

Expand PNG infra fast, Nadendra to companies

- Civil supplies minister directs PNG firms to speed up infrastructure expansion and public outreach to shift households from LPG to Piped Natural Gas across the state
- Announces large-scale skill training for youth through ITIs and polytechnics, with free accommodation, food and stipends, to meet manpower needs in the growing PNG sector and boost employment
- PNG connections will be mandatory for major temples conducting Annadanam

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VIJAYAWADA

FOOD and civil supplies minister Nadendra Manohar directed officials and PNG companies to accelerate efforts to shift people from LPG usage to Piped Natural Gas (PNG) across the state.

He assured that the government machinery would fully support PNG companies in expanding infrastructure and creating public awareness about the benefits of PNG usage.

The minister conducted a special review meeting at the Secretariat here on Friday with representatives of PNG companies and senior officials from various departments. Transport minister B C Janardhan Reddy participated in the meeting through video conference.

Speaking on the occasion, Manohar said the coalition

government is committed to providing alternative gas solutions to the public quickly and efficiently. He stated that the government aims to ensure uninterrupted cooking gas supply to households and urged the five PNG companies operating in the state to be fully prepared for rapid expansion. He noted that people are increasingly turning towards PNG gas in line with changing times and asked companies to strengthen infrastructure and intensify promotional campaigns.

The minister assured that the government is granting approvals for gas expansion works in cities and towns at a faster pace and promised immediate resolution of any issues faced by companies. He also said the government would facilitate land allotment on lease basis for setting up PNG filling stations. Highlighting the need



Civil supplies minister Nadendra Manohar holds a review with officials and representatives PNG companies at the Secretariat in Amaravati on Friday

for skilled manpower, the Minister said youth should be trained in PNG technical skills through ITIs, polytechnic colleges and other skill institutions.

Under the supervision of AP Skill Development and district collectors, batches of 100 youth from each district would be trained every 15 days with free accommodation, food and stipend support. He said linking trained youth with PNG companies would create employment opportunities while addressing manpower shortages in the sector.

Manohar also stressed the need for extensive awareness campaigns through women self-help groups, SERP and MEPMA net-

works to educate people about the convenience, cost savings and safety benefits of PNG usage. He instructed gas companies to coordinate with women's groups and offer incentives for their participation in expansion activities.

The minister announced that PNG connections would be made mandatory for major temples where Annadanam is conducted. He said the government would resolve pending issues in temples like Kanaka Durga temple and Srikanthasthewara temple to speed up PNG implementation, following directions from Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. He also stated that simplified guidelines

would soon be introduced for tenants using PNG connections and availing LPG subsidy benefits.

He said the government is preparing regulations to ensure PNG users also receive the Rs 2,400 Deepam-2 scheme subsidy annually, as directed by the Chief Minister.

Special focus would be given to expanding PNG connections in apartments, group housing complexes and villas in urban areas.

He warned that another review on the performance of PNG companies would be conducted within 15 days and made it clear that visible progress in expansion activities must be achieved by then.

AP plans gold mining expansion to boost jobs, economy

- Mines minister Ravindra reviews operations at the Jonnagiri gold mine in Kurnool district, where nearly one kilogram of gold is being produced daily using advanced underground mining technology
- Says AP is focusing on expanding mining activity, identifying new gold zones in Ramagiri and speeding up mineral block tenders near Visakhapatnam to drive industrial growth
- Pattikonda MLA Shyam Babu states that the Jonnagiri project has generated jobs for 300-400 local youth, reduced migration from drought-prone villages and strengthened economic activity in the region

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MINISTER for mines and geology and excise Kollu Ravindra on Friday said the state government is focusing on expanding the mining sector to generate employment, increase industrial growth and strengthen the economy.

The minister, accompanied by Pattikonda MLA K E Shyam Babu visited the Jonnagiri gold mine operated by Geo Mysore Services India Private Limited near Jonnagiri village in Tuggali mandal and reviewed mining and mineral processing operations.

During the inspection, the minister examined underground mining activities, ore extraction systems, and gold refining processes being carried out with advanced technology.

He said mining operations are currently being conducted at a depth of nearly 300 metres and may be expanded further in the coming years. According to officials, the mine is producing around one kilogram of gold every



Mines and geology minister Kollu Ravindra visits Jonnagiri gold mine in Kurnool district on Friday

day, while the monthly production has reached nearly 30 kilograms.

Ravindra said geological assessments indicate the presence of nearly 13,000 tonnes of mineral reserves in and around the Jonnagiri belt, making it one of the most significant private gold mining projects in the country.

Highlighting the state government's mining policy, the minister said Andhra Pradesh possesses vast mineral resources with strong industrial potential. He noted that efforts are underway to identify and develop additional gold mining zones in the Ramagiri region of Anantapur district.

He also pointed out that rare earth minerals available along the state's coastline

have immense international demand and said the government is accelerating the tendering process for mineral blocks near Visakhapatnam.

The minister added that value-added industries based on quartz and granite resources are also being promoted to encourage manufacturing activity and create large-scale employment opportunities.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Shyam Babu said the Jonnagiri gold mine has brought fresh economic activity to the region by providing direct and indirect employment to local youth. He said nearly 300 to 400 people from nearby villages have already secured jobs through the project, reducing seasonal migration in drought-prone areas.

State welcomes ECLGS 5.0 for MSME relief

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MINISTER for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) Kondapalli Srinivas welcomed the Centre's launch of the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0, describing it as a crucial relief measure for industries affected by the ongoing political and economic instability in West Asia.

The minister said the scheme would help businesses secure additional working capital through government-backed credit guarantees at a time of rising global uncertainty and supply-chain disruptions. He stated that the Central government would provide guarantee coverage on additional loans extended by scheduled banks and financial institutions under the scheme.

Explaining the framework of ECLGS 5.0, the minister said MSMEs would receive 100 per cent credit guarantee coverage in the event of loan default, while non-MSME sectors would be eligible for guarantee protection of up to



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90 per cent.

Eligible businesses can avail additional credit of up to 20 per cent of the highest outstanding working capital utilised during the fourth quarter of the 2025-26 financial year, he said. The scheme allows each eligible borrower to access additional credit support of up to Rs 100 crore.

According to the minister, the facility will apply only to loans sanctioned before March 31, 2027, and disbursed by June 30, 2027. He clarified that only borrowers maintaining regular repayment records with banks and financial institutions would qualify for the scheme. The scheme will be adminis-

tered and monitored by the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC).

Highlighting Andhra Pradesh's MSME ecosystem, Srinivas said the state currently has nearly 20.77 lakh MSME units, including 4.98 lakh manufacturing enterprises, around 10 lakh service-sector units and 5.74 lakh trading establishments.

The minister urged MSMEs impacted by the West Asia crisis to utilise the scheme to strengthen liquidity and sustain operations. He also thanked the Central Government for introducing ECLGS 5.0 at a critical time for domestic industries.

Atchanna hits back at Jagan's charges on deaths

VIJAYAWADA

AGRICULTURE minister K Atchanna on Friday strongly criticised YSRCP chief Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy for linking family deaths to the TDP and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

Speaking in Amaravati, Atchanna said people were well aware of the circumstances surrounding the murder of Jagan's grandfather, Y S Raja Reddy. He alleged that victims of that era had spoken of a "reign of oppression and anarchy" under the Y S family. While most accused in the Raja Reddy case had since died, he claimed one accused remained in the YSRCP, exposing the party's "double standards." Rejecting Jagan's claims about former CM Y S Rajasekhara Reddy's helicopter crash, Atchanna said Chandrababu's Assembly remarks only referred to faith in Lord Venkateswara and had no link to YSR's death. He accused Jagan of twisting the statement for political gain.

On the murder of Y S Vivekananda Reddy, Atchanna alleged the YSRCP initially portrayed it as a heart attack before evidence proved otherwise.

Smart drug tracking soon in state hosps

- AP plans major reforms to the e-Aushadhi platform with QR code access, real-time stock monitoring and automated alerts to improve transparency and efficiency in medicine supply.
- Patients will soon be able to check medicine availability in state hospitals directly, while officials will receive advance alerts on medicines nearing expiry to reduce wastage
- The state is developing a live dashboard covering medicine stocks from Ayushman Arogya Mandirs to teaching hospitals

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THE state government is set to introduce sweeping reforms in the medicine supply and utilisation system in government hospitals by strengthening the existing 'e-Aushadhi' software platform with advanced technology-driven features aimed at ensuring transparency, efficiency and public accessibility.

As part of the proposed reforms, people will soon be able to directly check the availability of medicines in government hospitals through QR code-based access. The government is also planning to introduce an automated alert system to monitor medicine utilisation, expiry timelines and

supply chain management in real time.

A high-level review meeting on the proposed reforms was held on Friday at the headquarters of the Andhra Pradesh State Medical Infrastructure Development Corporation (APSMIDC) in Mangalagiri.

Senior officials from the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), who arrived from Delhi at the request of Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav, participated in the discussions.

At present, medicine procurement and supply to government hospitals in Andhra Pradesh are being managed through the e-Aushadhi application. The government spends nearly Rs 800 crore annually on medicines and



C-DAC officials from New Delhi participate in the high-level review meeting at APSMIDC headquarters in Mangalagiri Friday.

surgical supplies, of which around Rs.600 crore worth of medicines are supplied free of cost to poor patients through primary health centres, community health centres, district hospitals, teaching hospitals and specialty institutions.

Based on indents raised by pharmacists, medical officers and hospital superintendents, proposals are generated through the e-Aushadhi system and medicines are procured through tenders before being distributed to Central Drug Stores and subsequently to hospitals across districts.

However, officials observed several operational challenges in areas such as stock monitoring, expiry tracking and supply management.

To address these issues,

the Health Department has proposed several key changes. A public-facing QR code system will allow citizens to directly verify medicine availability at hospitals. A special alert mechanism will notify officials in advance about medicines nearing expiry, especially within six months of the expiry date to minimise wastage.

The government also plans to introduce a state-wide dashboard displaying real-time medicine stock positions from Ayushman Arogya Mandirs to teaching hospitals.

Officials are considering bringing AYUSH medicine supply systems under the e-Aushadhi network as well. In addition, the "Mana Mitra" app will soon provide information on medicine stocks to the public.

AP powers through record summer demand

- State recorded its highest-ever power consumption at 288.9 MU on May 21, with peak demand touching 15,016 MW amid intense heatwave conditions
- APTransco, APGenco and discoms ensure uninterrupted electricity supply through advance planning, continuous grid monitoring and effective load management

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AMID severe summer conditions and intense heatwave temperatures across the state, the Andhra Pradesh State power utilities successfully ensured uninterrupted and quality power supply while handling the highest-ever electricity demand in the State's history.

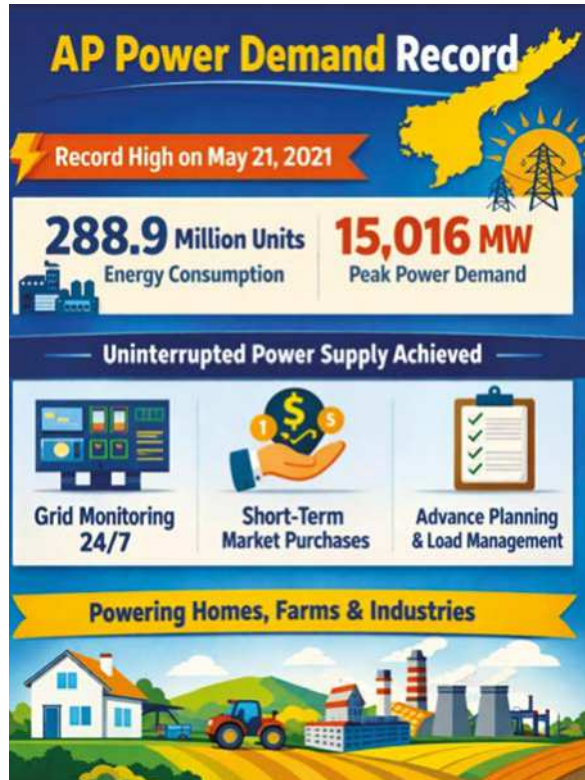
The Andhra Pradesh State Grid recorded an all-time high energy consumption of 288.9 million units (MU) on May 21, along with a record day peak demand of 15,016 MW and an evening peak demand of 12,474 mw.

According to officials,

the unprecedented surge in electricity demand was mainly due to soaring temperatures, high humidity levels and increased usage of air-conditioners, cooling appliances, drinking water systems and agricultural pump sets across the State. Temperatures in several districts reportedly touched nearly 46 degrees Celsius.

Despite the extraordinary demand, APTransco, in coordination with APGenco and the discoms, maintained continuous and stable power supply without any disruption.

Officials attributed the achievement to advance planning, round-the-clock grid monitoring, effective load management and opti-



mum utilisation of available power resources. Special chief secretary

to the Chief Minister K Vijayanand said that the milestone was achieved in

line with the vision of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and energy minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar to provide reliable and uninterrupted power supply to consumers across the State.

He said additional power was procured through short-term market purchases whenever necessary to maintain grid stability and ensure uninterrupted supply to domestic consumers, farmers, industries, commercial establishments and essential services during peak demand periods.

Vijayanand appreciated the dedicated services of APTransco, APGenco and discom personnel, including engineers, field staff, system operators and maintenance teams, for successfully managing the historic demand. He reiterated that the State government remains committed to strengthening power infrastructure and ensuring quality electricity services to all consumers.

TTD records highest Thursday darshan figures

- More than 79,000 devotees had darshan on May 21
- TTD ensured darshan to 5,850 pilgrims under Sarva Darshan during Abhisheka Seva on Friday

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TIRUMALA

TTD managed to provide darshan to over 79,000 devotees on May 21, Thursday, and also allowed over 5,850 common devotees during Abhisheka Seva on Friday, according to TTD additional executive officer Ch Venkaiah Chowdary.

Speaking to media outside the Srivari temple on Friday morning, the additional EO said through the Integrated AI Command Control Centre, with a proper time, queue and darshan management schedule besides collective efforts of various departments, the sharp rise in pilgrim traffic during the summer holidays is being handled in



TTD additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary speaking to the media at Tirumala on Friday

a smooth manner ensuring comfortable darshan for common devotees. Through this effective pilgrim influx forecasting and continuous monitoring, there is a substantial increase in daily darshans, facilitating darshan for over 15,000 additional devotees every day, he said.

Despite Thursdays traditionally having reduced darshan hours due to weekly rituals, TTD facilitated darshan to a record number of 79, 603 devotees for the first time, demonstrating the institution's operational efficiency, he said. Senior officials are reviewing queue-line conditions hourly and implementing necessary measures

immediately to expedite the darshan process. The coordinated efforts among TTD departments, vigilance and police wings helped manage the summer rush and all departments are working round-the-clock to ensure uninterrupted supply of drinking water, Annaprasadam, medical services and amenities in queue lines for devotees, he maintained.

Reiterating that providing comfortable and speedy darshan to common devotees is the primary objective of TTD, the additional EO said that the entire administrative machinery is committed to working with dedication to this end.