Enforce SC orders, stop TDP's poll violence: YSRCP

- Sajjala cites 76 incidents across 11 districts during nominations
- Seeks action against officials accused of favouring the ruling party
- Welcomes Supreme Court directives and demands free, fair polls

Hans News Service
Amaravati

YSRCP state coordinator Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy welcomed the Supreme Court's intervention in Andhra Pradesh's local elections and demanded that the State Election Commission exercise its powers, protect candidates and remove officials serving the ruling party.

Addressing the media at party central office on Wednesday, Ramakrishna Reddy highlighted 76 incidents across 11 districts during ZPTC and MPTC nominations, including attacks, arrests, house confinement, threats and destruction of nomination papers.

YSR Kadapa district accounted for 22 incidents, Palnadu 18, Annamayya and Tirupati 11 each, with the remainder across seven districts. YSRCP would submit these developments to the Supreme Court and seek transfers or removal from election duties of responsible officials. Municipal nomination obstruction, arbitrary rejection during scrutiny and threats forcing withdrawals were now recurring in parishad elections. Candidates

YSRCP state coordinator Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy speaking to the media at the party central office in Tadepalli on Wednesday

withdrew under police pressure and threats of fabricated narcotics and other criminal cases, rather than unwillingness to contest. Overlapping municipal withdrawal and parishad nomination schedules compounded confusion.

Ramakrishna Reddy welcomed postponement of final candidate lists until October 25, a decision on nomination complaints by October 22, CCTV coverage and compliance reporting by October 27. Merely forwarding complaints to the same police authorities was ineffective; the SEC must demand records from Collectors and SPs and enforce accountability.

Citing stone attacks near YSR Kadapa's zilla parishad office and papers torn inside nomination centres in Narasaraopet and elsewhere, he challenged Chandrababu's attempt to blame YSRCP. Ruling-party groups operated with police support, while victims faced cases and leaders faced confinement.

He condemned the use of hired interstate groups, including workers brought from Bihar, to create violence and rejected attempts to equate them with licensed security personnel. YSRCP's restraint reflected strength and democratic commitment.

Expressing confidence in courts and constitutional institutions, Ramakrishna Reddy warned against distortion of the ruling and demanded immediate SEC action so candidates could contest freely without repeatedly seeking judicial intervention to protect electoral participation.

POTENTIAL FEDERAL HATE CRIME

US lawmakers urge FBI to probe temple shooting plot

Washington

A bipartisan-free Democratic-led group of 105 US lawmakers has urged the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to investigate an attempted mass shooting at a Hindu temple in Aurora, Illinois, as a potential federal hate crime, citing concerns over anti-Indian, anti-Hindu and broader anti-South Asian hostility. Alexandros Paporakis, 19, was arrested on October 11 for plotting a mass shooting at the Sri Venkateswara Swami (Balaji) temple. Led by Indian American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, the lawmakers sent a letter dated October 20 to FBI Director Kash Patel seeking details of the Bureau's investigation into the alleged plot at the Sri Venkateswara Swami (Balaji) Hindu temple. They also called for greater scrutiny of credible online threats against Indian Americans, Hindu Americans, Sikhs and other South Asian communities.

Krishnamoorthi and his family were worshipping at the temple when the alleged attempted attack occurred on October 11, according to a statement issued by the congressman's office.

"The alleged combination of targeted racial hatred, a religious setting, and preparations for mass violence demands a comprehensive federal response," the lawmakers wrote, urging the FBI to ensure that potential hate-crime violations receive explicit attention.

The letter was signed by members of Congress from across the country, including the entire Illinois House Democratic delegation, every Indian American member of Congress, and senators Dick Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Andy Kim and Chris Van Hollen.

According to rosecutors, Alexandros Paporakis, a resident of Palatine, Illinois, drove to the temple on October 11 intending to carry out a shooting but fled after his rifle allegedly failed to fire. Statements from local police departments and the FBI's Chicago field office said Paporakis was arrested that day and subsequently charged with making a terrorist threat and unlawful possession of weapons. Prosecutors allege that he authored an eight-page manifesto expressing white supremacist views and describing violence against people of Indian descent at a Hindu house of worship.

BLAMING MUSLIMS FOR FRENCH ARSON

Macron blasts Trump for stupid claims on riots

Paris

PRESIDENT Emmanuel Macron said on Wednesday that foreign leaders - including those "on the other side of the Atlantic" - were seeking to exploit France's tense social climate for political gain following a weekend of street violence and looting.

Protests over soaring living costs have led to widespread rioting and looting that have drawn worldwide attention and shocked many French citizens.

US President Donald Trump has used the violence to rally his political supporters, making unsubstantiated claims that Muslim migrants are responsible for the unrest, and urging Macron to "close your borders and take control before it is too late!"

Macron responded by saying there "has been foreign manipulation of information in the aftermath" of the looting in Paris and other French cities last weekend.

"And that has led to comments that are as unacceptable as they are stupid, from many people, including foreign leaders," he said. Asked by a reporter if he was referring to Trump, Macron replied: "Among others."

He added that there have been "AI-generated images depicting scenes that never actually happened in France. We've had people claiming that we were invaded by hordes of migrants and Islamists, which is completely false." Macron did not specify which AI-generated images he was referring to, nor how he knew the content was false.

VIT open applications for VITEEE 2027

Chennai

THE Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) opened applications for VITEEE 2027, inviting aspiring engineers to take the next step toward their dream careers.

According to a press release, students can now apply online at https://viteee.vit.ac.in for admission to VIT's flagship engineering programs offered across its campuses in Vellore, Chennai, Amaravati (AP) and Bhopal (MP).

The VITEEE 2027 will be conducted in a single phase, scheduled from April 28 - May 2, 2027. The exam will be held in 133

test cities across India and at 9 international centres, providing opportunities for candidates from India and abroad to appear for the entrance exam, the release said.

Rubio pushes energy ties, Venezuelan crude

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He spent a few hours in Jamnagar before departing for the United States.

Almost the entire Ambani family, led by billionaire Reliance chairman Mukesh Ambani, welcomed the US delegation. Those present included his wife, Nita Ambani, daughter Isha Ambani and her husband, Anand Piramal, and younger son Anant Ambani and his wife, Radhika Merchant, along with Reliance Industries Executive Director PMS Prasad and US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor.

Akash Ambani, Mukesh Ambani's eldest son and managing director of Jio Platforms, was overseeing the opening of the telecom giant's initial public offering (IPO). Rubio arrived in Jamnagar a day after describing India as a crude-refining "superpower" and urging it to process more Venezuelan oil. Officials have described the Ambani-hosted programme as a "private visit", and neither side released details of the itinerary.

The visit comes as Washington seeks to increase sales of American energy to India, encourage the processing of Western Hemisphere crude and strengthen commercial ties with Reliance, a major buyer of internationally traded oil and a leading exporter of refined fuels. It also coincides with pressure on US diesel prices ahead of the midterm elections.

Gor said American liquefied petroleum gas had risen sharply as a share of India's imports. "Over the past year, India's imports of US LPG have surged from under 10 per cent to 67 per cent, making the United States India's largest LPG supplier," he said in a post on X. He also highlighted Reliance's planned investment in a new refinery in Texas as an opportunity to expand US energy production and create jobs.

Rubio told Reliance-owned Network18 that Washington wanted to work more closely with Reliance on refining energy from the Western Hemisphere, describing such cooperation as beneficial to both countries.

POTENTIAL FEDERAL HATE CRIME

'NDA will abide by SEC decision on ULB polls'

K Varaprasada Rao
Amaravati

THE ruling NDA alliance in Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday night declared that it will abide by any decision taken by the State Election Commission (SEC) on the urban local body elections, even as it accused the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) of attempting to obstruct the electoral process through repeated litigation and alleged acts of violence. In a joint statement issued in the names of Chief Minister and TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu, deputy chief minister and Jana Sena president K Pawan Kalyan, and BJP state president PVN Madhav, the alliance reiterated its commitment to conducting elections in a peaceful, transparent and democratic manner. It said the three constituent parties would extend full cooperation to the SEC and respect its decision.

The alliance stressed that conducting local body elections within the stipulated timeframe was important not only for democratic representation but also for securing funds from the 16th Finance Commission and the Central government.

The NDA leaders alleged that the YSRCP had been attempting to stall the elections from the outset and had approached various courts 59 times in pursuit of that objective. They further accused the opposition party of provoking violence at several places after the electoral process began, including attacks on police personnel and the digging up of roads constructed for public use. The statement contrasted the current election process with local body polls held during the previous YSRCP government. It alleged that opposition candidates had then faced intimidation and obstruction while filing nominations, enabling the ruling party to claim unopposed victories.

The alliance also referred to a letter reportedly written by the then state election commissioner to the Central government regarding alleged irregularities in unanimous elections. It said central forces had been deployed following a request for protection from the then SEC. The NDA leaders said their parties had faith in democratic institutions and would support the election process in accordance with the Constitution. They maintained that voters should be able to elect their representatives freely and that local bodies should become effective instruments for delivering development and welfare.

Foreign forces behind regime change narrative: BJP

New Delhi

THE BJP on Wednesday alleged that a "clear nexus" had emerged between forces within and outside India that were opposed to the country's growing global influence. Party national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi accused them of seeking to destabilise the country by creating social divisions and attacking its cultural and religious traditions.

Addressing the media at the BJP headquarters, Trivedi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Vijayadashami message had highlighted three defining characteristics of such forces: "loot after coming to power, division in society and hatred towards Indian culture and Hinduism".

He alleged that some groups were pursuing campaigns against Sanatan Dharma and "global Hindutva", while also questioning the credibility of Indian institutions. Trivedi cited repeated allegations concerning the SBI, SEBI, vaccines, EVMs and electoral bonds as examples of what he described as a pattern of attempts to discredit institutions.

Using the imagery of Ravana's multiple heads, Trivedi argued that such campaigns could not be understood merely through their individual demands. "Fulfil one demand and another demand will emerge," he said, arguing that the "real source" behind different protests and campaigns had to be identified.

He alleged that forces opposed to India's progress were using different "disguises" and that their stated demands were not their ultimate objective. Referring to calls for "regime change", he alleged that some of these forces ultimately sought to promote violent conflict, political destabilisation and social fragmentation.

The BJP spokesperson also invoked the Ramayana to underline his argument that the apparent form in which a threat presented itself could conceal its real objective.

Naidu calls upon AP Police to set nat'l benchmark

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He directed the police to act firmly against rowdy elements disturbing public order and individuals harassing others through social media.

Describing the khaki uniform as a symbol of responsibility and reassurance, he said criminals should fear the police, while victims should feel confident of receiving protection and justice. He recalled the force's contribution to controlling factional violence, tackling Naxalism and preventing communal clashes, and congratulated the AP Counterintelligence wing for exposing recent conspiracies threatening national security.

Stressing the need to modernise policing, Naidu said investigative methods must evolve alongside changing crime patterns. Cybercriminals were siphoning off people's hard-earned savings through phone calls, links and messages, with even educated people falling victim to fraud. He called for wider use of CCTV cameras, data analytics, drones and artificial intelligence to improve surveillance, crime detection and investigations. He expressed the aspiration that Andhra Pradesh Police should gain nationwide recognition for adopting advanced technologies.

People approached police stations in distress, fear and tears, expecting solutions to their problems. Police personnel must listen patiently, treat complainants with dignity and resolve grievances promptly, he said.

He also emphasised women's safety, asserting that technology-driven policing would have little meaning unless women could live without fear. He assured the families of police martyrs and serving personnel of the government's continued support and commitment to their welfare. Ensuring uninterrupted public safety, he said, would be the most meaningful tribute to fallen officers.

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, DGP Harish Kumar Gupta and other officials paid floral tributes at the police martyrs' memorial.

YSRCP distorting SC verdict: Naidu

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Naidu described Jagan and his associates as "criminal litigants" and alleged that the opposition leader was conspiring to create disturbances while the NDA was concentrating on selecting strong candidates. He claimed that the YSRCP approached courts whenever its attempts to disrupt the electoral process were thwarted, and urged people to reject "politics aimed at undermining democracy".

Citing the YSRCP's legal challenges over electoral rolls and the BC reservations, Naidu alleged that the party had filed nearly 60 petitions in the High Court and the Supreme Court. He accused its leaders of obstructing the Mega DSC recruitment process through hundreds of petitions and attempting to stall projects such as Amaravati and Polavaram.

In a series of teleconferences with party leaders, Naidu directed the TDP cadre to work towards the victory of NDA candidates in the local body elections. He stressed coordination with Jana Sena and the BJP at every stage, from candidate selection to the declaration of results, and called for disputes over seat-sharing to be resolved amicably. Warning rebels, Naidu said those filing nominations against officially selected alliance nominees should withdraw their payers; otherwise, they would be suspended. He assured party aspirants who had failed to secure tickets that they would be considered for nominated posts. He urged them to work collectively for the alliance's success.

With only a week remaining for campaigning, Naidu asked leaders and workers to intensify outreach across all municipalities and explain the government's welfare and developmental initiatives. He called on them to approach voters with the message, "We promised, and we have delivered."

The Chief Minister also instructed the cadre to highlight the alleged excesses of the previous YSRCP government and communicate the NDA government's achievements directly to people at the grassroots level. Naidu said the alliance had prioritised hardworking party workers while selecting candidates and called for sustained coordination to prevent internal differences from damaging the NDA' electoral prospects.

... dismisses India protests as internal matter

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They have elections here, so I'm not going to opine on their domestic political matters," he said in response to a question on protests from the opposition and students in India. Rubio said that even the US witnesses protests every day and that they are reflective of the political discourse and differences of opinion.

Court orders CJP leaders' release

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Earlier, CJP leaders withdrew their petition before the Delhi High Court challenging a special executive magistrate's decision to extend their judicial custody. Das and Ranka were taken into custody on October 13 after they allegedly climbed over a locked gate to enter Jantar Mantar, which had earlier been denotified as a designated protest site. CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke expressed solidarity with the group's co-convenors, saying they could not be with their families during the festive season. Dipke said that while some people might "troll" him, he was getting emotional because he "cares for" Das and Ranka and considers them as his family.

HDFC probe finds senior execs leaked confidential info

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"In line with our policies, an internal review into this matter is currently underway to gather and evaluate all relevant facts," the spokesperson said, according to Bloomberg. "Appropriate action will be taken based on the findings, once the review is complete."

Punjab CM detained at Delhi airport, fined ₹50K

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Baltej Pannu, AAP's media in-charge in Punjab, alleged that Mann was kept waiting at the airport under the pretext that his luggage was still arriving and being checked. "When Mann returned from Paris and arrived at the Delhi airport, he was deliberately detained for three hours. Excuses were made that 'your luggage is still arriving' and 'your luggage is still being checked'," Pannu said in a statement.

He further claimed that officials approached Mann just as he was about to leave the airport after loading his luggage into a vehicle. "After three hours, when Mann was allowed to leave and was about to depart after placing his luggage in a vehicle, officials came running after him and said that they were under 'tremendous pressure from above'," Pannu alleged.

AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj also alleged that Mann was made to wait at the airport after travelling to Paris to promote Punjab's products. In a post on X, Bharadwaj said the chief minister's visit came after he challenged the Centre's decision to deny him political clearance for the trip. "Mann Saab stopped at Indian Airport for around 3 hours. Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann went to Paris to launch Punjab's products at Paris. This was after he challenged Centre's not granting him the NOC. This arrogance of Centre must end. Even Ravan's arrogance ended on Dussehra.," Saurabh Bharadwaj said in the post.

According to the AAP leader, officials subsequently issued a challan of Rs 50,000. He argued that their alleged admission of pressure indicated that the episode had been carried out under instructions from higher authorities. "Has any chief minister of an Indian state ever been detained at an airport for three hours in this manner? Has any chief minister of a state ever been disrespected by being issued a challan of Rs 50,000?" Pannu asked, calling the incident an insult to Punjab.