

# All not happy with 'saffron' Congress

## MADHYA PRADESH | Leaders protest celebration of Hindu festivals, idols at party office

MILIND GHATAI  
BHOPAL, OCTOBER 6

THE CONGRESS'S attempts to get rid of an 'anti-Hindu' tag by celebrating Hindu festivals at the party's Madhya Pradesh headquarters here has not gone down well with a section of its leaders.

Former PCC secretary Akbar Baig registered his protest Monday by walking into the headquarters carrying non-vegetarian delicacies and other dishes to remind the Congress that it should also celebrate Bakrid as the party swears by secularism.

"I don't know whether it was the sight of mutton and biryani or the presence of Muslims, but except one, all leaders present in the headquarters maintained distance from me," Baig told *The Indian Express*.

Incidentally, the party has celebrated several Hindu festivals at the headquarters since installing an idol of Lord Ganesha there on August 29. In contrast, BJP in Madhya Pradesh celebrates only Ganesh Chaturthi by installing an idol, a tradition it has followed since decades.

"If they are bent on celebrating festivals, why not include festivals associated with other religions as well," said Baig. The Congress leader said that he had gone to the party office during Dussehra with sweets and



The state Congress office in Bhopal

vegetarian items.

Baig's action follows comments from former union minister Kantilal Bhuria, who had opposed installation of idols of Ganesh or Durga, arguing that people belonging to various faiths frequent the PCC office and such a move might hurt their religious feelings.

State Wakf Board ex-chairman Gufran-e-Azam has also spoken against celebrating religious festivals at the headquarters.

The practice of celebrating Hindu festivals was started by PCC chief Arun Yadav. On the opposition from several party leaders, he said, "What's wrong in celebrating festivals? Our leaders used to associate with festivals outside the PCC office." Congress spokesperson Sangeeta Sharma, however, said the party would celebrate Bakrid on October 8. She is responsible for ensuring daily prayers at the PCC and had recently invited girls to the party office for a *kanya bhoj*.

# Andhra, Telangana struggle with farm loan waiver

SREENIVAS JANYALA  
HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 6

THE TDP government in Andhra Pradesh and the TRS regime in Telangana are struggling to fulfil their pre-poll promise of waiving farm loans.

While Andhra Pradesh has tied itself up in knots on setting the scheme rolling, the Telangana government missed its own deadline to pay the first installment on September 27, but remitted it haphazardly on September 30, the end of the kharif season.

As a result, some loan ac-

counts received the money while others did not. Due to this, the farmers whose loan accounts did not receive the money would not get benefit of crop insurance for the rabi season starting October 1, nor can they apply for fresh loans. The AP government requires more than Rs 40,000 crore to pay banks while Telangana needs Rs 17,000 crore.

Telangana Agriculture Commissioner B Janardhana Reddy said that the government has set the ball rolling on farm loan waiver.

"On September 30, 90 per

cent of the farmers' loan accounts were credited. Banks may take some time to process and hence some may not have received it in their accounts. Rs 4,250 crore was released by the government. There are close to 35 lakh beneficiaries for farm loan waiver in Telangana. In the first phase, we deposited 25 per cent of the total loan they have taken. For those who were unable to renew crop insurance, we will work out something," Reddy said.

The AP government has floated another scheme to take care of the loan waiver scheme.

After promising to deposit the first installment on September 30, the government said it would be able to do so only on October 15.

Like their Telangana counterparts, AP farmers also won't get fresh loans. The government set up a Resources Management Committee to get funds to fulfil the loan waiver scheme.

TDP Rajya Sabha MP Y Sujana Chowdary, who heads the committee, said the government was setting a Farmers' Empowerment Corporation which will issue bonds to farmers to waive crop loans.

# Bad crop and debt drive two Telangana farmers to end life

SREENIVAS JANYALA  
HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 6

Two farmers, who were heavily in debt, allegedly committed suicide in Karimnagar district of Telangana over the weekend. While one consumed pesticide, the other hung himself.

Inadequate rainfall, which led to crop failure, reportedly forced M Tirupati and D Ramesh of Kodimial village to end their lives. With 30 per cent rainfall deficit and groundwater levels dangerously low, the borewells in the state have been

rendered useless.

Investigation Officer K Ravi said while Tirupati, a cotton farmer, appears to have committed suicide by consuming pesticide after his crop failed and he ran into heavy debt, police are yet to verify whether D Ramesh's suicide is also linked to crop failure.

Telangana Agriculture Minister P Srinivas Reddy, however, assured that farm loan waiver would ease the debt burden of most farmers. So far, 187 farmers have committed suicide in the state.

## RAPID ACTION FORCE

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- Quick mobilization in emergency.
- Female members in each Team.
- First response in calamities and disaster.
- RAF Academy of Public Order was inaugurated on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2013.
- Imparting Training on Riot control to State Police officers and men going on UN Mission.
- 1<sup>st</sup> ever all women Armed Police Contingents deployed in UN Policing in Liberia since 2006 and One Male contingent since 2009.

- Contingent served in Haiti and Kosovo in past.
- RAF organized training on "Gender Sensitization" in association with "UN."

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# Single window clearance & infrastructure status for realty sector, Venkaiah Naidu

The real estate and housing sector is experiencing a period of active change. A combination of policy settings and snag in environmental clearances, have created a climate of uncertainty and heightened risk. This ASSOCHAM Summit addressed these key issues and drew attention to hygiene and sanitation.

Speaking on the challenges ahead of affordable housing, Naidu said, "We don't want a tag of infrastructure, but a bag of support from banks which is a priority lending for the housing sector. Housing for all by 2022 is a big challenge and unless the government along with state governments, urban local bodies and private institutions participate in a big way, we'll not be able to reach this ambitious goal."

**Bottlenecks in clearances**  
With regard to environment clearances, one of the reasons for long delays in projects, Naidu said that once the urban development authority plan is approved, individuals would not have to go for clearance for each and every project. Assuring that Government will introduce the Real Estate (Development and Regulation) Bill in the subsequent session of Parliament in 2014, he pointed that discussion and consultations with various stakeholders, including consumer forums,

were in place and various ministries have addressed and given their responses.

**Healthful living**  
On the issue of hygiene and sanitation, Naidu believed that sanitation being made part of the school curriculum, would bring in new ideas from the youth of the country and steer the means in the right direction.

"The Union Government is holding discussions with various ministries on the need for single window clearance and also about giving infrastructure status to the real estate and housing sector."

**M. Venkaiah Naidu**



At the Summit (L - R) : Santhosh Kumar, CEO, Operations, Jones Lang LaSalle India; Prashant Kumar Tiwari, Chairman, Prateek Group; K B S Sidhu, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation; Punit Malik, Group President, Corporate Finance Relationship, Yes Bank; Anil Mithas, CMD, Unnati Fortune Group; Anil Behl, Executive Director, Jindal Realty; Dr. P. S. N. Rao, Professor and Head, Department of Housing, School of Planning and Architecture; D. K. Aggarwal, CMD, SMC Real Estate Advisors

M. Venkaiah Naidu, Hon'ble Union Minister for Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation releasing the study report 'Roadmap to achieve Housing for all by 2022' and a study on 'Real Estate - Key Reforms for Boosting Growth'. Also seen (L - R) Punit Malik, Group President, Corporate Finance Relationship, Yes Bank; Navin M. Raheja, Chairman, Real Estate Committee, ASSOCHAM; Rajeev Talwar, Chairman, Urban Development Committee, ASSOCHAM; Rohit Raj Modi, President, CREDAI, NCR; D. S. Rawat, Secretary General, ASSOCHAM; S. K. Jindal, Chairman, Investment & Investors' Protection Committee, ASSOCHAM; M. K. Bharadwaj, Chairman, Government Procurement Committee, ASSOCHAM

**M. Venkaiah Naidu presenting Real Estate Excellence Awards**



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**Neelam Realtors, Mumbai** Best Integrated Suburban Developer In Eastern Mumbai  
**Karla Landmarc Group, Mumbai** Best CSR initiative in Real Estate of the year  
**Mayfair Housing, Mumbai** Best Quality Construction Real Estate Developer in Mumbai  
**SARE Homes, Chennai** Best Residential Developer in Chennai  
**Prateek Group, Noida** Affordable Housing Project 'Prateek Grand City' in Ghaziabad  
**Darshan Infra Projects, Mumbai** Affordable Residential Property in South Mumbai  
**Sunlife Infratech, Gwalior** Debutant Developer of the Year  
**Shriram Properties, Bengaluru** Best Realty Investment Partner in India  
**Deepak Mehta & Associates, New Delhi** Best Architectural Firm in Delhi NCR  
**Neetta K. Bokaria, Mumbai** Best Real Estate Vastu Consultant

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