

Yeddyurappa confident of BJP forming govt in Karnataka, rules out post-poll tie-up with JD-S

SHIKARIPURA, APRIL 30 /- Riding a 'Modi wave', the BJP will form the next government in Karnataka with absolute majority its chief ministerial candidate B S Yeddyurappa said today, and ruled out a post-poll alliance with the JD-S 'as of now'.

Pollsters have predicted a hung Assembly in Karnataka, with neither the ruling Congress nor the BJP attaining a majority. They have said the JD-S, of former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, would emerge as the kingmaker. Yeddyurappa, a Lingayat strongman who has supported the demand for religious minority status for the community when he headed the Karnataka Janata Paksha (KJP) that he had formed after breaking away from BJP, said the issue would not be the electoral prospects of the saffron party and instead 'backfire' on the ruling Congress. The state BJP chief also said the saffron party was campaigning as a 'united force' to 'renew the mission of winning 150 seats in the

May 12 Assembly polls.

"The Lingayat issue is not going to affect us. This will backfire on Congress," Yeddyurappa told news agency PTI in an interview. The Siddaramaiah government had recently recommended to the Centre religious minority status for Lingayats and its sub-caste Veerashaiva Lingayats, in an apparent move to cut into the solid vote base of the BJP which has traditionally backed the party. The Lingayats, who account for about 17 per cent of the state's population, have a large presence in the central Karnataka, especially in Shivamogga, Davanagere and Chitradurga, where their votes can be critical to the electoral outcome.

The BJP has treated casteism as the contentious issue, while the Congress, unsure of the consequences it may have for the party in the elections, has also kept it on the back burner. The 75-year-old former chief minister, who has won

seven times from Shikaripura, said he would triumph with a huge margin from his home seat, as the Lingayats would not let him down. He rejected the Congress' allegation that the BJP was stoking caste and communal sentiments to win the elections. "Not at all," he said.

"Had the Congress been secular, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah would not have been contesting from a second place, Badami, a constituency with a sizeable population of Kuruba," he said. Siddaramaiah hails from the Kuruba community. Siddaramaiah is 'scared' of losing his traditional Chamundeshwari seat, from where he has won five times since 1983, he added. The BJP has fielded its resourceful Ballari MP B S Sriramulu against Siddaramaiah in Badami in North Karnataka. "We are confident that Sriramulu will win that seat," Yeddyurappa said. Asked if the BJP's alleged 'politics' would work for it in coastal

Karnataka, Yeddyurappa said, "There is no such thing out there. Congress is spreading lies. There is only Modi wave and we are going to sweep not only the coastal region but the entire state." He said the party would secure a majority and form the government. "There is no question of post-poll alliance with JD(S) as of now," Yeddyurappa said. JD-S's chief ministerial nominee H D Kumaraswamy, a son of Deve Gowda, had told PTI on Sunday that he would emerge as the "king" and not a "kingmaker" after the elections. The JD-S and BJP had cobbled together a coalition and formed the government headed by Kumaraswamy in 2006. It collapsed in October 2007, after the JD(S) backtracked on its promise and refused to hand over the reins of power to Yeddyurappa under the agreement the two parties had entered into over rotational chief ministership.

Mayawati condemns caste mark on chest of MP police aspirants NCP wants PMO to probe matter

LUCKNOW, APRIL 30 /- BJP chief Mayawati today lashed out at the BJP claiming the incident in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district, where aspirants for the post of police constables reportedly had their caste categories written on bare chests, was just a fresh example of the saffron party's new found love for Dalits.

Mayawati also questioned the 'silence' of top leaders including the prime minister on the issue. "This is the new and fresh example of BJP governments' new found love for Dalits for their political gains," she said in a statement released here referring to the Dhar incident.

The BSP chief, in her statement, asked why top BJP leaders had not condemned the incident. Does it suit the BJP and company, and the Prime Minister himself, to remain silent, (and) not to condemn such a casteist incident, she asked.

The former UP chief minister demanded the official responsible for the incident should be punished while the Centre needed to issue strict orders to check recurrence of such incidents anywhere in the country. Referring to the Dhar incident as a "criminal act", Mayawati said it was because of the casteist and spiteful attitude towards the Dalits, Tribals and backward classes that they were forced to convert to the Unna case in Gujarat had shown.

"The BJP needs to realise that besides self-respect, Dalits are also vigilant towards their interests and will never fall into the trap of anyone's assurances," she said. The Dhar incident had come to light when photographs in various newspapers showed aspirants with "SC" (Scheduled Caste), "ST" (Scheduled Tribe) and "G" (General) marked with sketch pens on their chests as they queued up for their

medical examination. Those conducting the medical examination process had told police that the markings were made to differentiate candidates belonging to different categories as the physical requirements for each of these categories were different.

Meanwhile, the Sharad Pawar led NCP today asked the PMO to probe the marking of candidates' chests with their caste categories during police recruitment in Madhya Pradesh and described the incident as "shameful". It is extremely shameful that during police recruitment in the BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh, the candidates were marked as SC, OBC, ST on their chest," NCP MP Supriya Sule tweeted.

Describing the process as "insensitive", Sule said this act deserved strong condemnation. "The PMO should probe the incident," she said.

Declaring income by private schools in Chandigarh made mandatory

NEW DELHI, APRIL 30 /- Private schools and other unaided educational institutions in Chandigarh will henceforth have to declare their income and expenditure every year and will not be able to raise the fee arbitrarily or any time during the academic session.

In a gazette notification, the Union Territory (UT) division of the home ministry also said no part of income from the private schools shall be diverted to any individual in the trust or school management committee and it cannot indulge in profiteering or charge capitation fee.

The notification came after the central government decided to extend to Chandigarh, a Union Territory, the Punjab Regulation of Fee of Unaided Educational Institution Act, 2016 with certain modifications.

"Provided further that every unaided educational institution shall (a) upload income, expenditure account and balance sheet on its website; (b) not charge any kind of cost from the parents; (c) disclose complete fee structure at the beginning of the academic year in the booklet issued, along with the admission form, by the schools and also be posted in its website (d) not raise the fee any time

during the academic session," the gazette notification said. It was signed by additional secretary in the home ministry P K Srivastava. Being a union territory, Chandigarh comes under the direct administrative control of the home ministry.

The notification also said no part of the income from unaided educational institution shall be diverted to any individual in the trust or society or company or school management committee or any other person. The savings, if any, after meeting the recurring and non-recurring expenditure and contributions to development, depreciation and contingency funds may be utilised for promoting the unaided educational institutions concerned. A private school or institute shall be competent to fix its fee and it may also increase the same after taking into account the need to generate funds to run the institution and to provide facilities necessary for the benefit of the students.

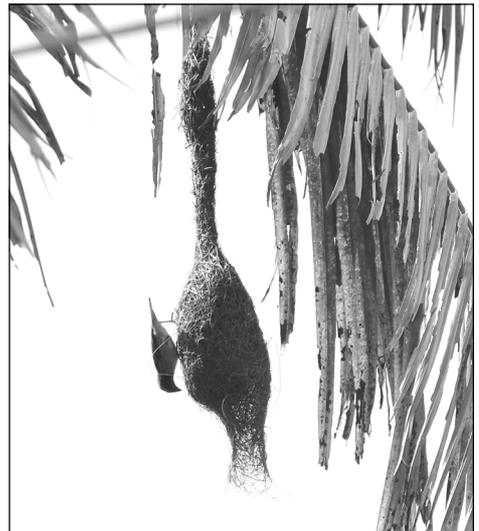
However, the increase in fee will not exceed eight per cent of the fee of the previous year. It cannot indulge in profiteering and it cannot charge capitation fee, the notification said.

Portals of Badrinath opened for devotees

GOPESHWAR, APRIL 30 /- The portals of Badrinath here were opened amid a recital of vedic hymns early today with pilgrims turning up in large numbers at the Himalayan shrine to get a glimpse of the unbroken flame.

Pilgrims and devotees braved a morning chill and congregated in front of the temple's entrance even before the doors were opened at 4.30 am by chief priest Ishwari Prasad Namboodiri. Temple committee officials were also present for the opening ceremony. Delighted devotees sang devotional songs to the beats of Dhol-Damru and rent the air with chants of 'Jai Badri Vishal' as the ceremonial opening of the temple took place in the small hours.

It was a chilly morning in Badrinath because of intermittent rains in the area over the past few days, but this did not dampen the spirit of pilgrims whose number on the first day crossed 2,000, temple committee CEO B D Singh said.



A weaver bird making its nest hanging from a coconut tree in Thrivananthapuram on Monday.

Speaker, 7 others sworn in as ministers in J&K

JAMMU, APRIL 30 /- Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Speaker Kavinder Gupta and seven others were today sworn in as ministers in the state's PDP-BJP government led by Mehbooba Mufti.

Gupta will be the new deputy chief minister in place of Nirmal Singh, who submitted his resignation last night, officials said. The reshuffle is the result of BJP ministers Lal Singh and Chander Prakash Ganga resigning from the cabinet earlier this month after they were criticised for taking part in a rally in support of those accused in the rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua. The new BJP faces sworn in as ministers were the party's state unit chief Satpal Sharma and the MLAs from Kathua and adjoining Sambha, Rajiv Jasvota and Devinder Kumar Manral, respectively.

The BJP also upgraded Sunil Sharma, at present minister of state for transport, to the rank of a cabinet minister. BJP legislator Shakti Raj took oath as a minister of state. The PDP members included in the cabinet were Mohd Khalil Band, MLA from Pulwama, and Mohd Ashraf Mir, MLA from Sonwar. The BJP has dropped Nirmal Singh, Health Minister Bali Bhagat and minister of state (MoS) for Tourism, Priya Sethi. Their resignations have been accepted along with that of law minister Abdul Haq Khan by Governor N N Vohra, an official said, adding that Sunil Sharma, who was upgraded as cabinet minister, also resigned as MoS.

BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav and MoS in the PMO Jitendra Singh attended the event. The saffron party had on April 17 asked all its in-charge ministers in the PDP-BJP government in the state to submit their resignations to enable bringing in new faces in the two-year-old Mufti cabinet.

Bhandara-Gondia LS by-poll Cong, NCP yet to reach consensus on candidate

NEW DELHI, APRIL 30 /- By-elections to Maharashtra's Bhandara-Gondia Lok Sabha constituency will be held on May 28, but the Congress and the NCP are yet to arrive at a consensus on whose candidate will contest from the seat, sources said today.

The seat fell vacant after BJP MP Nana Patole resigned from the post and also quit the ruling party to return to the Congress fold earlier this year. Patole had defeated NCP heavyweights Praful Patel in the 2014 general elections from the constituency. Sources said both the parties are keen on contesting the bye-election and the final decision in this matter is expected to be taken after May 3, when elections to 21 seats in the Upper House of the state Assembly will be held. "Both the parties are keen on contesting the by-poll. There is no consensus on it yet. We will discuss it with NCP leaders after four days," a Congress insider said.

Although the seat had gone the NCP's way during seat sharing talks between the two parties for the previous Lok Sabha polls, after Patole switched over to the Congress, the Rahul Gandhi-led party is also keen on fighting the by-poll to the parliamentary constituency. It also means that whichever of the two parties contests the by-poll on May 28, is more likely to field its candidate to the seat in the Lok Sabha elections next year, the sources said. "Talks to form an alliance are on, but the final decision in this regard will be taken by the central leadership of the two parties," the leader said.

Besides the Bhandara-Gondia seat, the Election Commission had on April 26 announced the schedule for bypolls in Palghar (Maharashtra), Kasirana (Uttar Pradesh) and Nagaland. The Palghar seat fell vacant after the demise of BJP MP Chintaman Wangyana. The by-poll to the Kairana seat was necessitated after BJP veteran Hukum Singh passed away in February.

State Notes

Police disperse clashing DMK, AIADMK groups

COIMBATORE, APRIL 30 /- Police today resorted to cane charge to disperse two warring groups belonging to AIADMK and DMK which had come to file nomination papers for a Housing Cooperative society in nearby Tirupur. Trouble started when police reportedly closed the doors after AIADMK men led by former minister MSM Anandan entered the hall, while former DMK Mayor Selvaraj and his supporters were not allowed, police sources said. As an argument broke out over this, some DMK men were seen banging into the hall where nominations had to be filed, which was prevented by AIADMK men. This resulted in a melee forcing police to resort to "mild" cane charge and also pushing some workers out, they said. Returning officer Shoba postponed the date of filing nominations following the violence, police said. A few DMK men were hurt in the melee and were admitted to hospital with minor injuries, they added.

DK Jain takes charge as Maharashtra chief secy

MUMBAI, APRIL 30 /- Senior IAS officer Dinesh Kumar Jain today took charge as the new chief secretary of Maharashtra. The 1983-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer succeeded Sumit Mullick, who retired today. Jain was additional chief secretary (finance) before his appointment to the top bureaucratic post. He succeeded Medha Gadgil, additional chief secretary (relief and rehabilitation), and Sudhir Shivastava, additional chief secretary (home). Jain, after taking charge, said he will chalk out a plan for development of agriculture in Maharashtra.

Kargil martyr's statue found broken in Hisar

HISAR, APRIL 30 /- A statue of Kargil martyr Paviter Kumar was found broken in Harwana (Milkapur village, 40 km from here, police said today. The statue was broken by some unidentified miscreants on the intervening night of April 28 and 29, they said. According to police, it was the family of the martyr who noticed that the statue was broken. On a complaint of Saviter Singh, brother of martyr Paviter Kumar, a case under relevant sections of the IPC was registered by Naranaud police of Hisar district.



Kerala Excise and Labour Minister TP Ramakrishnan addressing the valedictory function of Road Safety Week at Town Hall in Kozhikode on Monday.

Delhi boy tops VITEEE for admission to B.Tech Courses

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, APRIL 30 /- Kalash Gupta, a student of Delhi has secured the first rank in the VIT Engineering Entrance Examination (VITEEE)-2018 held from April 4 to 16th in 124 selected cities across India, as well as Dubai, Kuwait, Muscat, and Qatar. The entrance exam was held for admission to the various B.Tech programmes offered by VIT at its Vellore, Chennai, Bhopal and Amaravati branches.

Releasing the results here on Friday last, VIT announced a record number of 2,12,000 candidates had registered for the VITEEE-2018. The other rank holders

are as follows: 2nd rank: Sarikonda Ananda Ramaro, Telangana state, 3rd rank: Anirudh Panigrahi, Odisha state, 4th rank: Sai Anirudh M, Karnataka state, 5th rank: Shubham Kar, Jharkhand state, 6th rank: Shubham Agarwal, West Bengal state, 7th rank: Pranav Goyal, Chandigarh state, 8th rank: Sanchit Agrawal, Delhi state, 9th rank: S Vishal, Tamil Nadu state and 10th rank: Anmol Gupta, Uttar Pradesh. The results are available also at www.vit.ac.in and admissions would be only on merit.

Counselling for candidates, who obtained ranks up to 8,000 will be held on May 9th (Wednesday) and counselling for ranks 8001 to 14,000 will be held on May 10th (Thursday) while for those who secured ranks from 14001 to 20000 will be held on May 11th (Friday). Counselling will be held simultaneously in Vellore, Chennai, Bhopal and Amaravati (AP). Under the G V School Development Programme central and State board toppers would be given 100 per cent fee waiver for all the four years. Candidates with ranks up to 50 would be given 75 per cent tuition fee waiver, Rank 51 to 100 would be given 50 per cent tuition fee waiver and Rank 101 to 1000 would be given 25 per cent tuition fee waiver.

VITEEE RESULTS - 2018

1st Rank Kalash Gupta	2nd Rank Sarikonda Ananda Ramaro	3rd Rank Anirudh Panigrahi	4th Rank Sai Anirudh M	5th Rank Shubham Kar
6th Rank Shubham Agarwal	7th Rank Pranav Goyal	8th Rank Sanchit Agrawal	9th Rank S Vishal	10th Rank Anmol Gupta