

Bhogapuram airport set to be opened by PM in three months

AIRPORT ALMOST READY

- Greenfield airport 45km from Vizag
- Capacity to handle six million passengers per annum
- Has a 3800-meter runway
- Has 18-self drop counters

SANTOSH PATNAIK
VISAKHAPATNAM

WITH the work on the construction of Alluri Sitarama Rau International Airport being built by GMR Aero-led GMR Visakhapatnam International Airport Limited (GVIAL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of GMR Airports Limited (GAL) going at a brisk pace for making it ready by June, 2026, six months ahead of schedule, a date is being awaited from Prime Minister Narendra Modi for its inauguration in July or August.

The first phase of the project is being developed at a cost of Rs4,592 crore by awarding the EPC contract to

About 98% of critical infrastructure is completed, clearances awaited



The Bhogapuram greenfield airport, located 45 km from Visakhapatnam recently conducted its first validation flight by Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu. The concession agreement signed with Andhra Pradesh Government stipulates that once it is commissioned, the Visakhapatnam International Airport will be closed for civilian operations

L&T. Though it is scheduled for completion in December, 2026, due to pressure from the State Government, the project proponent advanced it to June, 2026. There is also good progress by VMRDA

in expediting work on seven road alignment works at a cost of Rs175 crore. "From our side, we are making it ready as per a promise made by our company," an official of GVIAL

told Bizz Buzz. During a recent visit to the airport site, State R&B Minister BC Janardhana Reddy said they are trying to commission it by the Prime Minister in July or August. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will finalise the dates after consulting the Prime Minister's Office. Almost 98 per cent of work on the runway and other critical infrastructure is already completed.

The airport, as part of the first phase, has a 3800-meter runway, 40 check-in-counters, a few aerobridges and 18-self drop counters and 18 DigiYatra pods. It has a capacity to handle six million passengers per annum with plans to expand further as part of demand.

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ernment stipulates that once it is commissioned, the Visakhapatnam International Airport will be closed for civilian operations. The airport in the city is located at INS Dega Station of the Indian Navy. It has restrictions on schedules of civilian aircraft being a civil enclave managed by Airport Authority of India (AAI).

Before throwing open to civilian aircraft, the Bhogapuram International Airport needs approvals from Director General Civil Aviation and other statutory authorities for its airside infrastructure, navigational aids, runway systems, and operational readiness, in line with the regulatory requirements laid down by the DGCA.

Expressing satisfaction over the completion of the airport work ahead of schedule, Tours and Travel Agents of Andhra (TTAA) president K Vijay Mohan told this reporter that more international airlines will launch their operations once the Bhogapuram Airport is made operational.

TG to set up 109 trauma centres along highways

Our govt strengthening emergency response system to ensure help reaches the scene of a road accident within ten minutes, says Damodar Raja Narasimha

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
HYDERABAD

HEALTH Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha stated that the government is establishing 109 trauma care centres equipped with all necessary facilities along national and state highways across the Telangana state.

The Minister, along with MLA Arikapudi Gandhi, laid the foundation stone for the construction of a 100-bed critical care block in Kondapur on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Raja Narasimha said the government has launched a comprehensive Trauma Care Policy aimed at saving lives by immediately transporting victims of road accidents and other emergencies to hospitals.

He said the State government is strengthening the emergency response system to ensure that help reaches the scene of a road accident or other emergency within ten minutes and as part of this initiative, it is increasing the number of (108) ambulances and establishing 31 Critical Care Blocks



across the state.

The Minister said the government has already inaugurated Critical Care Blocks in Nizamabad, Nalgonda, Karimnagar, Mahabubabad, Jagtial, Sangareddy, Narayanpet, and Adilabad.

The construction of another 21 CCBs is currently underway. We will make all of them operational by the end of this year, he said.

The Minister stated that the State government has today laid the foundation stone for the construction of a 100-bed Critical Care Block in Kondapur, at a cost of ₹41 crore and is taking

measures to complete the construction as expeditiously as possible and to provide medical services equipped with state-of-the-art facilities.

"Health issues are on the rise within the IT corridor due to sedentary lifestyles. We are currently providing enhanced medical services to the local residents at the Kondapur Area Hospital. In the future, we will introduce even more advanced medical services. These critical care services will prove to be immensely beneficial to the people residing in this area," Raja Narasimha said.

IN BRIEF

K'patnam Port handles highest cargo



NELLORE: Adani Krishnapatnam Port Limited (AKPL), a flagship asset of Adani Ports and SEZ Limited (APSEZ), achieved a milestone of 59.22 MMT in the FY 2025-26, registering eight percent growth in throughput over the previous year. In addition to this, it recorded the highest monthly volume of 5.85 MMT in June 2025, a new milestone since the inception of Krishnapatnam Port. The port handled as many as 1071 vessels and record cargo of 59.22 MT with customer focus approach, operational excellence, infrastructure strength, technology adoption, and seamless coordination. Krishnapatnam Port has also diversified its cargo by adding new ones such as laterite, soda ash, rock phosphate and yellow peas. The landmark achieved with the higher berth occupancy, seamless vessel operations supported by strong safety and emergency response mechanisms, a company spokesman said. The port optimized its capability to handle five deep draft Cape size vessels simultaneously which is highest in India, thus maximising parcel size and efficiency.

HC adjourns Pawan Khera's hearing



HYDERABAD: The Telangana High Court adjourned the hearing to Friday in the anticipatory bail petition filed by Congress leader Pawan Khera in a case filed by the Assam government on his allegations against Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's wife. Congress leader and senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, who virtually argued for Khera, alleged political vendetta in the case filed by the Sarma-led government in Assam. Assam Advocate General Devajit Saikia, who argued against Khera's petition, stressed that there is no political vendetta and that the petition is not maintainable before the Telangana High Court. Khera's lawyer, Ponnam Ashok Goud, told PTI that orders are likely to be pronounced on Friday.

BRS MLA falls prey to cyber fraud

HYDERABAD: BRS MLA Palla Rajeshwar Reddy said on Thursday that he was cheated by cyber criminals who posed as officials offering financial assistance for unemployed youth under a central government scheme in his constituency. Reddy, who represents Jangaon in the legislative assembly, said the scammers contacted him on April 5 and claimed that 40 young men and women in the constituency would receive Rs 10 lakh in aid, including a grant of Rs 5 lakh, under the 'Prime Minister Viksit Bharat' scheme. He was instructed to pay Rs 2,500 per application, with April 5 as the deadline. "I thought our youth should benefit from the scheme, so I decided to pay the money myself as that day was the last date to apply. I transferred Rs 1 lakh through a digital payments app for 40 people from my wife's phone. Later, I realised it was a fraud and lodged a complaint with Jubilee Hills police station," Reddy told reporters.

Naidu targets land resurvey 2.0 by 2027, alleges YSRCP tampered with records

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
VEMURU

ANDHRA Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday said the government aims to complete land resurvey 2.0 by March 2027 and distribute 1.12 crore pattadar passbooks across the state. The CM, while participating in the 'Mee Bhoomi-Mee Hakku' (Your Land, Your Right) programme in Bapatla district, distributed pattadar passbooks and highlighted the government's commitment to transparency and secure land ownership for citizens across the state. "We have set a target to complete Land Resurvey 2.0

The previous YSRCP gov't weakened the state beyond the impact of bifurcation, leading to investor flight: CBN



by March 2027 and distribute 1.12 crore pattadar passbooks across the state," said Naidu, addressing the gathering. The TDP-led NDA government

promised welfare, development, and good governance, and is moving forward accordingly, he added. The CM said the programme aims to

provide permanent solutions to land issues while ensuring rightful ownership and legal security for citizens statewide. He alleged that the erstwhile YSRCP government severely damaged governance systems, creating "administrative inefficiencies and widespread irregularities" in land records.

Naidu further claimed that the previous regime "weakened the state beyond the impact of bifurcation," leading to investor flight, administrative collapse, and increased disputes over land ownership rights.

Vande Mataram against my religious beliefs, says NCP-SP leader Fauzia Khan

NEW DELHI

AMID the controversy over singing of 'Vande Mataram', NCP-SP MP Fauzia Khan on Thursday said that singing the national song goes "against my religious beliefs".

Her reactions came a day after two Congress councillors, Fauzia Sheikh Aleem and Rubina Iqbal, refused to sing the national song during proceedings in the Indore Municipal Corporation. Aleem reportedly insisted on being shown the specific statute or law that makes singing of 'Vande Mataram' mandatory inside the civic body.

Fauzia Khan told media: "Had I been there, I, too, would not have sung it, as



it goes against my religious beliefs. I would have stood there respectfully and upheld the law."

She emphasised that no one, particularly a person belonging to a different faith, can be compelled to sing the song, "given that our Constitution guarantees religious freedom".

"The coercion currently being exercised runs contrary to this principle," Khan contended.

Good that he didn't suggest Vatican: Naidu on Jagan's MAVIGUN proposal

Says Amaravati will be developed as the only and permanent capital of Andhra Pradesh

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
AMARAVATI

ANDHRA Pradesh Chief Minister, N Chandrababu Naidu, on Thursday mocked YSR Congress Party President, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, over his 'MAVIGUN' proposal and also took a swipe stating "good that he didn't suggest Vatican as the state capital."

For the uninitiated, Vatican City is an independent city-state enclaved within Rome, Italy and is the spiritual and administrative centre of the Roman Catholic Church.

Addressing a public meet-



ing in Bapatla district, the Chief Minister lashed out at the former Chief Minister for mooted 'MAVIGUN' (Machilipatnam, Vijayawada, Guntur) corridor as the state capital. He made it clear that Amaravati will be developed

Pharma Expo 2026 in Hyderabad from April 23

BIZZ BUZZ BUREAU
HYDERABAD

THE India Pharma Expo 2026 is set to emerge as one of the most influential pharmaceutical industry gatherings in India, bringing together the entire pharma ecosystem under one roof. To be held from April 23-25, 2026, at the HITECH Exhibition Centre, Hyderabad, the event will convene industry leaders, policymakers, innovators, researchers, and technology providers to explore the next phase of growth in pharmaceuticals and life sciences.

With the theme "India's Pharma Power - Building Global Bridges in Life Sci-



ences & Innovation," the expo will spotlight India's expanding role in global drug manufacturing, vaccine production, biotechnology research, and pharmaceutical exports. Co-located with the NextGen Pharma Summit & Awards, the event creates a dynamic platform where policy, innovation, and business converge.

Bomb threat to Delhi Assembly triggers massive security drill

NEW DELHI: A bomb threat email sent to the Delhi Legislative Assembly on Thursday triggered a massive security drill across key government establishments and public locations, officials said. The email landed in multiple government and other inboxes at 8.14 am, including those linked to the Assembly. The letter carried the threat of possible blasts at the Assembly, Secretariat, certain schools and a metro station at different times during the day, they said. Acting swiftly, the Delhi Police, along with bomb disposal squads and dog units, launched extensive anti-sabotage checks.

ECI hosts 23-nation team to witness voting in Kerala

The visit is aimed at providing a firsthand understanding of India's robust and technology-driven electoral process

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

IN a significant moment underscoring India's electoral credibility, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has rolled out the red carpet for a high-powered international delegation to witness the Kerala Assembly elections under its International Election Visitors' Programme (IEVP) 2026.

Kerala, on Thursday at 7 a.m., started to vote to elect 140 legislators.

A 43-member delegation representing 23 countries arrived in Thiruvananthapuram as part of the first phase of the IEVP.

The visit is aimed at providing a firsthand understanding of India's robust and technology-driven electoral

process.

The team also distributed sweets to first-time voters, as that was a new practice to energise the first-time voters, an initiative of the chief electoral officer, Rathan U Khelkar, here.

In Kerala, the delegation's polling day itinerary on April 9 is tightly packed, reflecting the state's diverse and inclusive election management model.

The observers began early at 6 a.m. with a mock poll at Booth No. 104 at Cotton Hill LPS, Vazhuthacaud, an exercise designed to demonstrate transparency and system integrity before the commencement of voting.

The team also visited a women-friendly polling station at Kendriya Vidyalaya,



Pattom, followed by a model polling booth at Government Model GHSS, Pattom, both of which showcase enhanced voter participation.

A youth-managed booth at Government Girls HSS,

Peroorkada, forms another key stop, highlighting efforts to actively involve younger citizens in the democratic process. Beyond polling stations, the delegation visited

the district collectorate con-

trol room to gain insights into backend coordination and real-time monitoring, critical components of managing elections at scale.

Officials said the initiative is intended not only to

demonstrate India's electoral efficiency and magnitude but also to facilitate the exchange of global best practices in election management. The programme reinforces India's standing as a benchmark in democratic governance. Earlier, the ECI posted on X, "International delegates under the International Election Visitors' Programme (#IEVP) visited polling stations in Kochi, Kerala, and witnessed the polls, celebrating the Festival of Democracy. They appreciated the large-scale and meticulous arrangements of the polls." Voting began at 7 a.m. and will continue till 6 p.m. across more than 30,000 polling stations, where the fate of 883 candidates will be decided.