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# Cong, JD(S) wrap up tough deal; Stalin repeats Rahul-for-PM pitch



Rahul Gandhi addressing students at the Stella Maris college in Chennai on Wednesday | EXPRESS



*Economic growth is directly related to the mood of the nation. One cannot expect the economy to grow in a negative and fearful atmosphere in India*

Rahul Gandhi, Cong president

## 'TAMIL NADU WILL COMPETE WITH CHINA'

Rahul Gandhi said that his party, if voted to power, would focus on reviving the manufacturing sector in Tamil Nadu. "We will ensure that the State competes with China in generating jobs in the manufacturing sector," he said. "We are going to put special provisions in our manifesto for young entrepreneurs who want to start their own business."

20-8 pact stiched up in Karnataka; Stalin gets to hear the next Tamil Nadu CM RaGa

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
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ALLIANCE making in the Congress camp gathered momentum on Wednesday with the party finally striking a deal with the tough-as-nails JD(S) in Karnataka, and talks for a pact with the RJD and others in Bihar approaching endgame.

The Karnataka deal was clinched in Kochi where JD(S) general secretary Danish Ali met Congress president Rahul Gandhi around 7 pm with the grand old party taking 20 seats, leaving eight for the ally.

The JD(S) though managed to retain its pocket boroughs of Hassan and Mandya. It also got Bangalore North, Shimoga, Udupi-Chickmagalur, Bijapur, Uttar-Kannada and Tumkur. As for the Congress, its 20 includes all seats where it has sitting members except Tumkur, which went to the JD(S).

Congress MP from Tumkur Muddahanume Gowda became the fall guy. He was sacrificed at the altar of peace.

Before reaching Kochi, Ra-

hul was in Chennai and later in Nagercoil, where he launched the Opposition's election campaign along with senior ally DMK's chief M K Stalin.

As he had done in the past, much to the chagrin of Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee and other leaders of various regional parties, Stalin said: "Within a few weeks, Rahul Gandhi will become the prime minister. We believe in your (Rahul's) hands the country will be safe." Rahul returned the compliment, saying "Stalin would be the next chief minister of Tamil Nadu."

Attacking Prime Minister Modi, Rahul said: "By capturing the state government and institutions, Modi cannot control the people of Tamil Nadu."

Meanwhile, seat-sharing talks in Patna will shift to Delhi on Thursday as top leaders of the *mahagathbandhan* are expected to meet there to thrash out a formula to distribute the 40 seats in Bihar. The RJD will take the biggest share, followed by the Congress and Kushwaha's RLSF.

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