

ANDHRA PRADESH CONGRESS COMMITTEE

SALIENT FEATURES OF CONGRESS MANIFESTO-2009

On behalf of Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee, we have great pleasure in releasing the Manifesto for the ensuing general elections in the State. We place on record our sincere appreciation for the good work done by the Manifesto Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr.Chakrapani in bringing out this comprehensive document. We give below the gist of the Manifesto.

Perhaps for the first time in the history of any State in the country, the Congress Government in Andhra Pradesh has not only honoured all major and material promises made in the Manifesto for the 2004 elections, but has also implemented a large number of other schemes (which were not part of the Manifesto 2004) intended for the benefit of the poorest of the poor. The last five years have been the most glorious years in the history of our State, as our State had not only achieved the highest economic growth rate during this period but was also able to ensure that the fruits of the economic development have reached the neediest of the society. The State had achieved more than 9% per annum GSDP growth rate during the last five years, even after taking into account the possibility of a lower growth rate of 7% during the current year due to the global melt down. Our growth rate has been more than that of the National average for the first time in last two decades.

In agriculture and allied activities, the sectors that suffered most with very low growth rates of 2.13% per annum during the 9 years TDP rule, the State had achieved an average annual growth rate of 6% during the last five years, even after taking into account the possible negative growth rate in the crop sector for the current year, which is an unbelievable achievement and perhaps the best for any five years period for any State in the country. While all the agricultural input prices, with the possible exception of labour costs, have either come down or have been maintained at the same level as in the year 2004 and with the MSP for various crops having gone up by 80% during the last four years, the incomes of the farmers have increased substantially.

Thanks to a large number of irrigation projects, weaker section housing programme and National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme being implemented in the State, the demand for employment and labour has gone up phenomenally during the last five years, substantially improving the incomes of the people across the board, leading to virtual extinction of extremist movement in the State. Districts which were earlier known for chronic labour migration are now forced to hire labour from other States.

We are very proud and happy that, by and large, during the last five years we were able to create an economic activity in the State wherein every citizen in the State had access to employment. We have provided the much needed food and health care security to almost about 80% of the State's population in proportions unheard of in any parts of the World.

Recognizing that education is the most powerful tool for empowerment of all sections of population, a large number of initiatives were taken, including the provision of complete reimbursement of tuition fees for all eligible students among SCs, STs, Minorities and BCs. Other welfare measures included Pensions on saturation basis and Pavala Vaddi scheme for SHGs to help women empowerment and for unleashing their potential. All these have contributed to substantially improving the quality of life of a large number of people in the State like never before in the history of our State.

This extraordinary achievement in the last five years did not happen by accident or by just wishing good. Undoubtedly, nature was on our side. Instead of experimenting with fanciful ideas given by multinational consultants, we have followed the time tested economic policy of stepping up the public expenditure, more particularly the Governmental expenditure for fostering higher economic growth. It is now globally acknowledged that higher economic growth is the only remedy for faster reduction of poverty. It is a matter of common knowledge that higher investments will lead to higher economic growth which will further lead to higher Revenues for the State. The private investments have always grown in tandem with the public investments. Higher public investments have always catalyzed higher private investment.

The issue then was to select the sector in which the public investment had to be stepped up. It is there for every body to see that districts with best irrigation potential have the greatest prosperity and consequentially the best human development index. Thanks to the efforts of Sir Arthur Cotton, in the middle of the nineteenth century, Irrigation projects across the rivers Godavari, Krishna and Penna were implemented. We can see the prosperity there. 95% of Industrial investments and Industrial entrepreneurs of the State have come from these districts because of the surpluses in the agriculture which went towards the capital formation. India is going to shortly become the most populous nation in the world. The global tradable surplus in the food grains is coming down. Agricultural productivity bears a direct proportionality to the level of irrigation. So, there is every case for augmenting every drop of water in the State. Therefore, we have decided that public investment in irrigation will have the greatest beneficial impact on the society, particularly because we continue to be predominantly an agrarian society. We have therefore embarked upon the Jalayagnam programme to create new irrigation potential of 109.96 lakh acres besides stabilizing 21.75 lakh acres and providing drinking water. The Jalayagnam programme has been taken up at a cost of Rs.1,50,998 crores. So far, 12 projects have already been completed. In addition water has been released and partial irrigation potential has been created in 13 projects. The Government incurred approximately a sum of Rs.38,000 crores from 14th May 2004 to 31st December 2008, compared to Rs.10,000 crores spent in the preceding 10 years period.

Next to Irrigation, the other area of public expenditure chosen by the Congress Government was the weaker section housing programme as part of INDIRAMMA programme. The weaker section housing programme in our State is the biggest programme implemented by any State in the country. The programme aims at making AP a hutless State in a time bound manner and in a saturated mode. So far, under the three phases of INDIRAMMA, 67.27 lakh houses have been sanctioned, against which 19.45 lakh houses were completed as on 22.12.2008. It is estimated that another 5 lakh houses will be completed before 31st March, 2009. Other houses are at various stages of completion. In the Pre-INDIRAMMA period, in the years 2004-05 and 2005-06, an estimated 12 lakh houses were constructed.

Thanks to these two massive programmes involving huge public investment, the impact of the multiplier effect was very much in evidence. The construction, mining, manufacturing and services sectors in the State have registered growth rates which were more than double of the growth rates during the earlier regime. The Revenues of the State have boomed, even though the Government did neither impose any fresh taxes nor increased the power tariff to any class of consumers. The Government fully utilized these revenues for the welfare of the people.

WAY FORWARD

- ✓ **We would therefore, like to continue with this successful policy even in future.** We have taken up many programmes and initiatives in the last five years.

Some of them are long term in nature requiring huge funds and others relate to the welfare measures.

- ✓ The Welfare programmes started by the Congress Government will be continued.
- ✓ The Aarogyasri, the two rupees a kg rice scheme, the Pensions, the Weaker Section Housing Programme, the Land distribution scheme and Indira Prabha, the SHG programme, the complete reimbursement of tuition fee scheme, the Weavers package, the Tappers package, four percent reservation for Muslim minorities, the Kalyanamasthu programme etc., the Pavala Vaddi scheme for various sections of population have all been designed to cover about 80% of the State's population. Dhobhi ghats with all modern facilities will be provided for all the localities to reduce the drudgery of washing and ironing. The Congress Party promises to encourage the BC rural artisans like Goldsmiths, blacksmiths, Carpenters, Weavers, Tappers, Washermen etc., to form into SHGs for purchase of tools for common use or for individual use. The Congress pledges to extend the Pavala Vaddi Scheme to these SHGs also.
- ✓ Special initiatives will be taken to step up the literacy rate among the SC, ST girls so as to achieve universal literacy in the next five years.
- ✓ The entire health care administration in the State starting from the primary health centres will be thoroughly overhauled in a phased manner during the next five years.
- ✓ The AP GENCO has taken up many projects for doubling the capacity of power in the next five years. All these projects will be speeded up. Immediately upon the release of natural gas by RIL, an additional 1800 MW of power capacity in the State will become operative. Many other merchant power projects are coming up at various ports in the State.
- ✓ The State will be in a position to provide 24X7 electrical power throughout the State, besides supplying power to the farm sector for 9 hours per day from 1st June, 2009.
- ✓ It is also proposed to saturate the requirement of gas cylinders for cooking. There will be no household in the State without a gas connection at the end of the fourth year.
- ✓ Similarly, there will be no household without electrical connection or a sanitary toilet by the end of the next five years time.
- ✓ We promise to cover all the citizens in the State with Biometric Identity Cards. We also promise to make efforts towards achieving 100% financial inclusion of all households in the State by enabling them to open no-frills accounts with the Commercial Banks.
- ✓ The Congress Party is also committed to implementing the Forest Land Rights Act passed by the UPA Government for giving land rights to the Scheduled Tribes.
- ✓ On the issue of SC Categorization, the State Assembly has passed a unanimous resolution in support of SC categorization. The matter is pending with the Central Government. The Congress Party promises to pursue this with the Central Government.
- ✓ On the Telangana issue, the Congress Party pledges to honour the stand taken by the Government on the floor of the House. The Congress Government has already constituted a Committee of Members of both the Houses under the Chairmanship of senior Congress leader Sri K.Rosaiah. The report is awaited.
- ✓ It is proposed to increase the quantity of rice for white card holders in the State from 4 kgs to 6 kgs per person per month. **Other future initiatives include:**
 - The INDIRAMMA Programme started essentially for saturating the Weaker Section Housing, Pensions, provision of drinking water, roads, drains, electrification and sanitation will be continued and completed in all respects in

the next five years. The left over houses for which sanctions have already been given under all the three phases will be completed. The Government will sanction an additional amount of Rs.20,000 as loan from the budget of A.P. State Housing Corporation in place of bank loan in rural areas to beneficiaries of SC & ST communities for completion of their houses under INDIRAMMA Phase-II and Phase-III also, as in the case of Phase-I. Special emphasis will be given for completion of drinking water projects, internal roads, drains, electrification and sanitation programmes in the first three years on a saturation mode.

- The JALAYAGNAM programme will continue to be flagship programme of the Congress Party. The Congress Party resolves to complete the balance projects in a time bound manner. In addition to the above, in recognition of the growing aspirations of the people in Mahabubnagar, Nalgonda, Prakasam, Nellore and the four Rayalaseema districts for a fair share in Krishna waters, it is proposed to take up new projects creating an additional ayacut of 24.5 lakh acres after restrictions imposed by the Krishna Water Dispute Tribunal are lifted. This comprehensive irrigation policy will not only help in effective utilization of every drop of water for agriculture and drinking water purposes but also substantially enhances the incomes of a large number of farmers and others in the rural areas.
- AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED ACTIVITIES will continue to receive top most priority. Despite the country making great strides during the last 62 years, a large number of people continue to depend on agriculture; with the result, agriculture in our country is not only a source of food security but is also livelihood security for about 60% of the population. As Indian population increased from 36 crores in 1947 to 112 crores in 2008, the agricultural land has been further fragmented, lending itself to little or no possibility of application of precision farming techniques and mechanization, which are the only two solutions for increasing agricultural productivity to meet the food requirements of the ever growing population. It is therefore, proposed to revisit the Cooperative Movement. It is true that the Cooperative Movement has by and large not succeeded in the country in the past. Nevertheless, the experiences in China and Israel confirm that in countries like India, where there is a severe fragmentation of agricultural land, Cooperative approach to farming and related issues is the only long term solution. It is therefore proposed, as a first initiative after the formation of the new Government after the elections, to select one or two villages for every Mandal in the State for the Cooperative Movement, by whatever name called, for an integrated approach to farming, with an active support from the Government and Commercial Banks. Given the present day communications and information explosion, it will not be difficult to replicate the success. The Congress Party's commitment is to ensure that there is an assured minimum decent returns/income to every farmer. All other initiatives and schemes implemented in the last five years will continue. Additionally, it is also proposed to launch Mobile Agri and Livestock Clinics with consultation facilities on the lines of 108 and 104 for providing ready service to the farmers at their doorstep on matters like soil testing, agricultural practices, animal health care, artificial insemination etc
- Social Empowerment through Education will continue to get top priority. In recognition of this, the Congress Government has taken unprecedented number of initiatives by expanding both the higher and school education in the State. It is proposed to continue all the initiatives like scholarships and reimbursement of tuition fees for post metric students not only among the BCs, SCs, STs and Minorities but also for the economically backward communities. Similarly the scholarships etc. will also continue. As the present

experience shows that the social welfare residential schools have performed better than other Government schools, it is proposed that wherever the existing facilities are adequate and suitable, the existing hostels will be converted into residential schools in a phased manner. English as a medium of instruction will be introduced for all classes in the residential schools in a phased manner. All SC, ST, BC and Minority residential schools across the State will be elevated to the standards of Navodaya schools by improving the infrastructure and number of teachers. While completing the mission of establishing a University in every district, we propose to achieve a graduate enrollment ratio of 25% in the State by expanding polytechnic/ITI and quality medical institutes. In addition, education standards will be enhanced by connecting both public and private educational institutes with broadband network and skill development fostered through community colleges.

- Empowerment of Women will continue to receive the same level attention as it did during the last five years. The SHG programmes both in the rural areas and urban areas will be further expanded and strengthened. The Pavala Vaddi scheme will be continued. The Abhaya Hastham scheme guaranteeing a minimum pension of Rs.500/- per month for women members of SHGs completing 60 years will be continued.
- Industry, IT, Power and Infrastructure will continue to get importance. The Industries and Services sectors in our State have also witnessed an impressive growth during the last five years. We are committed to increasing the share of manufacturing in GSDP to 30% in a phased manner as this sector provides greatest social equity in terms of employment, next only to agriculture. All other infrastructure projects already taken up will be completed. The MSME Sector shall be given order preference over all bidders for orders within the State. This will be backed with payment preference as a priority over others.
- The Cable TV Network has played a significant role in expanding the visual media in the State, which is not only the cheapest entertainment for poor and middle class sections but has also emerged a major information source. The Government is fully committed to extend full support to this industry.
- YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: In the next few decades India will probably have the world's largest set of young people. Even as other countries begin to age, India will remain a country of young people. The thrust of the Congress Party would be on harnessing Yuva Shakti (the youth) by involving them in various nation-building activities and to inculcate the values of secularism and national integration; The Rajiv Yuva Shakti programme will be substantially expanded.
- URBAN DEVELOPMENT: About 27% of our State's population lives in urban areas and their holistic management is a matter of great importance to us. In this direction, the Congress Government has taken many policy decisions and initiatives to facilitate overall growth. The Government has taken initiatives to access funds under recently launched Government of India schemes i.e. Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme for Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT), Basic Services for Urban Poor (BSUP) and Integrated Housing and Slum Development Program (IHSDP). Special emphasis will be given on water supply and sewerage, integrated development of slums including housing, development of infrastructure projects, Solid Waste Management etc., under these schemes. We have taken expeditious action for completion of Krishna Drinking Water Supply Scheme, Phase II with an estimated cost of Rs.1082 crores by adding 90 MGD of water, thereby enabling daily supply of water in the area of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation. All the

ongoing projects like the ORR and the fresh projects like the Metro Rail project will be completed.

OUR RESOLVE

The Congress Party came to power in May 2004 promising to improve the quality of life of the people of the State with a firm commitment to the principle of growth with social justice. The Congress Party can justifiably look back with satisfaction that a large number of schemes implemented by them over the last 5 years have really helped a vast majority of the people of the state, particularly the SCs, STs, BCs and Minorities, like never before since the formation of the state in 1956. The Government could truly promote inclusive growth in the State in proportions unheard of in post-independence era in the Country. Every care was taken to ensure that the moneys of the Government were spent on productive purposes ensuring that there was equitable distribution of resources not only amongst the three regions of the state but also among all the districts of the state covering all sections of population. We are approaching the people of the State once again seeking their support for one more term for Congress Party with a promise that in the next five years, Andhra Pradesh will emerge as one of the best and the safest places in the world to live. We promise to continue all the schemes and welfare measures that we have implemented in the last five years in future also. We promise to work with greater sincerity and dedication to saturate all the basic requirements of every citizen of the State. It shall be our endeavor to ensure that no citizen in the State is deprived of Employment or access to Education, Health care, Sanitation, and Housing. Our major future thrust areas will be Administrative Reforms, Infrastructure, Agriculture and allied activities, Empowerment of Youth and Women, Power and Urban Development. We seek the support of the people.

JAI HIND