AI misuse a threat to women's dignity, needs safeguards: Purandeswari

- The chairperson of Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women says Tirupati marks a turning point in women's technological empowerment
- Bihar first to reserve 50 percent local body seats for women, recalls Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman
- AP Assembly Speaker raises concerns over absenteeism in legislatures and calls for accountability

Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women Chairperson D Purandeswari speaking at the national conference in Tirupati on Sunday

Hans News Service
Tirupati

THE first National Conference of Parliamentary and Legislative Committees on Empowerment of Women was inaugurated in Tirupati on Sunday, marking a significant milestone in India's efforts to advance gender equality. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh, Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women Chairperson Daggubati Purandeswari, AP Assembly Speaker Ch Ayyanna Patrudu, Deputy Speaker K Raghu Rama Krishna Raju, and state ministers jointly declared the two-day event open.

Addressing the gathering, Purandeswari described it as a matter of pride that the journey of women's technological empowerment was beginning in Tirupati. Calling the event a 'turning point' in advancing women's representation, she said women MPs, MLAs, and committee members from across the country would exchange policies, best practices, and experiences.

"While artificial intelligence is necessary, it is also being misused to harm women's dignity. It is vital to frame safeguards," she cautioned. Resolutions passed at the conference would be implemented nationally and extended even to the grassroots level.

Purandeswari highlighted women's increasing participation in areas once considered inaccessible — from coal mining operations to rescue teams. She noted that rural women had adapted swiftly to digital payments and were now confident in using mobile applications. Women's presence in premier institutes like IITs and NITs, she said, was steadily growing.

Underscoring the need for supportive infrastructure at workplaces, she urged governments and institutions to ensure facilities such as toilets, rest areas, and crèches. Referring to Om Birla's call for 'gender-neutral language' in parliamentary bills, she appealed to state legislatures to adopt the practice.

She also cited new initiatives like Drone Didi, which trains women to operate drones for agricultural purposes, supported by enhanced SHG loan limits of up to Rs 20 lakh with subsidies. On cybersecurity, she informed that the parliamentary committee had worked with the IT and Home Ministries to prepare guidelines against online threats, with recommendations compiled from activists and NGOs.

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh paid tribute to former Chief Minister NT Rama Rao for his pioneering role in women's empowerment. He noted that many developed countries have prioritised women's progress, while Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched several programmes dedicated to women's welfare.

Citing Bihar's example, he recalled that it was the first state to reserve 50 percent of local body seats for women. Singh also praised Chandrababu Naidu for transforming Andhra Pradesh into a technology hub and initiating India's first skill census. "Today, more than half the employees at Sri City are women," he observed.

AP Assembly Speaker Ayyanna Patrudu raised a separate concern on absenteeism in legislatures. "The Assembly meets only 45 days a year. How can members fail to attend even that?" he asked, urging Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to issue guidelines to ensure accountability.

He stressed the need for cross-party collaboration in women's empowerment and recalled NT Rama Rao's initiatives, including equal property rights for women and establishing Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam in Tirupati. He also lauded Chandrababu Naidu for strengthening self-help groups and the current Andhra Pradesh government for inducting three women ministers.

The conference will continue on Monday with detailed deliberations on policy frameworks, technology-driven opportunities, and challenges in advancing women's empowerment across India.

Union Health Minister Nadda declares AP 'shining bright' under NDA rule

Says that AP is in Modi's heart, hence Prime Minister Modi is allocating crores of rupees for the development of AP

BJP national president and Union Health Minister JP Nadda and party key leaders greeting the people at the venue in Visakhapatnam on Sunday

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

UNION Health Minister and BJP national president J.P. Nadda asserted here on Sunday that the NDA government has rescued Andhra Pradesh from the "darkness" of the previous five years, steering the state toward a path of progress.

Addressing a huge public meeting at railway grounds in Visakhapatnam, organised as part of 'Sarathyam yatra' that concluded in the district on Sunday, the Union Minister reiterated that the BJP is one of the largest parties in the world with highest membership enrolment of 24 crore and 1,500 MLAs and other public representatives spread across various districts.

"Earlier, when I came to Tirupati, I noticed that the State was misruled by an irresponsible and corrupt government (referring to the YSRCP) and realised that it had to be changed. As the people of Andhra Pradesh were fed up with the YSRCP governance, they welcomed the NDA government by electing it with a thumping majority," he recalled.

Asserting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in the hearts of Andhra Pradesh people, while AP is in Modi's heart, JP Nadda said, it is one of the main reasons why the Prime Minister is allocating crores of rupees to the development of AP. "With the introduction of the new GST Act, the Prime Minister gifted people of the country ahead of Dasara and Diwali easing taxes," he stated, adding that all products will now become affordable for the middle class.

From the 11th place, Prime Minister Narendra Modi positioned India in the top three economies of the world in the past 11 years of his leadership, the Union Minister stressed. "The BJP is a party known for its commitment, discipline and ideology. Under the able leadership of Narendra Modi, India gained the top place on all fronts and is drawing global attention. Those who strive for the party are certain to gain recognition," he stated.

Talking about the growth of pharmaceutical sector, the Union Minister mentioned that India is a hub for it as the country supplies medicines to various parts of the world. This apart, about 92 percent of mobile phones are being manufactured in India, he informed.

Nadda highlighted how the Centre is extending support to AP government in the form of execution of projects, developing infrastructure, allotment of funds, establishment of institutions, etc.

Addressing the gathering, BJP State president PVN Madhav said, "Even as the Sarathyam yatra concluded in Visakhapatnam, it is going to be the beginning of a new era for the BJP. The yatra that commenced from Kadapa travelled 26 districts by getting close to people. The BJP is welcoming all sections of people to its fold. A number of activists have grown to be MLAs, MLCs and MPs and ministers in the party."

Health Minister Y Satya Kumar Yadav pointed out that the other parties are under the impression that the BJP has less strength in AP. "But the massive turnout for the public sabha proves otherwise. Under the able leadership of Narendra Modi at the Centre and N. Chandrababu Naidu in the state, Andhra Pradesh is set to witness exceptional growth in the next four years," he underlined.

'Committed to safeguard assets of Godugupet temple'

- Minister Kollu Ravindra announces that fencing would be installed at a cost of Rs one crore to safeguard temple properties

Minister Kollu Ravindra, Vijayawada MP Kesineni Chinni, APSRTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana Rao, Swachhandhra Corporation Chairman Pattabhi and others at Sri Bhunila Sametha Venkateswara Swamy Temple at Godugupet in Machilipatnam on Sunday

Hans News Service
Machilipatnam

MINISTER for Mines & Geology and Excise Kollu Ravindra and Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath alias Chinni reaffirmed their commitment to safeguarding the assets of Sri Bhunila Sametha Venkateswara Swamy Temple, Godugupet, Machilipatnam. Also, they assured that they will take steps to generate income for the temple's development.

On Sunday, Minister Kollu Ravindra, APSRTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana, Swachhandra Corporation Chairman Kommareddy Pattabhiram, and members of the Society for Vibrant Vijayawada visited the temple along with Vijayawada MP Kesineni Chinni. Priests and the temple committee, with Vedic chants and auspicious rituals, welcomed them. Special pujas were performed, and Prasadam was distributed to all participants.

As part of the programme, representatives of the Vijayawada Utsav Committee presented a cheque of Rs 45 lakh at the deity's feet for using 40 acres of temple land at Gollapudi, near Vijayawada, for 56 days during the upcoming Vijayawada Utsav and Dasara Sarannavaratri festivities scheduled from September 22 to October 2. The agreement, made under the supervision of the district Collector, also included a payment of Rs 15 lakh to farmers.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Kollu Ravindra dismissed rumours that the Godugupet temple lands located at Gollapudi near Vijayawada had been leased for 99 years, clarifying that the land is being used temporarily with formal agreements in place. "For decades, these lands have generated no income. By permitting the Vijayawada Utsav, the temple not only gains revenue but also ensures that its lands are protected," he said.

The Minister further announced that fencing would be installed at a cost of Rs 1 crore to safeguard temple properties and that legal disputes concerning 7 acres would be resolved at the earliest. He emphasised that protecting temple lands was their foremost responsibility, alongside creating sustainable income streams for the temple's growth.

Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath underlined that the Vijayawada Utsav was aimed at celebrating Telugu culture and arts while positioning Vijayawada as a cultural tourism hub, much like Mysore during Dasara celebrations. "It is unfortunate that misconceptions are being spread about temple lands. This decision was taken in consultation with the temple committee to benefit the temple and the community," he said.

The programme was attended by DCMS Chairman Bandi Ramakrishna, former Machilipatnam Municipal Chairman Baba Prasad, temple committee chairman Vadlamudi Lakshmi Narasimha Rao, and other members of the Godugupet Venkateswara Swamy Temple Committee.

AP braces for four days of rain, thunderstorms

Hans News Service
Vijayawada

ANDHRA Pradesh is forecast to receive light to moderate rainfall, accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, over the next four days due to a low-pressure area and trough, according to Prakhar Jain, Managing Director of the State Disaster Management Authority. He warned the public to remain vigilant and advised against standing under trees during thunderstorms.

On Monday, scattered thunderstorms and light to moderate rainfall are expected in Alluri Sitarama Raju, Kakinada, Konaseema, East Godavari, West Godavari, Eluru, Krishna, NTR, Guntur, Bapatla, Palnadu, Prakasam, Chittoor and Tirupati districts.

The remaining districts are likely to experience scattered light rainfall.

On Sunday evening, rainfall was recorded across several locations, with Guntur receiving the highest at 81 mm. Other areas included Turlapadu in Palnadu district (54.5 mm), Pedakurapadu (40.2 mm), Vangipuram in Guntur district (39.5 mm), and Mukkamula in Konaseema district (39 mm).

TIRUPATI TO GET BUS STATION WITH ALL MODERN AMENITIES

Hans News Service
Secretariat (Velagapudi)

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu at a meeting with the officials from NHLML and APSRTC at the Secretariat in Velagapudi on Sunday

IN a move to accommodate the growing number of pilgrims, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has directed the officials to build a modern, high-tech bus station in Tirupati. The new station is designed to handle about one lakh passengers daily and will feature extensive commercial and passenger facilities.

During a review meeting on Sunday with officials from National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) and Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC), the Chief Minister inspected five different design models for the project.

The new facility will be built on a 13-acre plot and will include space to accommodate up to 150 buses at one time, two separate entry and exit points for buses to manage traffic flow, commercial complex, shopping malls, and multiplexes, a helipad and a ropeway system, solar rooftop panels to generate electricity for the station's needs. In anticipation of a future all-electric fleet, the station will be equipped with charging facilities for every bus.

The Chief Minister instructed officials to further refine the designs and hold a meeting with all stakeholders to move the project forward. He also directed them to prepare plans for modernizing all bus stations across the State.

Judicial leaders call for safe environment for girls

- Justice Dhoraj Singh Thakur informs that approximately 90 million children worldwide have experienced sexual violence
- Bombay High Court Judge Justice Revati Mohite Dere stressed that a girl's safety is not a choice but a constitutional, moral, and social responsibility

AP High Court Chief Justice Dhoraj Singh Thakur and others at the state-level Stakeholders Consultation-2025 in Vijayawada on Sunday *Photo: Ch Venkata Mastan*

Hans News Service
Vijayawada

A state-level stakeholders' consultation meeting on 'Protecting the Girl Child in a Safe and Conducive Environment in India' was held at Tummalapalli Kalakshetram here on Sunday. The event brought together prominent legal personalities to discuss and strategise on safeguarding the rights and well-being of girls.

AP High Court Chief Justice Dheeraj Singh Thakur, the chief guest, highlighted the historical suffering of women, citing the practice of Sati as a tragic example. He noted that while conditions have improved, discrimination against women persists, with many families viewing a girl child as a burden rather than an asset, often leading to issues like child marriage.

Justice Thakur presented a grim picture of violence against children, citing global statistics: Approximately 90 million children worldwide have experienced sexual violence. Over one billion adults have suffered such violence during their childhood. 1.6 billion children are subjected to violent punishment by their caregivers at home.

He stressed the shocking reality that 90 percent of abuse cases against children are committed by family acquaintances. Justice Thakur urged parents to be vigilant, emphasising that children must be protected not just from outsiders but from those within their known circles. He also called for the Department of Education to conduct awareness programs for students, particularly boys in 9th and 10th grades, to sensitize them to the severe implications of the POCSO Act. He advised that victims can seek help through the 1981 or 1098 helplines.

Bombay High Court Judge Justice Revati Mohite Dere, also in attendance, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate. She emphasized that the Indian Constitution, through Article 39 and Article 15(3), provides constitutional guarantees for the protection and development of every child, especially girls and women. She questioned whether society has truly been able to provide a safe environment, despite these legal frameworks.

Justice Dere outlined several strategies for creating a safer environment. She stressed that a girl's safety is not a choice but a constitutional, moral, and social responsibility.

Justice Ravinath Tilhari, chairman of the Juvenile Justice Committee, echoed these sentiments, stating that protecting a girl child is a collective moral and constitutional duty.

Justice V Sujatha highlighted the critical importance of girls, stating that "a world without a girl child is like a world without water."

The event included discussions among various stakeholders, including IAS and IPS officers and members of the Juvenile Justice Committee. The conference was attended by High Court judges, heads of various government departments, district judges, and representatives from NGOs.