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Jagan sounds poll bugle, targets 100% seats **page 7**

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'LS poll verdict must shock Cong'

KTR asks BRS cadres to ensure Congress, BJP are routed

STATE BUREAU
 HYDERABAD

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Saturday asked party workers and functionaries to ensure that the verdict of the State in the forthcoming parliamentary polls is a major shocker for the Congress.

Addressing a party meeting in the Jubilee Hills Assembly constituency, he said the Congress and BJP were working in the State as per an understanding.

Calling it a clear case of match-fixing between the two national parties, he said the Congress will field dummy candidates against the BJP bigwigs out to join the fray in the Lok Sabha elections in different constituencies in the State.

The two parties have been demonstrating a rare show of unity in working against the BRS because of their strong "Fevicol bonding". In a way, voting for the Congress would mean vot-

“ It is a clear case of match-fixing between the two national parties... The Congress will field dummy candidates against the BJP bigwigs out to join the fray in the Lok Sabha elections in different constituencies of the State

— KT RAMA RAO,
 BRS working president



ing for the BJP in the State. People should be wary of the machinations of both the Congress and BJP in the State, he said.

Stating that the BRS should win the Secunderabad parliamentary constituency this time, Rama Rao said Union Minister G Kishan Reddy had no moral right to seek votes from the constituency one more time. He had drawn a blank on the implementation of develop-

ment programmes and could not implement even a single major project for the constituency despite being a union Minister, he said.

Stating that the BRS government could shape Hyderabad into a global city and develop the State as number one on every development indicator, he said the efforts made in the direction of development were rewarded with huge margins registered by the

BRS candidates in the city during the just-concluded Assembly elections. But the same response was missing in the remaining constituencies of the State.

As a result, the State that had made rapid strides in development during the BRS rule was handed over to the Congress on a golden platter. But instead of devoting itself to sustaining the growth momentum, the new government was indulging in a relentless smear campaign. This would not augur well for the party or its government, as the people were watchful and would teach the Congress a lesson.

The Congress, which won the Assembly election based on false promises, was certain that it would not be able to implement all its 420 promises. They had to implement it all by March 17. "We are just reminding the Congress leaders," he said.

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Bopanna oldest to win Grand Slam



TEAM EFFORT: Rohan Bopanna and Australia's Matthew Ebden celebrate after beating Italy's Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori during their men's doubles final of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Saturday. — Photo: AFP (REPORT PAGE 11)

Comic Con kicks off in city

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Trump loses Carroll lawsuit

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Pope comes to England's rescue

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Caste census in Telangana soon

STATE BUREAU
 Hyderabad

Telangana is all set to join a select club of States in the country to conduct a caste census. While Bihar released the findings of a caste census last year, Andhra Pradesh launched one recently.

Telangana will now be among the States that have announced a caste census, with Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy declaring on Saturday that a caste census will be taken up soon to fulfil the promise made by the Congress to the people before the elections. To this effect, officials have been directed to initiate measures for caste enumeration.

The Chief Minister announced this during a review meeting with BC, Minority and Tribal Welfare Departments at the Secretariat here on Saturday. Earlier, he directed officials to

Officials directed to initiate measures for caste enumeration, says CM Revanth Reddy at review meeting

prepare estimates for providing cash and one tola gold under the Kalyanamasthu scheme for the poor. He also instructed officials to prepare estimates for the total budget required to operate all types of government social welfare hostels in the State. "Based on the estimates, the government will release the budget through the green channel," Revanth Reddy said.

The Chief Minister also enquired about the Gurukuls in the State and sought information on the schools being operated in rented buildings.

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Nitish may resign today, says source

New Bihar govt with BJP support by evening

PATNA/NEW DELHI

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar was on Saturday poised to dump the Mahagathbandhan he had joined less than 18 months ago and deal a body blow to the I.N.D.I.A bloc, with a source close to him saying that the JD(U) president was likely to resign on Sunday.

The source, who requested anonymity, said Kumar was "likely to address a meeting of JD(U) legislators around 10 am on Sunday before going to Raj Bhavan to submit his resignation" and formation of a new government, with the BJP's support, was "expected by evening".

"Offices, including the Governor's Secretariat,

RJD won't withdraw support

PATNA: The RJD on Saturday decided not to withdraw support from the Nitish Kumar government in Bihar. The decision was taken in a meeting held at the official residence of Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav located at 5 Circular Road in Patna where all MLAs unanimously decided not to withdraw support from the Nitish government. "We formed the government in Bihar with the aim of providing jobs to the common people, improved health infrastructure and others. How can we kill our own efforts? We have decided not to withdraw support from the Nitish Kumar government," said RJD's Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha. IANS

have been ordered to remain open on Sunday in view of the likelihood of hectic activities," said the source who claimed that Kumar, who has maintained a deafening silence over the political turmoil, had "con-

fided in trusted aides about his next move couple of days ago". As Kumar's return to the BJP-led NDA, which he had vowed to defeat, looked imminent, a rattled RJD held a meeting. PTI (REPORTS PAGE 7)

Maharashtra govt concedes quota for Marathas

MUMBAI

Activist Manoj Jarange on Saturday called off his indefinite fast for Maratha quota after the Maharashtra government accepted his demands, with Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announcing that till Marathas get reservation, they will be given all benefits enjoyed by the OBCs.

But a draft notification issued by the government following negotiations with Jarange, stating that blood relatives of a Maratha person, who has records to show that he belongs to the agrarian Kunbi community, would also be recognised as Kunbi, evoked criticism from senior Minister Chhagan Bhujuwal who questioned the "backdoor entry" of Marathas into the Other

Eknath Shinde says till Marathas get reservation, they will be given all benefits enjoyed by OBCs

Backward Classes (OBC) category.

Deputy CM Devendra Fadnis tried to assuage the concerns of the OBCs, stating that Marathas would not get the Kunbi caste certificate without any proof. Jarange launched his fast at Vashi in Navi Mumbai, a satellite city of Mumbai, on Friday, in the presence of thousands of his supporters. He set out on a protest march from Antarwali Sarati village in Jalna district last Saturday. PTI

RTC exploring ways to increase revenue as 'free travel' scheme eats into its finances

C ROMEIO
 Hyderabad

Seeking to wriggle out of the financial impact caused by the Congress government's Maha Lakshmi poll promise, which provides free bus travel for women, the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) is apparently looking at ways to increase its revenues.

The TSRTC authorities have proposed to do away with the free travel in special buses and collect fares instead, which would sustain the corporation's revenue.

Since its launch in December 2023, nearly 11 crore women have availed



The TSRTC authorities have proposed to do away with the free travel in special buses and collect fares instead.

the free travel facility in City Ordinary, Metro Express and Palle Velugu buses across Telangana.

Officials point out instances of women travelling in buses just because it was free. Of late, there

have also been reports of people boarding long-distance express buses and halting them at intermittent stops or wherever they want. With this, the RTC officials had to appeal to the women not to

do so. During the Sankranti festive season, women were allowed to travel for free in the special buses run by the corporation. Officials said the free travel will be applicable on special services on all festivals.

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Indian Navy helps vessel in Gulf of Aden

NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy on Saturday contained a fire on-board a commercial oil tanker with 22 Indian crew in the Gulf of Aden while swiftly responding to a distress call from the vessel after it was struck by a missile reportedly by Houthi militants.

Following the Mayday call from the Marshall Islands-flagged vessel, MV Marlin Luanda, on Friday night, the Navy deployed guided missile destroyer INS Visakhapatnam to assist it. Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said after six hours of battling the fire, along with the crew of MV Marlin Luanda, the Indian Naval fire-fighting team brought the blaze under control. PTI

Intruders sneak into women's hostel

CITY BUREAU
 Hyderabad

Alleged intruders created panic at the Osmania University PG Girls Hostel in Secunderabad on Friday midnight, with one of them being caught by the students and handed over to police.

Around 1 am, one of the women students spotted some outsiders near the college washrooms and panicked. On hearing her cries, other students rushed out and reportedly found three people moving around.

"One of the men was caught and handed over to us. The man was in an inebriated condition and we shifted him to the police station. The students said two more persons had accompa-

Kavitha urges govt to act

HYDERABAD: BRS MLC K Kavitha said the incident at the Secunderabad PG hostel for women had amply proved that protection of women, which was a priority in the previous BRS regime, ceased to be viewed with importance in the Congress rule.

(SEE PAGE 2)

nied him and we are trying to track them down," Begumpet Inspector Bhaskar Juttu said. Soon after the incident, the students staged a protest demanding better security. (SEE PAGE 2)

BJP threatening to topple Delhi govt, says AAP

NEW DELHI

AAP on Saturday alleged that the BJP has offered Rs 25 crore each to seven of its MLAs in Delhi to quit the party while also threatening to topple the Kejriwal government.

The Delhi BJP, however, rubbished the allegation and challenged AAP to name the MLAs and the people who allegedly contacted them with the offer.

The AAP claimed that the recording of a person who contacted one of the party MLAs was available and which will be shown later. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal posted on X that seven of his party MLAs had been contacted by "them" and warned that the AAP convener would be arrested soon. PTI