

State has turned into a drug capital, alleges YSRCP

• YSRCP Visakhapatnam district president KK Raju came down heavily on MP Putta Mahesh Kumar for his alleged involvement in a drug party

• Demands a detailed probe into Eluru MP's alleged involvement in the case

• Says that there is a free flow of ganja, heroin and cocaine in the state

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YSRCP Visakhapatnam district president KK Raju speaking to the media in Visakhapatnam on Monday

ANDHRA Pradesh turned into a 'drug capital,' while TDP has become 'Telugu Drugs Party,' criticised YSRCP Visakhapatnam district president KK Raju.

At a media conference held here on Monday, KK Raju came down heavily on Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar for his alleged involvement in a drug party at a farmhouse in Moinabad. "The TDP-led coalition government has turned

into a drug-capital under the leadership of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu," he remarked.

Accompanied by YSRCP east constituency coordinator Molli Apparao, among others, KK Raju demanded immediate resignation of the Eluru MP and expulsion from the party. He said that the incident shocked the people of Andhra Pradesh. "However the ruling party

is trying to protect the MP despite Mahesh testing positive for drug consumption," he said.

Further, KK Raju stated that there is a free flow of ganja, heroin and cocaine in the state and alleged that a number of coalition leaders are involved in the network.

The YSRCP Visakhapatnam district president said that a mafia culture is in progress in Andhra Pradesh.

Recalling an earlier incident, Raju said how the TDP created ruckus when a container carrying dry yeast of 25,000-kg reached Visakhapatnam Port from Brazil, suspecting cocaine. "However, CBI officials confirmed that the container comprised dry yeast," he recalled.

Despite the seriousness of the case, KK Raju questioned why the Eluru MP

was granted station bail.

Accusing the government of double standards on curbing ganja in the state, Raju demanded a detailed probe into Eluru MP's alleged involvement in the drug case. "If Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu respects constitutional values, he should ensure that Mahesh resigns from the MP post and launch an investigation with immediate effect.



District in-charge Minister Kollu Ravindra at the 'Raithanna Meekosam' programme held in Anakapalli district on Monday

Coalition govt committed to strengthening agriculture sector, asserts Ravindra

• Minister for Mines, Excise and Commercial Taxes Kollu Ravindra the govt has successfully implemented 'Annadata Sukhibhava' scheme

• Under the scheme, approximately Rs 9,000 crore was directly credited into farmers' bank accounts in three phases

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ANAKAPALLI

MINISTER for Mines, Excise and Commercial Taxes Kollu Ravindra said the coalition government is strongly committed to the development of the agricultural sector and farmers' welfare remains a top priority. Addressing farmers at the 'Raithanna Meekosam' programme held on Monday at Venkuppalem village in Anakapalli mandal, the Minister stated that the initiative was launched in Gannavaram to highlight various welfare measures implemented for farmers across the state.

Ravindra said that the government has successfully implemented 'Annadata Sukhibhava' scheme, benefiting nearly 46.83 lakh farmers across Andhra Pradesh. Under the scheme, approximately Rs 9,000 crore was directly credited into farmers' bank accounts in three phases. Rs 3,174 crore in the first phase, Rs 3,135 crore in the second phase, and Rs 2,600 crore in the third phase, he informed.

The Anakapalli district in-charge Minister informed

that Rs 132 crore has been deposited into the accounts of farmers in Anakapalli district alone, emphasising the government's commitment towards supporting farmers at the grassroots level. A record budget allocation of Rs 53,000 crore has been made for farmers' welfare and it reflects the government's dedication to strengthening the agricultural economy, he added. Talking about environmental and health concerns, the minister cautioned that the excessive use of chemicals in agriculture has become a serious threat. He urged farmers and stakeholders to recognise the consequences of chemical dependency in farming practices. Citing the example of Punjab, he noted that several farmers have been affected due to cancer following their prolonged exposure to chemicals and several patients reportedly travelling daily to Delhi for the treatment.

To address this issue, Ravindra said that the government is actively promoting natural farming, which not only safeguards farmers' health but also enhances soil fertility and sustainable crop productivity.

The Minister also pointed out the growing agricultural potential of Anantapur district, stating that while the Godavari districts were traditionally known as the state's agricultural backbone, Anantapur is now emerging as a strong competitor due to improved farming practices and irrigation initiatives.

Speaking on irrigation projects, Ravindra stated that the government is

working towards completing the Polavaram project by 2027 which will enable abundant irrigation water supply to several regions, including Anakapalli district through the Left Canal.

He also said that during a recent visit to Andhra Pradesh, Bill Gates expressed willingness to provide technical assistance for agricultural development, opening new avenues for technological advancement in farming.

Speaking on the occasion, Anakapalli District Collector Vijaya Krishnan explained that the main objective of the 'Raithanna Meekosam' programme is to ensure that officials from agriculture and allied departments visit farmers' homes and spread awareness about modern agricultural practices. She said that natural farming is being actively promoted in the district, and directed agriculture officials to intensify awareness campaigns to encourage farmers to adopt sustainable farming methods across larger areas.

Highlighting the government's push towards agricultural modernisation, she stated that the government is encouraging mechanisation in farming, and 60 agricultural drones have already been distributed to farmers in the district to assist in precision farming and crop monitoring.

District Agriculture Officer Asha Devi, along with former MLA Peela Govinda Satyanarayana, Gava Corporation chairman Malla Surendra Babu, and several farmers, participated in the programme.

Operationalisation of ECHS Polyclinic to cater to ex-servicemen



Naval officials inaugurating Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme Polyclinic in Vizianagaram

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IN a concrete step towards strengthening healthcare services for the veteran community, a new Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) Polyclinic has commenced functioning at Vizianagaram.

The facility was recently inaugurated by Rear Admiral M Murali Mohan Raju, Chief Staff Officer (Personnel and Administration), Eastern Naval Command (ENC), in the presence of Surgeon Rear Admiral Dilip Raghavan, Command Medical Officer, ENC and members representing the ex-servicemen fraternity.

The establishment of the ECHS Polyclinic at Vizianagaram is aimed at providing accessible and quality healthcare services to approximately 15,000 ECHS beneficiaries, including veterans ex-servicemen, Veer Naris, and their eligible dependents residing in Vizianagaram district and surrounding areas. The polyclinic will offer comprehensive outpatient

medical services, including consultation with medical specialists, diagnostic facilities, pharmacy services, and referral to empanelled hospitals for advanced treatment where required.

The importance of ensuring timely and effective medical care for veterans who have served the nation with dedication and distinction was highlighted.

Equipped with modern medical infrastructure to cater to the healthcare needs of ECHS beneficiaries, the polyclinic is staffed with qualified medical and support personnel. The facility is expected to significantly reduce travel time and improve access to medical services for a large number of veterans, veer Naris and their families in the region.

Members of the ex-servicemen (ESM) community expressed their appreciation for the establishment of the facility, noting that it will greatly enhance healthcare accessibility and convenience for beneficiaries in the district. Later, the officials interacted with veterans.



Participants at the workshop organised at Dr. Lankapalli Bullayya College in Visakhapatnam on Monday

A two-day workshop on column chromatography and HPLC techniques

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A two-day workshop on 'thin layer, column chromatography and HPLC techniques' was organised by the Department of Chemistry, Dr. Lankapalli Bullayya College, Visakhapatnam on Monday.

The workshop, held in association with the Royal Society of Chemistry Deccan Section, India, was inaugurated by GVR Sharma, convener of the programme, Professor of Chemistry and head of chemical research, explained the significance of the workshop.

Prof Sharma stated that chromatographic techniques are widely used in both academic research and industrial applications.

He urged the students to utilise the opportunity to gain knowledge and practical skills from the eminent speakers during the two-day programme.

Secretary and Correspondent of Dr Lankapalli Bullayya College G Madhu Kumar emphasised the need to continuously upgrade knowledge in chemistry and chemical sciences and highlighted the importance of using scientific knowledge for the constructive development of society.

Principal GSK Chakravarty spoke about the achievements of the college, while Kiran and the team from Spincio Biotech displayed HPLC and GC instruments for live demonstration.

V Peesapati, chairman

of the Royal Society of Chemistry, Deccan Section, shared his professional experiences and explained the applications of thin layer chromatography and column chromatographic techniques used in the pharmaceutical industry. He advised faculty and students to maintain the traditional guru-shishya relationship to ensure the continuous flow of knowledge.

Principals, vice-principals, heads of departments and faculty members attended the programme.

About 150 undergraduate and postgraduate students from the departments of chemistry, biotechnology and microbiology took part in the two-day skill development workshop.



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 Danavapeta 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

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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.