

Godavari Pushkarams

Bridges' condition causes concern

- Rajamahendravaram is connected to major cities such as Vijayawada, Hyderabad and Khammam through three primary road routes

- The Gammon Bridge, opened in 2015 to handle Pushkaram traffic, is also facing technical challenges



Road cum Rail Bridge



Dowleswaram Barrage Road

Bridge from Kovvur. Those travelling from Tadepalligudem through Nidadavole enter Rajamahendravaram via Vijeswaram by crossing the Dowleswaram barrage bridge. Except for the Ravulapalem route, all other approaches require crossing one of the three major bridges, leaving no real alternative corridors.

The Godavari Road-cum-Rail Bridge between Kovvur and Rajamahendravaram, inaugurated in 1974, has crossed 50 years of service. Though designed for a lifespan of 65 years, the bridge has been under stress due to continuous usage. Authorities imposed a ban on heavy vehicles in July 2023 after structural damage was observed at deck joints. At present, only light vehicles and limited public transport are allowed. Repair works are ongoing, including the replacement of damaged railings with iron structures. The bridge has also witnessed periodic closures in recent years for maintenance.

The Gammon Bridge, opened in 2015 to handle Pushkaram traffic, is also

facing technical challenges. Officials have identified issues with bearings, particularly at pillar number 52, where slight sinking and vibrations have been observed. Out of 37 bearings, several have worn out and are being replaced. Due to repair works and partial lane closures, traffic congestion has become frequent on this bridge.

The bridge across the Dowleswaram barrage between Vijeswaram and Dhavaleswaram, which has been in use since 1982, is another crucial link. As it is part of a barrage structure, authorities allow only limited traffic to avoid pressure on the dam. Heavy vehicles are generally not permitted, and the narrow roadway adds to congestion as vehicles from Ravulapalem, Atreyapuram, Vadapalli, Tadepalligudem and Nidadavole use this route. The bridge has also undergone repairs at various times due to its inability to cope with increasing traffic.

Traffic disruptions during the 2015 Pushkaram continue to serve as a reminder.

Hundreds of buses and private vehicles were stranded for hours at locations such as Nallajerla, Kovvur and Ravulapalem due to heavy congestion. Despite all three bridges being operational at that time, the situation could not be managed effectively. Though the Outer Ring Road has been proposed as a long-term solution to ease congestion and provide an alternative corridor for vehicles bypassing the city, there has been little progress on the ground so far. Given the scale of planning, land acquisition and construction involved, officials indicate that completing the project before the Pushkarams remains highly unlikely.

RTI activist Varada Nagewara Rao said, "Even when all bridges were fully functional in 2015, traffic chaos could not be avoided. Now that these bridges are facing multiple issues, authorities must clearly explain what alternative arrangements are being planned."

District Superintendent of Police D Narasimha Kishore said, "We are planning to divert Pushkaram traffic via

Diwan Cheruvu and Vemagiri towards the proposed Katheru ghat. A comprehensive traffic management plan is being prepared, keeping in view the limitations of the existing bridges."

State Tourism, Culture and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh said, "We aim to reduce pressure on Rajamahendravaram by developing bathing ghats at Madduru Lanka, Kovvur and Katheru with full facilities. Plans are also under consideration to set up tent cities at Bridgelanka and Pichukalanka. Large-scale parking areas, Pushkar Nagars and satellite bus stations will be created between Diwan Cheruvu and Katheru to regulate traffic effectively."

With less than two years remaining for the Godavari Pushkarams, the focus has now shifted to infrastructure readiness. The condition of the bridges and the lack of alternative routes have made it clear that careful planning and timely execution will be key to managing the massive influx of pilgrims expected during the festival.

VMC under Special Officer Rule from today



NTR district collector Dr G Lakshminsha

- With over 45 years of history, this will be the fourth time the civic body has been placed under Special Officer Rule
- The govt has decided to place all ULBs—including municipal corporations, municipalities, and nagara panchayats

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

THE Vijayawada Municipal Corporation will come under Special Officer Rule from March 18, following the completion of the five-year tenure of the elected body on March 17. With Urban Local Body (ULBs) elections yet to be conducted, the State government has decided to place all ULBs—including municipal corporations, municipalities, and nagara panchayats—under Special Officer Rule. In Vijayawada, NTR district collector Dr G Lakshminsha has been appointed as the Special



Vijayawada Municipal Corporation main building

Officer. As per norms, he will exercise the powers of the council, while the Municipal Commissioner will handle day-to-day administration.

With over 45 years of history, this will be the fourth time the civic body has been placed under Special Officer Rule. Officials said the arrangement will continue until elections are conducted and a new elected council assumes office. VMC was upgraded from a Special Grade Municipality to a Municipal Corporation in 1981. The first elected body assumed office on September 1, 1981, with T Venkateswara Rao of the Communist Party of India (CPI) as mayor. The second council, led by Jandhyala Shankar of the Congress party, held office from March 19, 1987, to September 8, 1992.

The first spell of Special

Officer Rule was imposed from April 2, 1992, to March 29, 1995—nearly three years. Subsequently, the third and fourth elected councils were formed in 1995 and 2000, followed by a brief Special Officer Rule from March 30, 2005, to October 6, 2005. Another council, the fifth, governed from October 7, 2005, to October 6, 2010. Thereafter, the sixth spell of Special Officer Rule—from October 7, 2010, to July 2, 2014—lasted nearly three years and nine months.

After the State's bifurcation, a council led by TDP's Koneru Sridhar served from July 3, 2014, to July 2, 2019, followed by Special Officer Rule till March 17, 2021. The outgoing council, headed by YSRCP's Mayor Rayana Bhagya Lakshmi, assumed office on March 18, 2021, completing its term on March 17, 2026.

Mall owners warned over roadside parking

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

CITY Police Commissioner SV Rajashekar Babu has issued a stern warning to shopping mall owners and commercial establishments over the growing problem of illegal roadside parking, which is worsening traffic congestion across the city.

Highlighting the issue, he stated that increasing traffic density has become a major concern, and indiscriminate parking of vehicles on roads is causing severe inconvenience to the public. He noted that customers visiting malls and business complexes are frequently parking their vehicles on the roads instead of using designated parking facilities, leading to traffic bottlenecks.

The situation, he said, is also obstructing the movement of emergency vehicles such as ambulances and fire services, apart from causing delays for regular commuters. In view of this, all shopping mall owners and managements of commercial complexes have been directed to ensure that cellar parking spaces within their premises are kept open and fully functional

for customers.

The Commissioner instructed that strict measures be taken to guide visitors to use in-house parking facilities instead of parking on roads. A deadline of one week has been given to all establishments to comply with these directions and make cellar parking acces-

sible for public use.

He further warned that after the stipulated deadline, if any mall or commercial establishment is found keeping its parking facilities closed and allowing vehicles to be parked on roads, strict legal action will be taken against the owners and managements concerned.

All set for CM visit to Mangalagiri today

Guntur district collector A Thameem Ansariya and Superintendent of Police Vakul Jindal inspect the security arrangements

HANS NEWS SERVICE GUNTUR

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu will inaugurate the Divyang Shakti scheme at Mangalagiri on Wednesday, aimed at providing free travel facility in RTC buses for persons with disabilities.

As part of the arrangements, Guntur district collector A Thameem Ansariya and Superintendent of Police Vakul Jindal inspected the security arrangements

and surrounding areas of the Mangalagiri bus stand on Tuesday. The scheme is being introduced as an Ugadi gift by the coalition government, benefiting about 11.16 lakh persons with disabilities across the state. In total, around 12.76 lakh beneficiaries, including assistants accompanying them, are expected to benefit. Assistants will be provided 50 percent concession in ticket fare.

The scheme is applicable to persons with disabilities having more than 40 percent disability and has been extended to cover 4 to 21 categories of disabilities. For effective implementation of the scheme, the government will allocate Rs 207 crore annually to RTC.

The CM will launch the scheme in Mangalagiri constituency along with Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, Minister for HRD Nara Lokesh and BJP state president PVN Madhav.

After inaugurating the scheme, the CM along with other dignitaries will travel in an RTC bus with persons with disabilities. Later, a special meal will be hosted for them. The Divyang Shakti programme will also be launched across all constituencies in the state by respective MLAs. Public representatives will travel along with persons with disabilities in RTC buses and subsequently participate in a meal with them. The government has extended free travel facility to persons with disabilities in Stree Shakti buses. It may be noted that more than 52 crore free journeys have already been availed by women under the Stree Shakti Scheme, for which the government has so far borne an expenditure exceeding Rs 1826 crore.

This scheme is being implemented in line with the announcement made by the CM on December 3, on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Youth urged to strive for knowledge economy

VIJAYAWADA "Youth are the greatest asset of the nation, and students must strive to contribute to building a strong knowledge economy," said Krishna University Rector MV Basaveswara Rao while addressing the Academic Excellence Awards ceremony at Andhra Loyola College on Tuesday.

As the chief guest, Prof Basaveswara Rao emphasised the importance of discipline, respect for Indian culture, and pride in one's mother tongue. He cautioned students about the growing influence of digital distractions and urged them to remain focused on their goals. He also said that over 100 final-year students have already secured placements this year, reflecting the institution's academic strength, and suggested further enhancement of academic and infrastructural facilities. Earlier, the programme be-



Academic Excellence Awards ceremony at Andhra Loyola College on Tuesday

gan with a welcome address by Principal S Melchior, while Correspondent A Rex Angelo encouraged students to pursue excellence in both academics and character.

The event featured a presentation on departmental association activities and the release of the ALC EXPO 2K26 book. The chief guest was felicitated by Rector Joe Sebastian. Academic Excellence Awards were presented to toppers and outstanding achievers, including honours for Best Library User, Best NSS Volunteer, Best HEPNS Volunteer, and Best NCC Cadets.

Session on higher edn in France held

VIJAYAWADA In a unique initiative, a session on higher education opportunities in France was conducted at Maris Stella College in Vijayawada on Tuesday. The programme was organised by the Career Guidance Cell and Department of French of the college in collaboration with Campus France, Hyderabad, the official higher education body of the Embassy of France in India.

Campus France Hyderabad Manager Mirrin Raikhan and Principal Dr Innyasamma Gade of Maris Stella College with students in Vijayawada on Tuesday

cialisation. The programme was hosted by French trainer and Head of the Department of History, Travel & Tourism Management Dr G Beulah Pearl Sunanda. College Principal Dr Innyasamma Gade, Dean of Student Affairs Dr Lavanya, and faculty members from various departments were present on the occasion.

It is noteworthy that the college has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Alliance Française Hyderabad, offering students opportunities to develop proficiency in French and participate in cultural and academic exchange programmes.



Campus France Hyderabad Manager Mirrin Raikhan and Principal Dr Innyasamma Gade of Maris Stella College with students in Vijayawada on Tuesday

NDC delegation to study development initiatives

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

A delegation from New Delhi-based National Defence College led by MV Patel called on Chief Secretary G Sai Prasad at the State Secretariat here on Tuesday. The 16-member team is on a study tour as part of its prestigious national security and strategic studies course.

As part of their visit, the delegation is touring key development projects across Andhra Pradesh, including the Smart City initiatives in Visakhapatnam and the construction of the people's capital at Amaravati.

During the interaction, the team sought insights into the challenges faced



The delegation meeting Chief Secretary G Sai Prasad at the State Secretariat on Tuesday

in building the new capital and the strategies adopted by the State government to overcome them.

Chief Secretary Sai Prasad explained that the government is committed to building a world-class, modern capital city despite financial

constraints arising from the State's bifurcation. He noted that with support from the Central government, funds are being mobilised to develop Amaravati with global-standard infrastructure. Rapid progress is being made in constructing roads and

essential infrastructure to transform the capital into a major administrative and economic hub.

He further emphasised that the State is focusing on balanced regional development alongside the capital project. Andhra Pradesh currently has airports in Visakhapatnam, Rajamahendravaram, Vijayawada, Tirupati, Kurnool, and Kadapa, with the Bhogapuram International Airport expected to be operational soon.

The State is also expanding port infrastructure and undertaking major road and railway projects under national initiatives to strengthen connectivity and economic growth.

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CHANGE OF NAME
I, SANGALA V V SATYANARAYANA S/O Veera Nageswar Rao (Old Name), R/o D.No. 11-27, Venkatadripuram Village, H/o Annaram Post, Nuzvid Mandal, Krishna District (now Eluru District), Andhra Pradesh-521201. I have changed my name to **SANAGALA VEERA VENKATA SATYA NARAYANA, S/o Venkata Nageswara Rao** (New Name) for all purposes. (TH_162)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, DUDYALA PAVAN KUMAR, S/o DUDYALA PEDDA VENKATA RAMANA, R/o D.No. 1/2751, MIGH-140, Housing Board Colony, Near Manikanta Swamy Temple, Yerramukkappalli, Kadapa City, YSR Kadapa District, Andhra Pradesh, hereby declare that in my Passport No. N3276824, my parents' surnames were wrongly mentioned as PEDDA VENKATA RAMANA DUDHYALA and PADMA KUMARI DUDHYALA. The correct surnames are **DUDYALA PEDDA VENKATA RAMANA and MUTUKURI PADMA KUMARI**, and shall be treated as correct for all purposes. (TH_15614)

PROPERTY FOR SALE
Sale of 3 BHK by Sri Vaibhav Villa, Gunadala (Behind Ayush Hospital) Vijayawada, NTR District, Andhra Pradesh, having Built up area of 1610 sqft (Plinth Area of 1360 sqft) Common Area of 250 sqft and UDS of 54.40 Sq.yds and 150 sqft of car parking on 25.03.2026. For further details call **Mr. G.K.Raghu Ram 989 927 6269 and Mr. Ramesh on 8886112124.** (TH_15614)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, VENKATAJHANSIRANI MANNURI (Old Name) W/o. RAMARAO LAM, resident of D.No.5-93, BOOPUDIVARI PALEM, MUNDLAMUR MANDALAM, PRAKASAM-523265, Andhra Pradesh India Hence I have Changed My Surname and Name to **JHANSI RANI LAM** (New Name) hereafter My Surname and Name is Known As **JHANSI RANI LAM.** (New Name). (TH_44949)

CHANGE OF SURNAME
I, ANJAMMA RAO wife of Late Ex No.649067-T, SGT, PATHIPATI VENKATESWARA RAO, Residing at D.No. 17-25-7, Naidu Peta, Renukamma Mandir Street, Chirala Village, Post & Mandal, Bapatla District, Andhra Pradesh, PIN-523155, That I have changed my Name from **ANJAMMA RAO** to **PATHIPATI ANJAMMA**, that my date of birth is **15.10.1961** vide affidavit dated 17.03.2026 at Ongole. (TH_BSR)

CHANGE OF NAME & D.O.B.
I, Ex No.14920329X, Rank. HAV, NANDIPATI HAYAGREEVA CHARI, Residing at D.No.1-53, BC Colony, Maseedapuram Village & Post, Mahanandi Mandal, Nandyal District, Andhra Pradesh, PIN-518502, That I have changed my Son's Name from **N SUDHIR** to **NANDIPATI SUDHEER**, and D.O.B. from 05.04.2005 to 06.04.2006 vide affidavit dated 17.03.2026 at Ongole. (TH_BSR)

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