

SHORT TAKES

New law for Gig workers soon: Vivek

HYDERABAD: In response to a question from Mahabubnagar MLA Yennam Srinivas Reddy regarding the welfare of gig workers, Labour & Employment Minister, Dr. G. Vivek Venkatswamy, announced that the State government is preparing to enact a comprehensive new law designed to safeguard the rights and well-being of this workforce. The Minister indicated that the proposed Gig Workers Bill will undergo deliberation by the Cabinet before being presented to the Assembly. MLAs Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, Beerla Ilaiiah and others also raised additional concerns and suggestions. Dr. Vivek said that upon the Bill's approval by the Assembly, a specialised board will be established to represent gig workers. This board will be responsible for managing a grievance redressal system and ensuring that gig workers throughout the state receive protection, fair treatment, and social security, he said. (NSS)

EPFO-ESIC outreach drive "Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0" on March 27

HYDERABAD: The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), regional office in Banjara Hills, in collaboration with the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), is organizing the "Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0" (NAN) outreach program. This initiative aims to increase awareness among the employers and employees through district-level engagement. The program focuses on two key areas: Grievance redressal and Awareness and education. The outreach sessions are scheduled to be held on the 27th of every month (or the next working day if the 27th is a holiday). For March 2026, the program will take place on March 27 (Friday), from 9:00 AM to 5:45 PM, at: Wellness Hospitals, Ameerpet.

Prof J Anuradha takes charge as acting VC of UoH

HYDERABAD: J. Anuradha, senior most professor, has assumed charge as the in-charge Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hyderabad from March 13, following the retirement of B.J. Rao who was relieved on March 12 on attaining the age of 70 years. A senior professor and noted Kuchipudi dancer, Prof. Anuradha becomes the first woman to hold the post (in-charge) at the university. With over three decades of service, she has played a key role in strengthening dance as an academic discipline. She has guided 12 PhD scholars, authored several works on South Indian art, and contributed to national bodies like the Sangeet Natak Akademi. Prof. Anuradha said her focus will be on ensuring smooth academic and administrative functioning until a regular Vice-Chancellor is appointed. (NSS)

ONLY COMMUNISTS STAND BY THE PEOPLE: KUNAMNENI

HYDERABAD

Kunamneni Sambasiva Rao, CPI Telangana State Secretary and MLA, said that whenever people face difficulties, it is the Communist Party that comes to their support. He remarked that those who once questioned where communists were are now seeking their support during tough times.

On Monday, a "Municipal Workers' Maha Dharna" was organized at Indira Park in Hyderabad under the leadership of the AITUC Telangana State Municipal Workers and Outsourcing Employees Union. The protest demanded that contract and outsourced workers working in GHMC corporations and municipalities across the state be made permanent, be paid a minimum monthly wage of ₹26,000, and that permanent workers be given four DAs along with the immediate announcement of PRC.

Participating in the protest, Sambasiva Rao said he did not attend as an MLA but as one among the workers. He recalled forming a municipal workers' union in Kothagudem about 40 years ago. He questioned why governments pay permanent employees higher salaries while contract and outsourced workers, who perform the same duties, are not paid equally.

He criticized the lack of minimum wages for workers who risk their health and lives and work even harder than others. He stated that he was elected as an MLA because of the votes of municipal and Singareni workers, vegetable vendors, hamalis, and construction workers in Kothagudem and



Palancha municipalities.

He also mentioned that in recent corporation elections, CPI won the Kothagudem mayor seat and even made an auto driver the mayor, highlighting the party's connection with workers and the poor.

"If we only wanted power and positions, why would we remain in the Communist Party? We could join other parties. If everyone seeks only positions, who will speak for the poor? The red flag will never change—it was born for the poor. We must protect it. The AITUC flag was established in 1920 for the working class, and later in 1925, the Commu-

nist Party was formed," he said. He assured workers that he would raise their issues in the Assembly and bring them to the attention of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka. He called upon workers to unite under the red flag and achieve their rights through struggle.

He pointed out that while workers seek Communist support during struggles, they often vote for other parties during elections. He urged them to vote for CPI instead, stating that political power would then be in their hands, allowing them to resolve their own issues.

M. D. Yusuf, AITUC State President, warned that if the government fails to resolve municipal workers' issues, sanitation work across the state would be halted and a strike would be launched. He also demanded jobs for heirs of workers above 60 years and ₹50,000 for funeral expenses of deceased workers.

S. Balraj, AITUC State General Secretary, demanded equal pay for equal work as per Supreme Court orders and called for the abolition of agencies and the establishment of a special corporation. Several union leaders and a large number of workers participated in the program.



Revanth, Bhatti distribute Rs.1 Cr insurance cheques to deceased power staff kin

HYDERABAD,

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka distributed ₹1 crore insurance cheques to families of deceased electricity employees in the Assembly Hall on Monday.

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka stated that this is a historic initiative in the country and no other state has implemented such a scheme for the welfare of government employees. He explained that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the Cabinet took this key decision with a strong commitment to employee welfare in Indiramma Rajyam.

Speaking on the occasion of distributing ₹1 crore accident insurance cheques to the families of electricity employees who lost their lives in the line of duty, Bhatti Vikramarka expressed concern that when a government employee dies while on duty, their family is often left in a vulnerable financial situation. Recognising the

hardships faced by such families, the government has introduced an unprecedented accident insurance scheme of ₹1.20 crore—unlike anywhere else in the country—to ensure that no government employee's family is left helpless, Bhatti Vikramarka said.

He stated that this scheme will benefit over 51,000 employees in power utilities, 41,000 employees in Singareni, and about 7.57 lakh government employees and pensioners' families across the state, providing them with financial security.

He recalled that soon after coming to power, the government launched this scheme as a pilot project in Singareni, SPDCL, NPDCL, and Transco, prioritising the welfare of electricity employees.

Ministers Uttam Kumar Reddy, Sridhar Babu, Tummala Nageswara Rao, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Ponguluri Srinivas Reddy, Seethakka, Jupally Krishna Rao, Gaddam Vivek, Azharuddin, Energy Secretary Naveen Mittal, and others participated in the programme.

Minister Jupally Reviews the Latest Situation at Basara Triple IT



HYDERABAD

Minister Jupally Krishnarao, in charge of the joint Adilabad district, held a high-level review in Hyderabad on Monday regarding the situation at Basara Triple IT (RGUKT), the students' protests, and the subsequent declaration of holidays. Professor Govardhan, the VC of Basara Triple IT, and OSD Murali Darshan explained to the minister the current conditions on campus and the reasons behind the students' agitation.

The VC informed the minister that, considering the students' protests and to maintain law and order on campus, it was necessary to declare holidays as a precautionary measure. He also briefed the minister on the students' main demands and the developments that

led to the announcement of holidays. During the meeting, Minister Jupally Krishnarao stated that students are highly talented and should not jeopardize their bright future by protesting in anger.

He emphasized that any issues should be resolved through dialogue, and the government is ready to safeguard the interests of the students. He also clarified to officials that there is no compromise when it comes to improving campus infrastructure and academic standards.

The minister instructed the VC to take steps to restore normalcy on campus soon and to reassure students and their parents. He further mentioned that he would personally visit the Triple IT after the Assembly sessions to interact with the students.

Free rice scheme misused? FGFG flags massive irregularities in Telangana

HYDERABAD

Forum for Good Governance (FGG) President M. Padmanabha Reddy has urged the Telangana government to conduct an intensive review of white ration cards, alleging large-scale inclusion of ineligible families under the free rice scheme.

In a representation to the Chief Minister, FGG chief highlighted that eligibility norms - annual income below Rs.1.5 lakh in rural areas and Rs.2 lakh in urban areas, along with land-holding limits - are being widely ignored. A family should own less than 3.5 Acres of wet land or 7.5 Acres of dry land.

Despite estimates suggesting that less than 20% of the population falls below the poverty line, nearly 85% of households are reportedly receiving free rice, raising serious concerns about misuse and fiscal burden.

FGG pointed out that while the Government of India allocates food grains sufficient to cover genuine BPL families, the state has expanded coverage significantly. With over 1.05 crore ration cards issued, the total beneficiaries allegedly exceed the state's population when averaged per household.

A field study by FGG revealed



striking anomalies: Ankopoor village (Nizamabad district): A prosperous village with high vehicle ownership, foreign remittances, and strong tax revenues still has over 1,200 families receiving free rice, though only about 300 qualify under norms.

As for Ranga Reddy district, which is one of the richest districts in India, shows 98.7% household coverage under the scheme, contradicting economic indicators.

In the media a lot of reports appeared that the eligibility criteria is not followed and for electoral gains close to 85% of

households in the state are provided free rice at 6 Kgs / head. Various survey reports mention that families below poverty line (BPL) in Telangana are less than 20% of the population of the State. Government of India is allotting free rice to 54.67 lakh families covering 2 crore people in Telangana.

Rice issued by the Government of India is more than enough to cover all the BPL families in the state. Telangana State in addition to Central Government allotment has issued 35.28 lakh cards covering 90 lakh people. Again, the present

Government has issued another 15.12 lakh new ration cards making a total of 105 lakh cards. Taking an average of four persons per family the total population covered will be 420 lakhs which is more than the population of Telangana.

FGG noted that despite repeated representations, including to the Civil Supplies Minister, no corrective action has been taken so far. Calling it a "serious drain on public funds", the organization has demanded immediate action to weed out ineligible beneficiaries and ensure targeted welfare delivery.



DGP Invites Governor to Inaugurate 74th B.N. Mullick Memorial All India Police Football Championship-2026

HYDERABAD

The Director General of Police, Telangana Sri B. Shivadhar Reddy, met the Hon'ble Governor of Telangana, Sri Shiv Pratap Shukla, at Lok Bhavan on Monday and invited to grace the inaugural ceremony of the 74th B.N. Mullick Memorial All India Police Football Championship-2026 as the Chief Guest. The championship is scheduled to commence on March 25, 2026, at 3:00 PM at the Gachibowli Stadium, Hyderabad. During the meeting, the DGP briefed the Hon'ble Governor on the arrangements being made for the successful organisation of the championship, including details of participating police teams from various States, Union Territories, and Central Armed Police

Forces. The tournament, being organized with great prestige by the Telangana State Police, will feature a ceremonial Guard of Honour by police contingents, a march past by participating teams, and the unfurling of the All India Police Sports Flag. The Hon'ble Governor will formally declare the championship open. Cultural programmes have also been planned as part of the inaugural event. The championship will provide a platform for talented football players from across the country to showcase their skills, while also promoting sportsmanship, coordination among police forces nationwide. Smt. Abhilasha Bisht, Director, RBVRR Telangana State Police Academy, Sri Gajarao Bhupal, IGP (Sports), and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Decision by Jayashankar University Governing Council to train 30,000 Soil Health Volunteers

Training for two or three individuals in every revenue village

Plans to create awareness among 2,40,000 farmers

Key decision by PJTAU as part of the 99-day Public Governance-Progress Plan - Vice Chancellor Aldas Janaiah

HYDERABAD

The final meeting of the present Governing Council of Professor Jayashankar Telangana Agricultural University was held today under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Aldas Janaiah. During the meeting, along with the approval of the annual budget for the upcoming financial year, several key decisions were taken as part of the 99-day Public Governance-Progress Plan, he stated.

One of the major decisions is to provide training on soil health to two or three individuals from every revenue village within the next two months, with the support of the State Agriculture Department. The training will cover the



importance of soil health, soil testing, soil health cards, and report preparation.

These training programs will be conducted at 31 Krishi Vigyan Kendras and 15 research institutes under PJTAU. The trained soil health volunteers will then create awareness among farmers in their respective villages. This is expected to help farmers reduce excessive use of chemical fertilizers.

He further stated that healthy soil leads to healthy food production, which in turn contributes to human health. Additionally, farmers will gain awareness about which crops provide better in-

come, encouraging crop diversification. Another prestigious program, "Scientists at Farmers' Doorstep," has been approved to be conducted again this year from April 27 to May 25. Around 200 teams comprising university scientists, students, and agriculture department officials will visit approximately 1,600 villages across various districts of the state.

These teams will create awareness among about 2,40,000 farmers on key agricultural practices. The Vice Chancellor noted that last year's program received a very positive response and was highly beneficial to farmers, which is why it is being continued this year.

Through this initiative, farmers will be educated on the harmful effects of excessive use of chemical fertilizers, cultivation of high-demand paddy varieties, the importance of crop rotation, and various welfare schemes implemented by the state government for farmers and agriculture.

He added that these two innovative programs were approved by the university governing council today as per the directions of State Agriculture Minister Sri Tummala Nageswara Rao.

Telangana BJP president arrested during protest

HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP President N. Ramchander Rao was arrested here on Monday while staging a protest against the alleged failures and unfulfilled promises of the Congress government.

The BJP leaders accused the Congress government of coming to power on ambitious promises related to welfare, governance, but the government's "Praja Palana" (people's governance) has turned into "Praja Mosam" (betrayal of people). The past two years have been marked by disappointment, with commitments to farmers, women, youth, employees, and pensioners largely unmet. The arrest of Ramchander Rao was criticized by BJP as an example of the government's "anti-democratic approach", claiming that instead of addressing public concerns, authorities are suppressing dissent. The party termed the arrest "anti-democratic" and said the "Assembly Siege" protest reflected growing public anger in Hyderabad.