

SHORT TAKES

CPI hits back at Naidu over 'tourism' remark

TIRUPATI: Senior CPI leader K. Narayana on Friday criticised Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for his comments dismissing ideological systems and promoting "tourism" as a model. Narayana said Naidu's remarks, made during campaigning in Tamil Nadu, were "irrelevant and sarcastic", arguing that capitalism remains the prevailing global system. He questioned the practicality of replacing established ideologies with tourism-based thinking. The CPI leader also took a swipe at dynastic politics, suggesting regional parties often prioritise family interests, while hinting at the possible political rise of Nara Lokesh in Andhra Pradesh.

Cyberabad Traffic Police book 383 cases in SPL drive

HYDERABAD: The Cyberabad Traffic Police conducted a special enforcement drive across multiple locations, booking 383 cases against vehicles without proper or visible number plates. The drive covered key junctions, including Patancheru, Miyapur, Kukatpally, JNTU, Jeedimetla, Narsapur cross road and Medchal. Authorities collected fines amounting to Rs.80,600 during the drive. Officials stated the initiative aims to improve road safety and ensure compliance with Motor Vehicle regulations, warning that such drives will continue with strict enforcement. All vehicle drivers are advised to strictly adhere to the prescribed norms regarding proper display of number plates as per Motor Vehicle Rules. Such enforcement drives will continue in the future, and strict action will be taken against violators.

EPFO to hold 'Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0' outreach on Apr 27

HYDERABAD: The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), Rangareddy district, will conduct its outreach programme "Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0" (NAN) on April 27 across eight districts. The initiative aims to raise awareness among employers and employees about provident fund services and grievance redressal. Sessions will be held at multiple venues including educational institutions, municipal offices and industrial units across districts like Vikarabad, Mahbubnagar, Nagarkurnool, Narayanpet, Gadwal, Wanaparthy, Rangareddy and Hyderabad. Officials said the programme is part of EPFO's efforts to strengthen grassroots engagement and improve service delivery.

Centre must procure all MSP crops to ease state burden: Tummala



HYDERABAD

Minister for Agriculture Tummala Nageswara Rao expressed concerns that while the Union government announces the Minimum Support Price (MSP), it leaves the responsibility of crop procurement to the states, thereby placing a significant burden on them.

He urged the Central government to take on the responsibility of procuring all crops for which an MSP has been set. The Minister criticised the Central government for limiting its role to merely announcing the MSP, arguing that after these announcements, there is a lack of follow-up to ensure that farmers

actually receive the promised price. Tummala Nageswara Rao highlighted that no effective steps are being taken to guarantee that farmers obtain the MSP in the open market, leading to financial hardships for many. In states such as Telangana, the government purchases farmers' produce at the MSP specifically to prevent them from experiencing losses due to inadequate prices, a measure that further strains the state's finances.

He pointed out that this responsibility results in an additional financial burden of ₹2,000 to ₹3,000 crore annually on the state government, while no support is forthcoming from the Central government. In

light of this situation, the Minister reiterated his call for the Centre to manage the full procurement of all crops for which an MSP has been announced.

Tummala Nageswara Rao, along with Agriculture Commission Chairman Kodanda Reddy and members of the Commission, held a meeting at the Secretariat here on Friday and conducted a review with university scientists and officials from the department of Agriculture regarding the selection of paddy varieties to be made available for the upcoming Kharif season, seed availability, and cultivation plans.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that it has come to

the government's attention that last year, farmers faced difficulties during the sales process—and even failed to receive bonuses for certain varieties—due to the availability of as many as 33 different fine-grain varieties.

The Minister clarified that, in order to prevent such issues this year, the focus must be placed on making available a limited selection of varieties—specifically those that yield high returns for farmers.

He instructed officials to ensure that selected seed varieties are ready for farmers by May 15. The Minister clarified that only those seeds offering high yields and having market demand should be made available.



NGRI hands over SLBC Tunnel Safety Survey report to Uttam

- Findings to guide completion strategy
- Minister stresses worker safety
- Vows speedy completion of tunnel

HYDERABAD

The National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) has submitted a comprehensive survey report to State Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, assessing the structural integrity and sub-surface conditions of the ongoing Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel works.

The report was formally handed over by NGRI Chief Scientist, H.V. S Satyanarayana to the Minister during a review meeting on Friday on the project progress. The NGRI has employed advanced geophysical techniques such as seismic imaging and electrical resistivity tomography to detect anomalies invisible to conventional inspections.

NGRI officials highlighted observations on stress zones, seepage patterns, and tunnel roof stability, while also explaining factors behind the February 22, 2025 roof

collapse. Uttam Kumar Reddy emphasized the government's commitment to ensuring the safety of workmen, noting that scientific inputs from NGRI would be crucial in making informed decisions on tunnel completion.

The Minister appreciated NGRI's work and sought its active involvement in the ongoing soil investigations into the Medigadda, Annaram, and Sundilla barrages of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project, where rehabilitation works are planned. The report will be thoroughly examined, and necessary measures will be initiated based on its recommendations," the Minister said.

He asked the irrigation officials to fast-track works on the SLBC tunnel project by mobilizing necessary equipment and machinery from agencies within the country in addition to the machinery being procured overseas.

Ever since the works were resumed on the tunnel, a progress of 151.50 meters was achieved. Of late the list of machinery pressed into service has the addition of imported electric loaders and heavy dumpers. In a month's time the works will gather pace to complete 200 metres of tunnel excavation from each side per month.

Status of Marine Heat Waves in the Indian Ocean during 1-18, Apr

HYDERABAD

The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) issued a status of Marine Heatwave (MHW) advisory on 20th April 2026, to assess the status of thermal stress over the Indian Ocean. The Marine Heatwave Advisory Services (MAHAS) report indicates that 22%, 9%, and 5%

of the Arabian Sea are under "Watch," "Alert," and "Warning" categories, respectively, with sea surface temperature anomalies exceeding the 90th percentile of daily climatology. This warming trend, spreading along the west coast of India and extending toward Oman. It might be increases the likelihood of coral reef stress and a decline in pelagic fishery productivity. In the Bay of

Bengal, nearly 22% of the region (10% under Watch and 3% under Alert) is impacted, particularly around the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and parts of the eastern coast, where elevated temperatures may adversely impact coral reefs and disrupt plankton productivity. Persistent Marine Heatwave conditions in the southern and western Indian Ocean primarily

affects the coastal waters of South Africa, Mauritius, and Western Australia, and may influence pelagic fish migration and reduce overall open-ocean productivity. This bulletin serves as an important early warning for coastal communities and industries dependent on the blue economy. For more information, please visit: <https://incois.gov.in/portal/mhw/index.jsp>

BJP demands immediate solution of RTC strike

AS IT ENTERED THIRD DAY CAUSING SEVERE HARDSHIP TO PEOPLE

HYDERABAD

With the support of Telangana state BJP, RTC strike entered third day today paralysing transport services across the state causing severe hardship to general public which claimed a live of RTC bus driver Shankar Goud who severed over 22 years in the RTC.

BJP state president N Ramchander Rao today visited Bus Bhavan to express solidarity with striking employees and visited protest venue in RTC depot. He appealed RTC workers not to resort to any extreme steps as BJP will continue to support their struggle till the Congress government resolve their demands who were on strike in support of their pending demands.

The Congress government must respond now and take full responsibility for the present situation, he said adding that it was deeply heart-breaking that three RTC workers



have attempted suicide following the strike. It was painful that driver Kola Shankar Goud (from Mutthojipeta, Narsampet Mandal, Warangal District), who attempted suicide due to the strike has passed away while undergoing treatment.

Demanding adequate compensation to the family of Shankar Goud, he said this tragic situation has arisen solely because the Congress government failed to fulfill the demands of the RTC workers and resolve their issues. Rao alleged that

the state government was doing a grave injustice by completely ignoring the issues of RTC employees. Instead of resolving the strike, the government has attempted to evade its responsibility by wasting time in the name of committees.

BJP state chief said the party stood by the workers and fought on their behalf even during the previous BRS government, when workers went on strike demanding the merger of RTC with the government. Similarly, the failure to pay PRC arrears to RTC workers since 2017 and the non-payment of benefits due to retired employees clearly demonstrate the negligence of the governments, he said.

Rao said the state government must open its eyes now and merge the RTC with the government. It was a known fact that several states in the country have already implemented such measures.

He said struggle launched by RTC workers for the resolution of their legitimate demands has finally led to a strike, creating a worrying situation in the state.

Mee Ticket App Service

"Any ticket - One app"

Simple services through the Mee Ticket App

HYDERABAD

Are you planning to go out this weekend with your family for some fun? Thinking of traveling by metro... visiting a temple, a park... or perhaps exploring Golconda Fort or a museum? The kids have holidays, but are you worried about the summer heat? And once you get there, do ticket counters and long queues make you reconsider your plans?

Now, there's no need for that anymore. All you need is a smartphone. With just a single click, your entire weekend plan can be managed smoothly. Simply download the Mee Ticket App (MEE TICKET APP) from the Play Store, and you can book not only your travel tickets but also tickets to various places—all from the comfort of your home.

This Mee Ticket App, introduced through MeeSeva under the State Government's IT Department, now provides access to numerous services right from your mobile phone.

From bus and metro travel tickets



to temple visits, parks, museums, and forest safaris—you can book tickets for a wide range of services directly, without worrying about queues at the location. If you are traveling in an electric vehicle (EV car), the app also helps you find nearby charging stations.

The goal of the Mee Ticket App is to provide various indoor and outdoor activities and services through a single platform. Within just a few days of its launch, the app has gained significant popularity. Approximately 250,000 users have already downloaded it. Citizens have booked over 600,000 services, and transactions worth more than ₹4 crore have been completed securely. At 219 locations

managed by various government departments, people can directly access entry tickets for services through the app.

With the slogan "Any ticket - One app," the Mee Ticket App is gaining widespread popularity. The Minister for Information Technology, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, stated that more services across the state will soon be brought under the app, and IT services will be expanded further into citizens' daily lives. MeeSeva Commissioner T. Ravi Kiran also mentioned that instead of waiting in queues at destinations, people can simply download the Mee Ticket App and conveniently book entry tickets and services in advance.



FTCCI Excellence Awards 26 announced; entries open till May 10

HYDERABAD

The Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FTCCI) has announced its Annual Excellence Awards 2026, inviting entries across 21 categories, with the last date for submissions set as May 10.

The awards cover diverse sectors, including industry performance, innovation, healthcare, exports, CSR, and entrepreneurship, alongside individual recognitions such as women entrepreneurship and social impact. Interested organisations with a presence in Telangana can apply by submitting completed forms via email, with additional details available on the official awards website www.ftcciawards.in. There is a nominal entry fee. Filled in appli-

cation forms should be sent to ftcciawards@ftcci.in. For more details, contact on mobile numbers: 9121000199, 8008804529.

FTCCI President R. Ravi Kumar said the awards remain among the most credible recognitions in Telangana. Winners will be chosen by an independent jury featuring eminent personalities, including Justice Challa Kodanda Ram and Uday B. Desai.

The awards ceremony is scheduled for May 22 at JRC Convention Centre, with the Chief Minister invited to present the honours. Officials expect higher participation this year, building on last year's 200 entries. Instituted in 1974, the FTCCI Awards continue to celebrate excellence, innovation and contributions to Telangana's economic growth.

Empower rural girls through mobility, leadership, says Divya Devarajan

HYDERABAD

Stating that freedom in mobility begins with bicycle riding, Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Commissioner and SERP Chief Executive Officer Divya Devarajan on Friday emphasised that every girl child, particularly in rural areas, should learn to ride a bicycle.

This initiative will be taken up as part of expansion of SNEHA groups - an initiative aimed at federating girls below 18 years under the banner of safety, nutrition, empowerment, and health for adolescents.

At a high-level review meeting with district officials, she directed authorities to prepare a comprehensive Human Resource Development (HRD) plan as part of strengthening SNEHA groups, alongside imparting bicycle riding skills.

Divya Devarajan noted that



such training would also pave the way for girls to obtain driving licences in the future.

She said the summer vacation should be effectively utilised to help students secure essential documents such as caste, income, residence, and Aadhaar certificates required for pursuing higher education. The SERP Chief Executive Officer also instructed officials to

map local vulnerabilities and take corrective measures.

Addressing safety concerns, she said complaints from adolescent girls, for instance lack of street lighting, should be promptly resolved in coordination with local bodies, particularly after being brought to the notice of the sarpanch.

Divya Devarajan called for the preparation of a 'safety

plan' for adolescent girls, highlighting their vulnerability to eve-teasing, stalking, and other social evils. She said that the plans should be implemented in coordination with departments such as the police. SNEHA groups should also be encouraged to petition authorities to address local issues.

Divya Devarajan noted that about 9000 SNEHA groups had been formed with more than 90,000 girls so far, and stressed the need to increase this number three to fourfold. She said the summer period should be used to achieve saturation in mobilisation.

Divya Devarajan also suggested that weekly activities, including sports and other engagement programmes, be conducted as part of summer camps, culminating in a major concluding event.

During the meeting, officials raised difficulties in opening

bank accounts for SNEHA groups led by adolescent girls. Following the discussions, Divya Devarajan wrote to the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC), seeking facilitation of savings bank accounts for adolescent girl SHGs, as well as for persons with disabilities and elderly SHGs.

She further directed that male Development Assistant Officers (DAOs) be replaced with women SHG Village Organisation Assistants (VOAs) to better address gender-specific concerns. She added that honorarium would be paid to bicycle coaches engaged under the initiative.

Divya Devarajan instructed officials to submit a comprehensive action plan by Monday, focusing on ensuring continuity in education, prevention of child marriages, and addressing issues concerning adolescent girls.