

Singareni to set up mega green, thermal power projects in Odisha

Company to sign MoUs with State govt tomorrow

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HYDERABAD /
KOTHAGUDEM

THE Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) will sign two Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the Industrial Promotion and Investment Corporation of Odisha Limited (IPICOL) on Thursday (December 18) for setting up mega thermal and green energy power projects with a total capacity of 4,900 MW in Odisha, according to SCCL Chairman and Managing Director N Balaram.

In a statement issued on Tuesday, the SCCL CMD said the company has decided to establish a 2,400 MW (3x800 MW) ultra-supercritical thermal power plant linked to its Naini coal block in Odisha. The MoU



with IPICOL will facilitate the implementation of the project.

He explained that as per conditions, coal produced from the Naini block must be utilised for captive power generation, making the thermal power project essential. The initiative is expected to benefit both Odisha and SCCL by ensuring optimal utilisation of coal resources and strengthening power infrastructure.

In addition to thermal

power, SCCL has drawn up ambitious plans to expand its green energy portfolio in Odisha.

As part of this, the company plans to set up 1,000 MW of solar power plants, 500 MW of floating solar power, 500 MW of wind power projects, and a 500 MW pumped storage power project, taking the total green energy capacity to 2,500 MW. A separate MoU for these projects will also be signed with IPICOL on December 18.

Officials of IPICOL have expressed their willingness to partner with SCCL in view of Odisha's power requirements and development priorities.

The MoUs will be formally signed in the presence of senior officials from both organisations.



Krishna Bhaskar appointed in-charge CMD of SCCL

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KRISHNA Bhaskar has been appointed as the In-Charge Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL).

The appointment comes as part of routine administrative changes in the state-run mining company. Krishna Bhaskar will now oversee SCCL's operations, including coal production, employee management, and strategic projects across Telangana.

Village development possible only under Cong rule: Sanjeev Mudiraj

Appeals to the people to elect Congress-backed candidates in third phase of polls

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MAHABUBNAGAR

District Congress Committee (DCC) president Sanjeev Mudiraj on Tuesday asserted that comprehensive village development is possible only under the Congress government and urged voters to support Congress-backed candidates in the third phase of local body elections.

Addressing a press conference at the Congress office in the district headquarters, Mudiraj said the Congress party had secured encouraging results in the first two phases of the Sarpanch elections, clearly reflecting the people's confidence in the party.

He stated that a large number of Congress-supported candidates emerged victorious due to public backing and appealed to voters to continue the momentum in the upcoming phase for the overall development of villages.



Highlighting the party's commitment to social justice, Mudiraj referred to Rahul Gandhi's vision of proportional representation based on population.

He said that under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the Telangana Assembly passed a resolution proposing 42 percent reservations for Backward Classes (BCs) and forwarded it to the Centre, but alleged that it was yet to be implemented. However, he noted that the Congress Party is implementing 42 percent reservations in general

seats at the organisational level. He added that the party had provided opportunities to SCs, STs, BCs, and minorities in general seats, with many candidates winning the elections. He said the Congress Party enjoys strong grassroots support across villages in the district.

MUDA Chairman Laxman Yadav, Market Committee Chairperson Bekkari Anita, and party leaders C.J. Benahar, Azmath Ali, Ramulu Yadav, Balaswamy, Kanchimi Laxman, Praveen Kumar, Moiz, and others were present at the press conference.

G RAM G Bill introduced in LS amid Oppn uproar

Continued from P1

Opposition members strongly opposed the proposed legislation at the introduction stage and pressed for sending the Bill to a Parliamentary panel for greater scrutiny. The MPs, including Priyanka Gandhi of the Congress, strongly objected to the "removal" of Mahatma Gandhi's name.

Opposing the Bill at the introduction stage, T R Baalu of DMK said Mahatma Gandhi lived in villages and worked for the welfare of the poor there. He said then prime minister Manmohan Singh brought the "noble bill" (MNREGA), which helped the poorest of the poor get 100 days of employment. The Father of the Nation is being "ridiculed" by the present government, he charged.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra registered her "strong objection" to the draft law, saying MNREGA was a revolutionary Act which was supported by all members of the House when it was passed. "Under

this, the poorest of the poor get 100 days of employment. This (present) Bill is weakening the employment rights of the poor. It is against the Constitution," she claimed. The MP from Kerala's Wayanad said the MGNREG Act has ensured the Centre provides 90 per cent of the funds for the works undertaken under the law. "It will be reduced to 60 per cent now. This will hit the finances of the state governments, especially those waiting for GST compensation, she pointed out.

"Under this bill, the Centre's control over the scheme will increase, but its responsibility will come down." Responding to certain remarks by some ruling party MPs, Priyanka said Mahatma Gandhi was not from her family, but he was from every family in the country. She proposed sending the Bill to a Parliamentary panel.

Congress' Shashi Tharoor took a sharp dig

at the government while opposing the VB-G RAM G Bill, recalling the 1971 hit Bollywood number -- "Dekho o deewano (tum) ye kaam na karo, Ram ka naam badnaam na karo (don't sully Lord Ram's name)". Tharoor asserted that the Bill is not merely an administrative tweak but an "assault on the very spirit and philosophical foundation of this crucial programme".

The Opposition members also came to the Well of the House, holding up photographs of Mahatma Gandhi, expressing their disapproval of the "removal" of the name of the Father of the Nation.

According to a copy of the Bill, it will provide a statutory guarantee of 125 days of wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to undertake unskilled manual work. Within six months from the date of commencement of the VB-G RAM G Act,

states will have to make a scheme consistent with the provisions of the new law.

In a statement, the Rural Development Ministry said the proposed legislation will establish a modern statutory framework aligned with the goal of 'Viksit Bharat 2047'. It said the Bill aims to create both employment and durable rural infrastructure through four priority verticals -- water security through water-related works, core rural infrastructure, livelihood-related infrastructure, and special works to mitigate extreme weather events.

All assets created are aggregated into the Viksit Bharat National Rural Infrastructure Stack, ensuring a unified, coordinated national development strategy, the statement said. The ministry termed it a "major upgrade" over MGNREGA, fixing structural weaknesses while enhancing employment, transparency, planning, and accountability.

Sydney attacker had Hyd roots: TG police

Continued from P1

He visited India on six occasions after migrating to Australia, primarily for family-related reasons such as property matters and visits to his elderly parents. It is understood that he did not travel to India even at the time of his father's demise.

His family members here expressed no knowledge of his radical mindset or activities, nor of the circumstances that led to his radicalization. The factors that led to the radicalisation of Sajid Akram and his son, Naveed appear to have no connection with India or any local influence in Telangana. Meanwhile, the Telangana Police stated that the police have no adverse record against Sajid Akram during his stay in India prior to his departure in 1998.

Modi's Jordan visit strengthens bilateral ties, 5 MoUs signed

Continued from P1

He also discussed the issues of fertilizer and agriculture; innovation, IT and digital technologies; critical minerals; infrastructure; health and pharma; education and capacity; tourism and heritage; and culture and people-to-people ties. The Prime Minister proposed that the two countries should aim to enhance bilateral trade to \$5 billion over the next 5 years. He also called for collaboration between Jordan's digital payment system and India's United Payments Interface (UPI). Jordan is an important supplier of fertiliser to India, and companies on both sides are in discussions for further substantive invest-

ment in Jordan to meet growing demand for phosphatic fertilizer in India.

PM Modi's first full-fledged visit to Jordan marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. India is Jordan's third largest trading partner. Jordan is also a leading supplier of phosphates and potash fertilizers for India. Around 17,500 Indian nationals currently live in Jordan, mostly working in textiles, construction, manufacturing and healthcare. While India exports cereals, frozen meat, petroleum products, animal fodder etc. to Jordan, fertilisers, especially phosphates and potash are imported.

Cong plans countrywide protest today

Continued from P1

Congress general secretary K C Venugopal, in a letter to all state Congress presidents, urged them to organise protests at all district headquarters. These protests must be held with portraits of Mahatma Gandhi, symbolising resistance to the erasure of his name and values, and highlight how the proposed law will impact the crores of beneficiaries of MGNREGA, he said in the letter. "The combined attack on Gandhiji's legacy, workers' rights and federal responsibility exposes a larger BJP-RSS conspiracy to dismantle rights-based welfare and replace it with charity controlled from the Centre," Venugopal said.

Trump sues BBC for \$10bn

Continued from P1

But the publicly funded BBC rejected claims it had defamed him, after Trump threatened legal action.

BBC chairman Samir Shah had called it an "error of judgment," which triggered the resignations of the BBC's top executive and its head of news. The speech took place before some of Trump's support-

ers stormed the US Capitol as Congress was poised to certify President-elect Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 election that Trump falsely alleged was stolen from him.

The BBC had broadcast the hourlong documentary -- titled "Trump: A Second Chance?" -- days before the 2024 US presidential election. It spliced together

three quotes from two sections of the 2021 speech, delivered almost an hour apart, into what appeared to be one quote in which Trump urged supporters to march with him and "fight like hell." Among the parts cut out was a section where Trump said he wanted supporters to demonstrate peacefully.

CM seeks IIM for TG

Continued from P1

The establishment of an IIM in Hyderabad would improve opportunities for the students of poor and middle-class families in Telangana, he added.

The CM also requested for immediate establishment of Kendriya Vidyalayas in Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Kamareddy, Jogulamba Gadwal, Narayanpet, Nagarkurnool, Suryapet, Vikarabad and Nirmal districts.

The CM urged Pradhan to establish Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas in Hanamkonda, Jangaon, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Jogulamba Gadwal, Mahabubabad, Medchal Malkajgiri, Medak, Mulugu, Narayanpet, Peddapalli, Rajanna Sircilla, Vikarabad, Wanaparthi, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri, Nirmal, and Adilabad districts. The state government is ready to provide necessary land and other facilities for the establishment of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, he told the Union minister.

IPL auction: Uncapped players strike gold!

Continued from P1

Seasoned South African opener Quinton de Kock returned to his old base Mumbai Indians for a base price of Rs 1 crore. Spencer Johnson remained unsold, while Anrich Nortje, who came with a base price of Rs 2 crore, was enlisted by LSG, who opened the bidding for the South Africa pacer. A total of 359 players -- 246 Indians and 113 overseas players -- are part of the mini auction pool with the 10 franchises bidding to fill up a maximum of 77 slots, including 31 reserved for foreign players.

Sonia lauds Revanth's efforts to develop TG

Continued from P1

Sonia Gandhi extended her best wishes to Revanth Reddy, expressing her hope that the state will be taken forward on the path of development in line with the Telangana Rising-2047 Vision document.

She made these comments when Revanth Reddy met her in Delhi on Tuesday and handed over the Telangana Rising-2047 Vision document.

The Chief Minister briefed Sonia Gandhi on the details of the Telangana Rising Global Summit-2025, which was held for two days on December 8, 9 in Telangana.

A 'north-south divide' over Hindi names for new laws

NEW DELHI

THE row over the renaming of MNREGA has highlighted the Centre's new practice of naming Bills in Hindi, deviating from the tradition of providing a Hindi and an English name for each Bill.

A slew of Bills in recent months have come with just Hindi names -- packing in an acronym -- which many have claimed is another attempt at homogenization through language.

The practice has resonated especially in the south, where leaders have equated it with another attempt at Hindi imposition.

The Congress is already seeing red over naming MNREGA -- a homage to Mahatma Gandhi -- after Lord Ram. While the BJP is jeering that it is another evidence of the party's aversion to Hindu religion and ethos, the use of Hindi names appears to be about to widen the north-south divide.

Many MPs and political leaders, meanwhile, have contended that the names in

Hindi are difficult to understand.

On Monday, as Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan presented the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill in the Lok Sabha, RSP(A) leader NK Premachandran said it was difficult for him to pronounce the name. He contended that this practice of using Hindi names violates Article 348(B) of the Constitution, which says new laws should have names in English.

Congress member Jothimani and DMK member T M Selvaganapathi also made their reservations clear. "I see this as an imposition of Hindi. Already, Tamil Nadu has been deprived of SSA funds just because we have opposed the three-language policy in the National Education Policy-2020," Jothimani said.

DMK leader T R Baalu also spoke against "imposition" of Hindi on southern states.

Congress's P Chidambaram said the change "is an affront to non-Hindi speaking

Hindi names so far

THE G Ram G -- which could replace the MNREGA, stands for Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Employment and Livelihood Mission (Rural) Bill.

A Bill for reforms in higher education is called Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill.

There is also Sabka Bima, Sabki Raksha Bill to amend insurance laws.

A Bill for allowing the entry of private sector into the field of atomic energy flips the system -- an English name that produces a Hindi

acronym. The "Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India" has the short name of SHANTI, meaning peace.

Earlier, the laws that replaced the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act were called Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Bill.

The Bhartiya Vayuyan Vidheyak law has replaced the Aircraft Act of 1934.

people and states that have an official language other than Hindi".

In a post on X, he said so far, the practice was to "write the title of the Bill in English words in the English version and in Hindi words in the Hindi version of the Bill. When no one pointed out any difficulty in the 75-year practice, why should (the) government make a change?"

What the Constitution says

Article 348(1)(b) of the Constitution says until Parliament decides otherwise, texts of all Bills, Acts, Ordinances, orders, rules, regulations, and by-laws at the Central and state levels, as well as all proceedings in the Supreme Court and High Courts, must be in English.

The English version should prevail in case of conflict with any other translation.

58 LAKH NAMES DELETED IN WEST BENGAL DRAFT SIR

NEW DELHI

IN a development likely to raise a political storm in poll-bound West Bengal, a total of 58 lakh names have been deleted from the state's draft voter list after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) to weed out duplication and errors.

Out of these 58 lakh names, 24 lakh have been marked as "dead", 19 lakh as "relocated", 12 lakh as "missing", and 1.3 lakh as "duplicate".

The publication of the draft list marks the end of the first phase of the Special Intensive Revision. Those whose names have been incorrectly excluded from the draft list can now raise objections and request corrections.

After addressing these objections, the final list will be published in February next year. The announcement of the Assembly polls in Bengal

is expected after the publication of the final list. SIR was last conducted in Bengal in 2002.

Trinamool MP Saugata Roy termed the deletion of 58 lakh names "injustice". "This is the BJP's conspiracy to remove legitimate voters from Bengal's list. We have set up voter assistance booths and we will help them submit forms to include their names in the

voter list," he said.

The publication of the draft list is likely to intensify the political uproar in Bengal over SIR.

Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee has opposed the exercise and accused the Centre and the Election Commission of using SIR to delete the names of lakhs of eligible voters ahead of the election.

24 lakh dead, 12 lakh missing