotees. At present, lodging options in Tirumala largely cater to upper, upper-middle, lower-income, and poor sections, while affordable rooms for the middle class are limited. He clarified that no new buildings will be constructed on the hill, but old and dilapidated structures will be rebuilt and allocated to middle-class pilgrims at reasonable rents. Future expansion of accommodation facilities will mainly take place in Tirupati.

The EO stressed the need to ensure a smoother darshan experience so that

devotees get at least a few moments to pray before Lord Venkateswara. Currently, only 15 to 16 hours a day are available for darshan after accounting for daily rituals, and these rituals cannot be reduced as they follow Agama traditions.

However, changes may be considered in certain Arjitha Sevaks introduced mainly for revenue generation. Since TTD's financial position is stable, some paid services may be modified or conducted in seclusion so that darshan can continue during those periods, after consultations with Agama scholars and Hindu religious heads.

Ravichandra further said TTD is studying pilgrim footprint patterns over the past decade to increase daily darshan capacity. By identifying days with lower crowd levels and issuing more tokens in Tirupati during less crowded periods on the hill, the number of devotees can be increased.

With the help of artificial intelligence technology, TTD aims to gradually raise the daily pilgrim count from the present 80,000 to 90,000 and eventually to one lakh devotees, while ensuring all decisions strictly follow Agama rules and regulations.

Jeevan Reddy set to join BRS; says endured humiliation for 20 months

- Says experienced leaders key for Telangana's growth; move could boost BRS strength

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

IN a significant political development, the BRS is set to strengthen its base in north Telangana, with senior leader T Jeevan Reddy confirming his decision to join the party, dealing a blow to the ruling Congress party.

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Thursday visited the residence of veteran Congress leader T Jeevan Reddy in Jagtial to invite him to join the BRS on behalf of party president K Chandrashekar Rao.

Jeevan Reddy expressed gratitude to BRS working president KT Rama Rao for visiting his residence. Speaking to the media along with KT Rama Rao and BRS leaders on the occasion, he said resigning from the Congress party was an emotional decision but expressed happiness at joining BRS.

He stated that he endured humiliation over the past 20 months with patience and added that, having seen

KTR visits Jagtial to invite him to join the pink party



BRS working president KT Rama Rao with Jeevan Reddy in Jagtial on Thursday

many governments, he believes the present government is moving in a regressive direction. Jeevan Reddy said his decision was based on public opinion and expressed happiness at the opportunity to work under KCR's leadership.

On the other hand, KTR emphasised that for farmers and the poor in the state to regain stability and happiness, KCR must return

as Chief Minister. He said experienced leaders like Jeevan Reddy are essential for rebuilding Telangana's growth trajectory.

Highlighting Jeevan Reddy's political journey, KTR noted that he has served the Congress party for over four decades with commitment. He also recalled that KCR had invited him to join BRS even before the 2014 elections, but he continued in

Congress at the time due to his loyalty to the party. KTR elaborated on the long-standing personal bond between KCR and Jeevan Reddy, built over four decades of mutual respect.

Recalling that during KCR's first official tour of Karimnagar district as Chief Minister in 2014, development works requested by Jeevan Reddy, despite being in the opposition, were im-

mediately sanctioned—reflecting statesmanship beyond party lines.

He also highlighted Jeevan Reddy's strong advocacy for farmers in the Assembly and his consistent fight on issues like Nizam Sugars. KTR recalled that KCR had even offered to support the revival of the sugar factory under a cooperative model, inspired by Maharashtra, with financial backing and leadership responsibility to Jeevan Reddy if he wished.

KTR thanked the Jagtial district leadership for proactively supporting the initiative and inviting Jeevan Reddy into the party fold.

He appreciated their commitment to strengthening the party and working towards bringing BRS back to power, stating that Jeevan Reddy's entry would significantly strengthen the party.

KTR strongly condemned remarks made by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, stating that such comments were inappropriate and unbecoming of a person holding the highest office in the state.

He accused the Chief Minister of using language that insults the dignity of women and goes against Telangana's cultural values.

Mahesh slams Jeevan's criticism of Revanth Reddy

Who is he to ask CM to step down, ask PCC chief

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD:

TELANGANA Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president B. Mahesh Kumar Goud termed senior leader T. Jeevan Reddy's remarks against the Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy inappropriate, and asked him to introspect on how Congress contributed to his political career.

"Who is Jeevan Reddy to ask CM Revanth Reddy to step down? The Chief Minister was elected by all the MLAs. Such criticism is not justified," Mr. Goud said, adding that people were not taking Mr. Jeevan Reddy's allegations seriously.

In an informal chat with reporters at Gandhi Bhavan, he said the Congress had issued B-form to Jeevan Reddy on 14 occasions, enabling him to contest elections as the party's official candidate. "Senior leaders who have taken B-forms 14 times from the Congress should remember their own political journey before criticising the party," he said.

The TPCC chief alleged that the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were not different from



each other and they might join hands in the near future. "BRS and BJP are not separate. They may come together tomorrow. No one has benefited under BJP's

leadership," he said, attributing the BRS' electoral defeat to the public's desire for change and growing awareness of alleged corruption during its tenure.

CENTRAL ORGANIZATION FOR RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION
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E-Tender Notice Date: 07.04.2026

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