

AP team studies Singapore models for Amaravati growth

- A delegation led by MA&UD minister Narayana visited Singapore to study global best practices in urban planning, sustainable infrastructure and scientific waste management
- Officials hold discussions with NUS Cities and Surbana Jurong on climate resilience, smart infrastructure, digital twin technology, urban analytics and capacity-building initiatives for Amaravati
- The team also examined Singapore's waste-to-energy and resource recovery systems at the Tuas South Incineration Plant, with plans to explore suitable models for Andhra Pradesh's urban development

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VIJAYAWADA

A high-level Andhra Pradesh delegation led by municipal administration and urban development (MA&UD) minister P Narayana visited Singapore to study global best practices in urban planning, sustainable infrastructure and scientific waste management, with a focus on applying key learnings to the development of Amaravati and other cities in the state.

The visit was undertaken on the directions of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who has stressed

the need to build Amaravati and major urban centres by adopting international standards in planning, governance and infrastructure development.

The delegation, which included MA&UD principal secretary S Suresh Kumar and APCRDA additional commissioner Praveenchand, held discussions with leading Singapore institutions such as NUS Cities, Surbana Jurong and the Tuas South Incineration Plant.

At NUS Cities, officials explored opportunities for collaboration in urban planning, climate resilience, gov-



Members of AP municipal administration and urban development department delegation at Tuas South Incineration Plant in Singapore on Wednesday

ernance, capacity building and data-driven city management. Discussions centred on how global expertise could support Amaravati, one of the world's largest greenfield capital city projects. Areas identified for possible cooperation included urban analytics, digital twin technology, climate studies, executive training programmes and the establishment of an Urban Futures Lab.

The delegation also visited the Surbana Jurong Innovation Hub in Singapore's Jurong Innovation District

to understand how urban planning can be integrated with economic development, sustainability and smart infrastructure. Officials examined technologies related to energy-efficient buildings, intelligent monitoring systems, green construction practices and innovation-led urban growth.

As part of its study on municipal solid waste management, the team toured the Tuas South Incineration Plant and interacted with officials of Singapore's National Environment Agency.

The visit provided insights into waste collection, waste-to-energy conversion, ash management, resource recovery and environmental safeguards.

Speaking during the visit, minister Narayana said the state government is committed to building clean, green and economically productive cities. He noted that Singapore's success highlights the importance of integrated planning, institutional coordination and long-term urban governance.

Principal secretary Suresh Kumar said the visit offered valuable insights for Amaravati's development and opened avenues for technical collaboration and knowledge exchange. He added that the government would examine suitable models and technologies that could be adapted to Andhra Pradesh's urban development and waste management initiatives.

The MA&UD department said the outcomes of the visit would be reviewed further to identify actionable partnerships, pilot projects and capacity-building programmes aimed at strengthening urban development across the state.

Amarnath hits back at TDP over 'fabricated' row

- YSRCP leader and former minister says his recent remarks were not meant against women but against home minister Anitha's comments

- States that irrespective of the party affiliation, women deserve to be respected and he will continue to support the party women

- Accuses the coalition gov't of using 'fabricated' controversies to divert attention from its failures

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VISAKHAPATNAM

FORMER IT minister and YSRCP regional coordinator Gudivada Amarnath said that his recent remarks were never meant against women but in response to unparliamentary language used by home minister Vangalapudi Anitha against Vijayamma, YS Bharathi Reddy and former chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan



Former IT Minister and YSRCP regional coordinator Gudivada Amarnath speaking at a media conference in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

Reddy for quite a while. Despite their political affiliation, Amarnath told in a media conference here on Wednesday, that women deserve to be respected and that his family political legacy that continued for three generations always upheld dignity and values.

However, Amarnath claimed that controversy was deliberately created over his remarks by the TDP three days after his speech to gain political advantage and divert attention from the coalition government's alleged failures.

He questioned the selective outrage of TDP leaders, wondering why were quiet when derogatory remarks were made against Y S Vijayamma, Y S Bharathi Reddy, former minister R K Roja, among

others, or when leaders in their own party made 'objectionable' statements targeting other women.

Referring to home minister Anitha's recent comments such as 'who is he?', 'that fellow', addressing a former minister, Amarnath said it clearly indicates her arrogance. "No matter what, I will continue to defend YSRCP leaders and workers against personal attacks and stand by my remarks against the Home Minister as I did not say anything wrong," he said. The former minister alleged that the coalition government is using 'fabricated' controversies to divert the attention from its failure in maintaining law and order in the state.

Pointing out to rising number of murders, attacks on women, political violence, missing children cases, lock-up deaths and the escape of a ganja smuggler from police custody, Amarnath questioned the Home Minister's silence over such burning issues. "However, her attack on the opposition continues," he remarked. Underlining YSRCP's commitment to women and Dalit empowerment, Amarnath stated that leaders who insulted Dalits and were silent on derogatory remarks made against women have no moral right to lecture others on dignity and social justice.

Lokesh pitches Anantapur as satellite hub

VIJAYAWADA

IT and electronics minister Nara Lokesh invited the chief technology officer (CTO) and founder of a company that builds and operates remote sensing satellites to Anantapur after the latter posted that getting land for making a satellite factory on the outskirts of Bengaluru is more difficult than making satellites. "Trying to get land for making a satellite factory in the outskirts of BLR has been way more difficult than actually making said satellites," Kshitij Khandelwal, CTO and founder of Pixelpace, posted on X.

Lokesh invited Kshitij to Anantapur near Bengaluru.

"Kshitij, there's a new investor-friendly destination on



the outskirts of Bengaluru. It's called Anantapur," he said.

He added that Andhra Pradesh is building Space Cities, aerospace parks and ready-to-go industrial ecosystems so founders can spend their time building satellites instead of hunting for land. The minister even asked the Andhra Pradesh Economic Development Board (APE-DB) to contact Kshitij.

Earlier, responding to Kshitij's post, Karnataka's minister for large, medium industries and infrastructure development, M B Patil, said that his office would get in touch with him. This is not the first time that Lokesh has tried to woo aerospace firms from Karnataka. Last year in October, Lokesh extended an open invitation to aerospace companies to consider Andhra

Pradesh as an option after then Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced withdrawal of the proposed land acquisition in Devanahalli taluk for an aerospace park near Bengaluru, following opposition from farmers who were set to lose their land for the project.

"Dear Aerospace industry, sorry to hear about this. I have a better idea for you. Why don't you look at Andhra Pradesh instead? We have an attractive aerospace policy for you, with best-in-class incentives and over 8000 acres of ready-to-use land (just outside Bengaluru)! Hope to see you soon to talk across the table," Lokesh had posted while tagging a story on the Karnataka government's decision.

PMVBRY to disburse Rs 2,400 cr sops

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THE Government of India has launched the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY), formerly known as the Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme, with the objective of promoting large-scale employment generation, improving employability, and expanding social security coverage across sectors, particularly in manufacturing.

With a total financial outlay of Rs 99,446 crore, the scheme aims to facilitate the creation of more than 3.5 crore jobs nationwide over two years. Of these, nearly 1.92 crore beneficiaries are expected to be first-time entrants into the formal workforce. The



Additional Central Provident Fund Commissioner Andrew Prabhu and Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-II Abdul Khader addressing the media in Vijayawada on Wednesday

benefits apply to jobs created between August 1, 2025, and July 31, 2027.

Addressing a press briefing at the EPFO zonal office here on Wednesday, Andrew Prabhu, additional Central Provident Fund commissioner and Abdul Khader, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-II, explained the significance and implementation of the scheme.

Under Part A, first-time

employees registered with EPFO and earning up to Rs 1 lakh per month are eligible for an incentive equivalent to one month's wage, up to Rs 15,000, paid in two instalments after six and twelve months of continuous service. The second instalment is linked to completion of a financial literacy programme.

Under Part B, employers will receive incentives of up to Rs 3,000 per month per additional employee for two years. Manufacturing sector employers will receive the benefit for an additional two years. The incentives are aimed at encouraging sustained employment and formal workforce expansion.

To mark the successful implementation of the scheme, a national-level event will be held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on Friday, in the presence of the Prime Minister. Benefits worth approximately Rs 2,400 crore will be disbursed to eligible beneficiaries. In the erstwhile Krishna district, a regional event will be organised at VR Siddhartha Engineering College, Kanuru, with participation from public representatives, industry leaders, employers, employees and EPFO officials.



BRS working president MLA KT Rama Rao interacting with party leaders and workers during the meeting at Palair in Khammam district on Wednesday

KTR alleges rampant corruption in Revenue department

Targets Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy accusing him of amassing wealth through irregularities in land and mining-related deals

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KHAMMAM

ALLEGING rampant corruption in the Revenue department, BRS working president KT Ramarao said while the State's revenues are declining, the wealth and influence of certain ministers are growing disproportionately.

Addressing the party workers in Palair constituency on Wednesday, KTR accused Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy of amassing wealth through alleged irregularities in land and mining-related dealings and questioned the status of investigations into previous enforcement actions against him.

He also alleged large-scale irregularities in revenue department and claimed that farmers were being subjected to uncertainty over land-related issues. Referring to recent controversies involving ministers and officials,

he slammed the Revenue Minister for behaving in arrogant manner and disregarding even fellow cabinet colleagues.

KTR further alleged that the Congress government had failed to fulfill several election promises, including farm loan waivers, housing schemes, enhanced pensions, unemployment assistance and welfare commitments made to various sections of society.

Targeting Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, KTR criticised what he described as the government's approach towards development and governance. He accused the administration of creating hardship for people through demolition drives and failing to deliver on major promises despite incurring substantial borrowings since assuming office.

The former minister defended the previous BRS government's record, stating that investments in ir-

rigation projects, welfare programmes, power supply, education and healthcare infrastructure had significantly contributed to Telangana's development. He cited projects such as the Sitarama Lift Irrigation Scheme and the establishment of educational and medical institutions in Khammam district as examples of achievements under the BRS regime.

Claiming that public dissatisfaction with the Congress government was growing, KTR urged party workers to strengthen the BRS at the grassroots level and mobilise support ahead of future elections.

MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra, MLC Tata Madhu, former Minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar, former MLA's Kannada Uppender Reddy, M Nageswara Rao, T Venkateswarlu, former ZP chairman L Kamal Raj and several senior BRS leaders and local party functionaries attended the meeting.

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HYDERABAD

POLITICAL tensions intensified after senior BRS leader T Harish Rao alleged a Rs 2,000 crore scam in tenders related to Telangana residential schools. Responding strongly, Ministers Ponnamp Prabhakar and Adluri Laxman Kumar refuted the allegations and challenged Harish Rao to prove the charges, stating that both Ministers were ready to resign if corruption was established.

Ponnamp Prabhakar questioned the basis of the allegations, stating that the total value of procurement tenders across welfare departments itself does not amount to Rs 2,000 crore. He said mak-



ing such serious accusations without evidence was inappropriate and could mislead the public.

The Minister defended the government's welfare initiatives, particularly those aimed at weaker sections,

and said departments working for the upliftment of poor communities should not be targeted with baseless claims. He alleged that such remarks reflected a negative attitude towards welfare programmes.

Ponnamp said the government functions with transparency and is prepared to face any investigation if wrongdoing is proven. He warned that the people of Telangana would not accept attempts to create confusion

through false allegations.

Recalling his political journey, the Minister said he, along with Minister Adluri Laxman Kumar and other leaders, had built their political careers through public service and grassroots work. He said their commitment towards weaker sections and social welfare was evident through their actions.

Minister Adluri Laxman Kumar also reiterated that they were ready to face consequences if any corruption charges against them were proven. The exchange has added to the ongoing political debate between the ruling Congress and opposition BRS over allegations related to government tenders and welfare schemes.

Gymnastics instructor jailed for 20 yrs for sexually assaulting preschool child

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HYDERABAD

A Special Court of Rajendranagar, Ranga Reddy District has sentenced a gymnastics instructor to 20 years rigorous imprisonment for sexually assaulting a three-and-a-half-year-old girl at a private preschool under the limits of Miyapur Police station in 2019. According to the police, on June 20, 2019, the alleged accused Kura Kiran Sai, 31, took advantage of a delay

in the school van's arrival. The alleged accused took the girl to the top floor of the gymnastics room, sexually abused her, and fled after the sexual assault, leaving her in tears on the ground floor of the gymnastics area.

The school principal, Chilakamukku Deepika, 37, was also convicted for the severe negligence that caused the sexual assault to happen, and she was sentenced to three years in prison. Police said the victim's father filed a formal

complaint after noticing her abnormal behaviour. The victim expressed her pain, refused to return to school, and named the instructor as the sexual abuser. Based on the complaint, the police arrested both accused persons on July 2, 2019, and filed a charge sheet against them after the investigation. After a full-fledged trial, the Special Judge for Trial and Disposal of Rape and POCSO cases delivered the verdict, convicting the accused persons and awarding Rs 3 lakh compensation to the victim.

PPA assures full protection for TG villages affected by Polavaram backwaters

HYDERABAD: The Polavaram Project Authority (PPA) has assured complete protection for Telangana villages likely to be impacted by backwater and submergence effects from the Polavaram Project, responding to concerns raised by former Irrigation Minister and Siddipet BRS MLA T. Harish Rao.

In an official communication, the PPA stated that all habitations in Telangana affected up to the project's Full Reservoir Level (FRL) would either be safeguarded through engineering measures or acquired under Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) provisions. The PPA assured that the issues pertaining to backwater impacts are receiving top priority and due administrative attention.

The assurance reiterates commitments made during an interstate meeting held on April 8, 2025, involving officials from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The Authority said scientific assessments, flood-mitigation plans, and protective interventions would be implemented to prevent adverse impacts on villages, farmlands, and livelihoods in the Godavari basin.