

DROUGHT DEFIED

Nellore farmer beats dry spell with natural farming

- Sows 25 crop varieties using Pre-Monsoon Dry Sowing, surviving a 4-month drought with only 12 mm of rain
- Earns over Rs 20,000 in net returns from just 0.30 acres of field crops and fruit-bearing bund plantations
- Keeps soil temperatures at a cool 31.88°C, over 20°C lower than neighboring conventional and barren fields

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

EVEN after four months without significant rainfall and with no irrigation facility, a farmer in Nellore district has demonstrated how natural farming practices can help sustain crops and generate income under challenging cli-



E Srinivasulu from Mahimaluru village in Atmakur mandal succeeds to overcome to the impact of El Nino by adopting natural farming method

matic conditions. Forty four-year-old farmer E Srinivasulu from Mahimaluru village in Atmakur mandal has relied on Pre-Monsoon Dry Sowing (PMDS), crop diversification, soil-cover management and bund plantations to build resilience against prolonged dry spells associated with El Niño conditions.

Srinivasulu's journey into natural farming began in

2017 after years of struggling with rising input costs and uncertain returns from chemical farming. Introduced to the approach by community resource person Venkatarami Reddy, he initially experimented on 50 cents of land, harvesting 540 kg of paddy. Encouraged by the results, he expanded the practices and later became an internal community resource person to

guide other farmers. For the past eight years, he has adopted PMDS to make effective use of available soil moisture. On April 18 and 19, 2026, he sowed 25 crop varieties on 0.30 acres using pelletised seeds and applied 150 kg of Ghanajeevamrutham. The major crops included indigo, vempali, dhaincha, sunhemp and red gram.

The field received just 12 mm of rainfall on May 31, with no subsequent rainfall or irrigation during the reported dry spell.

Despite the conditions, the diversified farm continued to provide produce and fodder, while additional returns from standing crops were expected. His six-foot-wide bunds, planted with mango, banana, amla, jamun, sapota, guava and drumstick, provide additional produce and income. The plantations also contribute to biodiversity and act as barriers

against hot winds. Srinivasulu reported crop returns of approximately Rs 15,210 from the 0.30-acre plot. After deducting Rs 2,000 towards seeds and Ghanajeevamrutham, the estimated net income from field crops stood at Rs 13,210.

Bund plantations generated an additional reported income of Rs 7,750, taking the combined reported and expected returns to around Rs 20,960.

Soil temperature readings were recorded at 31.88°C on his Natural Farming plot, compared with 55.80°C on barren land and 51.78°C on conventional farmland.

His experience highlights how crop diversity, soil cover, bio-inputs and bund plantations can help rainfed farmers manage climatic uncertainty, support livestock and household needs, and create multiple income streams despite limited water availability.

DASARI SRINIVASA RAO
VIJAYAWADA

THE nomination process for Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituency (ZPTC) and Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituency (MPTC) elections gathered momentum in NTR and Krishna districts on Thursday, with 103 nominations filed for ZPTC seats on the second day. The cumulative number of nominations in the two districts reached 122, with 57 in NTR and 65 in Krishna, including those filed on the first day.

In NTR district, 53 nominations were filed on Thursday for the 16 ZPTC segments, taking the total to 57. Kanchikacherla received the highest number of nominations on the day at seven, followed by Gampalagudem with six. Veerullapadu and Ibrahimpatnam received five nominations each, while Jaggayyapeta and Vatsavai received four each.

Mylavaram, Vijayawada Rural, Tiruvuru and A Konduru received three nominations each on



TDP senior leader Murakonda Edukondala Rao of Gani Atkuru village files his nomination as the party's candidate for the Kanchikacherla ZPTC seat before Returning Officer Suseela at the NTR Zilla Parishad office in Vijayawada on Thursday

Thursday. Penuganchiprolu, Chandralapadu, Reddigudem and Vissannapeta recorded two nominations each, while Nandigama received one. No nominations had been filed for the G Konduru ZPTC segment till Thursday. In Krishna district, 50 nominations were filed on Thursday for the 26 ZPTC segments, taking the cumulative tally to 65.

Candidates from the

ruling NDA constituents — the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Jana Sena and BJP — as well as the YSRCP, Left parties and Congress filed nominations accompanied by party leaders and supporters.

With Friday, October 23, being the last day for filing nominations, officials expect a rush at the centres and are taking steps to maintain law and order and facilitate the process.

SEC, police changed stance with SC intervention: Ambati

VL SYAMSUNDAR
GUNTUR

FORMER minister and YSRCP Guntur district president Ambati Rambabu said that incidents of irregularities had taken place at 19 locations during the municipal election nomination process. Following the Supreme Court's directions, the election process had been temporarily stayed at the affected locations, but not across all constituencies. He alleged that the Election Commission and the police had changed their stance only after the Supreme Court intervened.

Addressing the media here on Thursday, he claimed that public opposition to the ruling alliance

was growing while support for the YSRCP was increasing. He alleged that Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu was encouraging lawlessness.

He urged IAS and IPS officers to correct their mistakes, warning that a future YSRCP government would not spare officials responsible for wrongdoing and would bring them before the court. He alleged that alliance leaders were using the police to threaten opposition candidates and prevent them from filing nominations at several places.

He said the YSRCP would contest 76 seats in Guntur and claimed that the elections were being conducted under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

SARAS MELA

Every Lakhpati Didi has a success story: Collector

DASARI SRINIVASA RAO
VIJAYAWADA

EVERY Lakhpati Didi participating in the National SARAS Ajeevika Mela in Vijayawada has a success story to share, NTR District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha said on Thursday, describing the fair as a successful platform for rural women entrepreneurs.

The national-level exhibition, being held at Punnami Ghat, has been receiving an encouraging response from visitors over the past 10 days. Addressing a media conference at the venue, the Collector said the fair had recorded business transactions worth more than Rs 6 crore during this period.

He said it was a matter of



Collector Dr G Lakshmisha addressing the media at the National SARAS Mela venue at Punnami Ghat on Thursday

pride that a national-level SARAS Mela was being organised outside Delhi and the National Capital Region for the first time, with the support of the Union and State governments. Since its inauguration by President Droupadi Murmu, the fair has attracted visitors in large numbers, he added.

The exhibition features

products showcased by self-help group women entrepreneurs from various States and Union Territories. Around 600 stalls have been set up, offering a wide range of handloom products, handicrafts and other items. The India Food Court has emerged as a major attraction, serving traditional cuisines from different parts of the country.



TDP state leader Madigani Gurunadham addressing a press conference at Vijayawada Press Club on Thursday

YSRCP using ABV to divide communities: Madigani

DASARI SRINIVASA RAO
VIJAYAWADA

TELUGU Desam Party (TDP) state leader Madigani Gurunadham accused the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) of allegedly using retired IPS officer AB Venkateswara Rao, an independent candidate for Vijayawada Mayor's post, to create divisions between the Kamma and Kapu communities.

Addressing a press conference at Vijayawada Press Club on Thursday, Gurunadham objected to Venkateswara Rao's recent remarks against Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and TDP general secretary Nara Lokesh. He alleged that the retired officer was echoing the YSRCP's language and attempting to damage the TDP politically.

Defending Naidu's handling of the aftermath of the Hudhud cyclone, Gurunadham said the Chief Minister had worked from Visakhapatnam for several days to restore essential services and rehabilitate the city.

He described Venkateswara Rao's criticism of Naidu's response to flooding as politically motivated.

Collector holds meet with political parties

VL SYAMSUNDAR
GUNTUR

DISTRICT collector and District Election Officer CM Sai Kanth Varma said that the election process in the district was continuing peacefully.

He addressed a meeting with the representatives of various political parties at the Collectorate here on Thursday. General observer Veerabrahmaiah and expenditure observer Nandini Salaria also took part. Speaking on this occasion, he explained

the election process and said that appropriate action would be taken based on the information and feedback provided by political party representatives regarding the conduct of the local body elections. He said voter slips would be distributed soon.

District Revenue Officer NSK Khajavali, GMC additional commissioner I Kishore, Congress representative Botla Brahmaiah, TDP representatives Kancherla Sivaramayya, N Omkar, and representatives of various political parties were present.

Digital training for visually impaired students begins

MV SYAM SUNDAR
VIJAYAWADA

THE HEPSN wing of Andhra Loyola College, in collaboration with Benetech – Bookshare, USA, inaugurated a three-day Advanced Digital Training Workshop for visually impaired students. Running from Thursday, the programme aims to empower students with modern digital skills and assistive technology.

Inaugurating the event, chief resource person G Kumaresan highlighted how specialised digital training enables visually impaired learners to independently navigate higher education and access academic resources.



Customised Laptops being distributed to students

es. College leaders Rector Fr Royappa and Correspondent Fr Dr Francis Xavier reaffirmed their commitment to an inclusive campus.

A key highlight was the distribution of specialised laptops, sponsored by the Torchit Foundation, to 12

visually impaired students to help them write exams without scribes. Coordinated by Dr G Sahaya Baskaran, the workshop features practical sessions on screen-reading tools and accessible software led by trainers G Kumaresan, Prathusha and Nagababu.

‘Fear of defeat haunting YSRCP’

VL SYAMSUNDAR
NARASARAOPET

MP Lavu Sri Krishnadevarayalu urged YSRCP leaders to come forward and file their nominations to contest in the ensuing local body elections. He assured them of full support in filing their nominations. He said that every eligible person has the right to contest in the elections.

Several TDP candidates for ZPTC and MPTC seats in Narasaraopet, Palnadu district, filed their nominations along with their supporters on Thursday. MP Lavu Sri Krishnadevarayalu participated in the

programme and extended his support to the TDP candidates.

Speaking on the occasion, he expressed concern that no one from the YSRCP was coming forward to file nominations. He said every eligible person had the right to contest elections and emphasised that elections should be conducted freely and fairly.

He alleged that YSRCP leaders were resorting to provocative acts near nomination centres instead of coming forward to contest the elections.

He further said that YSRCP candidates were withdrawing their nominations due to fear of defeat.

Three prominent faces in race for mayor post

DASARI SRINIVASA RAO
VIJAYAWADA

THE Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) mayoral election has attracted considerable political attention, with three prominent personalities entering the fray for the prestigious post. The candidates, representing different political and professional backgrounds, are set to make the contest keenly watched in the city.

The NDA has backed Jana Sena Party candidate and former MLA Vangaveeti Radhakrishna, popularly known as Vangaveeti Radha, for the Vijayawada Mayor's post. He is the son of former MLA Vangaveeti Mohana Ranga Rao and

- The candidates, representing different political and professional backgrounds, are set to make the contest keenly watched in the city

former legislator Chennupati Ratna Kumari. Radha was elected to the Andhra Pradesh Assembly from Vijayawada East as a Congress candidate in 2004.

He later contested from Vijayawada Central on a Praja Rajyam Party ticket in 2009 and from Vijayawada East on a YSRCP ticket in 2014, losing on both occasions. Before the 2019 Assembly elections, he left



CPI, CPM and Congress support independent candidate and retired IPS officer AB Venkateswara Rao

the YSRCP and joined the TDP. As part of the seat-sharing arrangement within the NDA, the Vijayawada Mayor's post was allotted to the Jana Sena Party. Although Radha had been aspiring for the Mayor's post from the beginning, he



YSRCP candidate and former Mayor Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi

initially remained with the TDP. He subsequently quit the TDP and joined the Jana Sena Party. Later, Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan announced Radha's candidature for the Vijayawada Mayor's post. After a gap



TDP, BJP support Jana Sena Party candidate and former MLA Vangaveeti Radhakrishna

of 12 years, Radha has returned to the electoral arena, this time seeking the Mayor's post. He is campaigning alongside NDA leaders, seeking an opportu-

nity to serve the public and invoking the public service legacy of his parents.

The YSRCP has fielded former Mayor Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi, who held the office from 2021 to 2026. Drawing on her experience in municipal administration, she is highlighting the work undertaken during her five-year tenure while criticising what she describes as shortcomings in the NDA government's two years in power.

The third candidate, retired IPS officer and former Intelligence chief AB Venkateswara Rao, is contesting as an independent with the support of the CPI, CPM and Congress. His candidature has added

a distinct dimension to the contest, bringing a former senior police officer into the race for the city's top civic post.

The three candidates have distinct political and professional backgrounds, making the mayoral contest a closely watched event. Their respective support bases, public profiles and political networks are expected to shape the campaign as Vijayawada prepares for the municipal polls.

With the three prominent candidates in the race, the VMC mayoral election has become a focal point of political discussion, with the outcome drawing keen interest among residents and political observers.