

# Disruption in LPG supply hits hotels

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Hotel workers cooking biryani on firewood at Quarry Market area in Rajamahendravaram

DEEKSHITULA  
SUBRAHMANYAM  
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

FUEL supply disruptions linked to the ongoing conflict in West Asia have begun affecting LPG availability across the joint East Godavari district during the past two weeks. While domestic cylinders are reaching households with some delay, a severe shortage of commercial LPG cylinders is creating difficulties for hotels, restaurants and small food businesses. Many hotel owners say the scarcity has forced them to cut down operations. Some restaurants have restricted service to a single meal a day, while small eateries and biryani stalls have started cooking on firewood stoves due to the lack of gas cylinders.

Residents say the impact of tensions involving Israel, the United States and Iran is felt locally despite assurances from authorities that supplies remain adequate. Mohanakrishna, an employee from Danavaipeta in Rajamahendravaram, said he had to wait nearly 15 days after booking a domestic cylinder before receiving delivery.

Officials acknowledge that LPG bookings have increased sharply in the undivided East Godavari district over the past 15 days. Gas agency operators say bookings have risen nearly threefold as consumers are placing orders in advance fearing shortages. This surge has made it difficult for agencies to deliver

cylinders within the usual timeframe. District Civil Supplies authorities, however, urged consumers not to panic. District Supply Officer Parvathi said domestic cylinders are being delivered on a first-in, first-out basis. She said around 20,000 bookings are currently pending for delivery within 72 hours, while about 17,000 cylinders were available in stock as of Sunday. On average, around 12,000 cylinders are supplied daily in the district. She added that LPG supplies are continuing from distribution points at Gokavaram, Visakhapatnam and Kondapalli near Vijayawada as usual and assured domestic consumers that there was no need for concern. Changes in booking rules

have nevertheless caused anxiety among families. Earlier, urban consumers could book the next cylinder 21 days after receiving one. The interval has now been extended to 25 days. In rural areas, consumers can place the next booking only after 45 days. Many households say this restriction is difficult to manage. M Krishnaveni, a homemaker, said families with four to six members often finish a cylinder within about 20 days, making it difficult to wait for the next booking window. Shortage of commercial cylinders has also led some businesses to use domestic LPG cylinders illegally in restaurants and food stalls. Following complaints, officials conducted inspections at several hotels during the past four days and seized 45 domestic cylinders being used for commercial purposes. Cases were registered against 22 persons under the relevant provisions.

The situation has prompted people to look for alternatives. Traders in Rajamahendravaram say sales of induction stoves and electric cookers have increased significantly as households prepare for possible supply delays. A dealer on Main Road, Satish, said demand for these appliances

has risen so sharply that many models are currently out of stock. Meanwhile, the effects of the conflict are also being felt in the edible oil market. Consumers allege that traders are increasing prices by citing supply disruptions. Over the past ten days, prices of various cooking oils have risen by up to Rs 20 per litre. A sunflower oil packet that previously sold for around Rs 165 is now priced at about Rs 180. Retail traders say wholesale suppliers are providing only half the quantity requested, claiming reduced availability. According to wholesale dealer Janardhan, the undivided district consumes nearly 75 tonnes of cooking oil every day, with more than half of the supply dependent on imports.

Palm oil raw material is largely imported from Singapore and Malaysia, while sunflower oil raw material comes mainly from Indonesia through sea routes. These shipments reach ports such as Kakinada and Krishnapatnam, where the oil is refined, packed and then distributed to markets across the Godavari districts. Traders say any disruption in imports quickly affects local availability and prices.

# 'Statue of Sacrifice' puts Telugu pride on global stage: Lokesh

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA



Minister Nara Lokesh addressing the gathering at the unveiling of Potti Srimamulu's statue in Amaravati on Monday

MINISTER for education and IT Nara Lokesh said the installation of the 58-foot bronze statue of Potti Srimamulu in Amaravati has taken the greatness of the Telugu people from the state capital to the international stage. He said the "Statue of Sacrifice" symbolises the pride and self-respect of Andhra Pradesh and stands as a living reminder of Srimamulu unparalleled sacrifice.

Lokesh participated in the unveiling ceremony of the 58-foot bronze statue of Amarajeevi Potti Srimamulu in the people's capital Amaravati along with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on the occasion of Srimamulu's 125th birth anniversary. The statue has been erected to commemorate his historic 58-day fast unto death demanding the formation of a separate Andhra State.

Paying tributes at the memorial, Lokesh said he felt proud to say that he is a Telugu citizen of Andhra Pradesh and that this sense of pride was given to the Telugu people by Potti Srimamulu. "He is not just an individual but a symbol of Telugu honour. His sacrifice gave us our state, and his birth anniversary is like a festival for

every Telugu person," he said. Lokesh recalled that during his Yuva Galam padayatra, he had promised members of the Arya Vaishya community that a grand statue of Amarajeevi would be installed in Amaravati. "It gives me immense satisfaction that we were able to fulfil that promise in a short time," he said.

He noted that the foundation for the statue was laid on September 3, 2025, and the project was completed within 194 days, reflecting the commitment of the coalition government, the memorial trust, officials, workers and donors who contributed to the initiative. Lokesh described Potti Srimamulu as a tireless freedom fighter and social reformer who fought selflessly for society without seeking power or political positions. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, Srimamulu joined the Sabarmati Ashram,

participated in the freedom movement, and even went to jail during the Satyagraha struggle. He also led movements for Dalit temple entry in Nellore and fought against untouchability, undertaking several hunger strikes for social justice. Lokesh explained that Srimamulu began his historic fast on October 19, 1952, at the residence of Bulusu Sambamurthy in Madras and continued it for 58 days, sacrificing his life for the cause of a separate Andhra State. His death stirred the nation and ultimately led to the formation of Andhra State with Kurnool as its capital on October 1, 1953. He also referred to historian Ramachandra Guha, who wrote that Potti Srimamulu had a profound impact on India's history and geography, as his sacrifice paved the way for the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines.

# APCRDA wins 'Economic Times GovTech Award 2026'

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VIJAYAWADA

THE Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) has received national recognition for its innovative digital planning initiative for the development of the people's capital, Amaravati. The authority's "Amaravati Integrated Digital Urban Planning and Governance Platform" has been selected for the Gold Award at The

Economic Times GovTech Awards 2026.

The award has been announced by The Economic Times, which informed APCRDA Commissioner K. Kannababu about the honour and congratulated the authority for its achievement.

The digital platform, developed based on the Amaravati Master Plan, integrates advanced technologies such as Amaravati Digital Twin and ICT platforms

to support efficient urban planning and governance. The project has been selected for the Gold Award under the "Smart Cities & Urban Tech Leadership" category, recognizing its role in enabling technology-driven city development.

The Economic Times GovTech Awards aim to identify and honour innovative technology projects implemented in the government sector across India. The winners were selected

by a distinguished jury comprising experts and former senior government officials.

The awards will be formally presented at a ceremony scheduled to be held Thursday at the Hyatt Regency in New Delhi.

Officials said the recognition highlights the growing emphasis on digital governance and smart urban planning in Amaravati and strengthens the state's efforts to build a modern, technology-driven capital city.

# SRIRAMULU REMEMBERED

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE



District officials and public representatives paying tributes to Potti Srimamulu in Ongole on Monday

SOCIAL Welfare Minister Dr Dola Sree Bala Veeranjanya Swamy paid tributes to Potti Srimamulu, the freedom fighter who sacrificed his life for a separate state for Telugu people, on the occasion of his 125th birth anniversary, and described Srimamulu's fighting spirit as an enduring inspiration for generations. The celebrations were held in Ongole, where Minister Swamy, along with Collector P Raja Babu, Joint Collector Kalpana Kumari, MLA Damachala Janardhana Rao, Mayor Gangada Sujatha, AP Tourism Development Corporation Chairman

Dr Nukasani Balaji, and other dignitaries garlanded Srimamulu's statue near CVN Reading Room. Speaking at the event, the minister announced that the state government is installing a 58-foot bronze statue of Potti Srimamulu in Amaravati, honouring his immense

contribution to the Telugu people. The Collector said that Srimamulu's historic fast-unto-death laid the foundation for the formation of linguistic states, leading to the establishment of Andhra State. MLA Janardhana Rao emphasised that it is the responsibility of every citizen to pass Srimamulu's legacy to future generations and announced plans to install a bronze statue at the CVN Reading Room Centre.

The event concluded with a special programme at Prakasam Bhavan, where attendees watched a live broadcast of the bronze statue unveiling in Amaravati, attended by the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, and other ministers.

# 29 bonded labourers rescued

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ONGOLE

TWENTY-nine bonded labourers belonging to Chenchu tribal families from VY Colony of Kurichedu Mandal were rescued after being forced to work at a coal kiln near Kalvakurthy Road of Telekapalli Mandal in Nagarkurnool district, for nearly a decade.

The rescue was initiated by the Dalit Bahujan Resource Centre (DBRC), whose representatives visited the site upon receiving information and alerted the Nagarkurnool District Revenue Divisional Officer in coordination with India Labour Line. A special team led by Telekapalli Tahsildar Vijay Kumar, along with SI Naresh, District Labour Officer Rajkumar, and DCPU Officer Srisailem, rescued all 29 individuals, including men, women, and children



Collector P Raja Babu and other officials with those rescued from bonded labour in Ongole on Monday

from six families.

Kiln owner Lalu faces criminal charges under relevant bonded labour laws. The rescued workers were subsequently brought to Ongole and presented before collector P Raja Babu, who assigned rehabilitation responsibilities to Joint Collector Kalpana Kumari.

In a heartwarming gesture, a two-month-old baby born to rescued couple Shiva and Parvathi was named

'Prerana' (Inspiration). DBRC Project Director Al-ladi Deva Kumar noted that this is Prakasam district's second bonded labour rescue case this year. District Labour Officer Gayatri Devi, DBRC state coordinator Hemalatha, area coordinator Darla Koteswara Rao, India Labour Line Guntur in-charge Suresh Kumar, Prakasam in-charge Kiran Kumar, and others participated in the programme.

# Reply sought on bringing back artifacts to India

NARASARAOPET: Narasaraopet MP Sri Krishnadevarayalu raised a question in the Lok Sabha regarding the steps being taken by the Central Government to bring back India's historical and cultural heritage artifacts that were taken abroad on Monday.

It was recalled that in 2003, when Narendra Modi was serving as Chief Minister, he visited Geneva and brought back the mortal remains of freedom fighter Shyamji Krishna Varma to India. After becoming Prime Minister in 2014, Modi also facilitated the return of around 600 historical and cultural artifacts from countries such as the United States and Australia. Speaking about the Narasaraopet parliamentary constituency he represents, he noted that several archaeological and heritage objects belonging to the ancient Amaravati civilization and Buddhist stupas from the period of Acharya Nagarjuna had been taken abroad.

He asked the government to clarify what concrete steps are being taken to bring back such heritage objects currently held by foreign institutions such as the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

Responding to the question, Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat stated that many of India's historical and cultural artifacts were taken abroad during the period of colonial rule. He explained that under international agreements among countries worldwide, if artifacts belonging to one nation—especially those dating prior to the 17th century—are located in another country, they can be returned to their country of origin. Shekhawat acknowledged that many artifacts related to the Buddhist stupas established by Acharya Nagarjuna, as well as several other Indian antiquities, are housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

# Uninterrupted LPG supply assured

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ONGOLE

PRAKASAM Collector P Raja Babu assured the residents that adequate measures have been taken to ensure an uninterrupted cooking gas supply across the district, despite the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel in the Middle East.

Addressing a press conference at the Collectorate on Monday alongside Joint Collector Kalpana Kumari, the Collector urged citizens not to believe social media rumours claiming that gas stocks would deplete and



Collector P Raja Babu and joint collector Kalpana Kumari speaking at a press meet in Ongole on Monday

prices would rise due to the Middle East war situation. He revealed that Prakasam district has 551759 domes-

tic LPG connections served by 39 gas agencies, while Markapuram district has 322279 connections served

by 25 agencies. Against the daily requirement of 9875 cylinders, dealers currently hold 11542 cylinders, distributed on a First-In-First-Out basis, with no shortages anywhere.

Joint collector Kalpana Kumari stated that a Control Room has been established under the Civil Supplies Department to address public grievances. Officials are conducting daily inspections of hotels and restaurants to prevent the misuse of domestic cylinders for commercial purposes, while monitoring dealers' stock registers, she added.

# GMC passes budget for FY 2026-27

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

GUNTUR Municipal Corporation council special meeting held on Monday passed an estimated budget of Rs 1,700 crore for the financial year 2026-27. GMC showed opening balance of Rs 7,74,28,13,058 and receipts of Rs 926,33,68,007. It allotted funds for the development of infrastructure in the city. Mayor Kovelamudi Ravindra presided over the meeting. The council held detailed discussions on the development works undertaken in the city and the implementation of various welfare schemes.

Speaking on this occasion, Ravindra stated that several development works have been undertaken in the corporation during the last ten months. He said that under the leadership of chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, he learned the importance of welfare and development. Development



Mayor K Ravindra addressing GMC Council meeting on Monday. GMC commissioner K Mayur Ashok, MLA Galla Madhavi are also seen

works have been carried out in all 57 divisions without any discrimination of caste or religion, he said. He said, the budget is useful for the development of Guntur. Everyone cooperated with him in terms of administration and governance. He said works worth Rs 200 crore have been sanctioned in the East zone, while development work Rs 279 crore has been taken up in the West zone. He said that

the works that were initiated are being completed as planned before March 31. Special focus has been given to roads and drainage works and many of them have been completed. Regarding the third phase of the Inner Ring Road, he said compensation was paid to those who lost their houses soon after he assumed office. The Sankar Vilas Bridge will be completed by March 31, he said.

# 3 killed in road mishap

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MARKAPURAM

THREE persons were killed and five others severely injured in a tragic road accident in Markapuram district on Monday. A mini lorry carrying a load of bananas collided head-on with a Force Toofan vehicle on

the road between Mittameedipalli in Markapuram Mandal and Jangamguntla village in Cumbum Mandal. The injured were initially rushed to Government Hospital in Cumbum for first aid and were shifted to District Hospital in Nandyal for advanced medical treatment. Police identified the deceased as residents

of Chikodi village, Belgaum district, Karnataka. They were reportedly returning from Srisailem and heading towards Mahanandi when the accident occurred. One person travelling in the banana-laden mini lorry was also seriously injured.

The collision scattered bananas across the Amaravati-Anantapur National Highway, disrupting traffic. Police reached the scene and launched an investigation into the accident.

# Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0

# Safe water supply to villages through taps

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

THE Central government has launched Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0 with an estimated outlay of Rs 8.69 lakh crore to ensure safe and sustainable drinking water supply to every rural household in the country. The mission aims to provide tap water connections to all villages, protect public health, and support the vision of building a healthy and developed Viksit Bharat.

Addressing the media at the Secretariat here on Monday, Chairman of Twenty Point Programme Implementation (Viksit Bharat - Swarna Andhra Pradesh) Lanka Dinakar said that in Andhra Pradesh, the coalition government



L Dinakar

led by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu is working to strengthen the implementation of the mission and address the gaps that occurred during 2019-2024. The state government has set a target to ensure safe drinking water through tap connections to all rural households by December

2028, supported by sustainable water sources and improved infrastructure.

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan is overseeing corrective measures to expand the scheme and ensure safe drinking water for around 96 lakh rural households across the state. Due to earlier administrative issues, the estimated project cost in Andhra Pradesh has now increased to about Rs 81,000 crore.

The Union Cabinet has also extended the Jal Jeevan Mission timeline to December 2028 to enable states to complete pending works. Nationally, the mission has already provided tap water connections to over 15.8 crore rural households, significantly improving access to safe drinking water.