

Govt bets big on all-electric APSRTC, to buy 1,950 buses

- CM targets 100% electric RTC fleet by 2029 without job cuts
- Centre-backed funding slashes operating costs, brings Rs 1,774 cr incentive
- Assures depots remain with APSRTC, employees will be protected

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AMARAVATI

THE state has launched one of India's most ambitious public transport transitions, with the State government approving the induction of 1,950 new green buses as part of its plan to convert the entire APSRTC fleet of 10,661 buses with electric vehicles by 2029.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has directed APSRTC to procure only air-conditioned electric buses in



future, positioning the State's public transport system for a complete shift away from diesel under the AP State Electric Mobility Policy (SEMP) 4.0.

The government has approved procurement of 1,450 electric buses under the Gross Cost Contract (GCC) model and 500 CNG buses through direct purchase, with tenders already under way. Of these, the Centre has sanctioned 1,050 electric buses under the PM eBus Sewa Scheme, backed by substantial financial support

that significantly lowers APSRTC's costs. The Centre will bear 100 per cent of electrical infrastructure costs, 60 per cent of civil infrastructure costs, besides providing Rs 24 per km for 12-metre buses and Rs 22 per km for 9-metre buses for up to 10 lakh kilometres or 12 years.

The incentive package is expected to fetch about Rs 1,774 crore for APSRTC. The Centre has already sanctioned Rs 145.39 crore for charging and depot infrastructure.

Unlike earlier FAME-II contracts, the new procurement has been finalised at substantially lower operating costs through CESL, with 12-metre buses costing Rs 48.55 per km for the first 200 km and Rs 36.28 thereafter, while 9-metre buses will operate at Rs 40.17 per km, making electric operations commercially more attractive. To address concerns over privatisation, the government categorically clarified that APSRTC depots are not being leased to private operators. Operators will only use

designated garage space for charging and maintenance during the contract period, after which the facilities will revert entirely to APSRTC. The land will continue to remain with the Corporation. Equally significant, the Chief Minister reiterated that no APSRTC employee will lose his or her job because of electric buses. Employees shifted from depots undergoing electrification works will be redeployed and later brought back after commissioning. APSRTC is also floating India's first 'Dry Lease' model for electric buses to utilise surplus drivers while protecting employee interests.

The first phase will deploy 750 electric buses across 12 depots in 11 cities, while new greenfield e-bus depots are being developed at Simhapuri and Rajahmundry, with additional facilities planned at Tirupati, Tirumala, Kuppam and other locations as Andhra Pradesh accelerates its transition towards a fully electric public transport network.

AP sets new benchmark in paddy procurement

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VIJAYAWADA

THE state government has emerged as a national leader in paddy procurement by implementing farmer-friendly reforms that have significantly improved transparency, efficiency, and payment speed, food, civil supplies and consumer affairs minister Nandendra Manohar said on Thursday.

Speaking at a two-year review meeting on paddy procurement held here, the minister said the coalition government, under the leadership of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, has introduced transformative changes in the procurement system to ensure greater confidence among farmers.

He said the state procured a record 74 lakh metric tonnes of paddy in its second year, compared to 42 lakh metric tonnes during the previous government. Paddy worth Rs 31,000 crore was purchased, benefiting 11.53 lakh farmers, with 95 per cent of payments credited to farmers' bank accounts within 24 hours.

The minister spoke of several technology-driven initiatives, including QR codes on every paddy bag, Track-and-Trace systems, and WhatsApp-based farmer registration, which have enhanced transparency. He added that from the coming Kharif season, gunny bags will be made available at Rythu Seva Kendras, while transportation charges will be reimbursed within 48 hours.

To ensure uniformity in quality assessment, the government is installing standardised moisture meters of the same make and model across the state, with 90 per cent of the work already completed.

Civil supplies special chief secretary K



Civil supplies minister Nandendra Manohar addressing the two-year review meeting on paddy procurement in Vijayawada on Thursday

Kannababu said the reforms have made the procurement process faster and more transparent, while urging rice millers to work closely with farmers.

Civil supplies commissioner Dilli Rao noted that paddy procurement had increased by 74 per cent compared to 2023-24, attributing the achievement to the coordinated efforts of officials, district administrations, rice millers, and transport agencies.

FCI regional general manager Vijay Kumar Yadav praised AP's procurement reforms, stating that the state's QR code-based tracking system and improved rice procurement model are now being recognised as best practices for adoption across the country.

The minister also interacted with farmers during the meeting, assuring them that issues related to procurement and banking would be taken up with the Chief Minister for resolution. Officials and district teams who excelled in paddy procurement were felicitated on the occasion.

Strengthen party at grassroots level, Madhav to BJP cadre

- Party state unit chief says 'Mana Ooru-Mana Jenda' campaign aims to ensure party representation in every village
- Urges cadre to become public representatives and take Centre's welfare schemes to every household

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VIJAYAWADA

BJP state president P V N Madhav called upon party members to strengthen the organisation at the grassroots level and ensure that the BJP has elected representatives in every village throughout the state.

He was speaking at a state-level workshop for the 'Mana Ooru-Mana Jenda' campaign at the BJP state office in Vijayawada on Thursday. Madhav was felicitated by senior party leaders to mark his first anniversary as the BJP's state president on the occasion. He also released a commemorative souvenir that highlighted the party's activities and achievements over the past year.

In his speech, Madhav said that the party's long-term goal is to build a robust organisational network from the village level upwards.

He told the party workers to aspire to become public representatives, in-



BJP leaders felicitate party state unit president P V N Madhav marking completion of one year in office, at the party state office in Vijayawada on Thursday
(Hans photo Ch Venkata Mastan)

cluding ward members, Sarpanches, MPTCs, ZPTCs, and directors of cooperative societies.

Madhav stated that the growth of the BJP relies on committed grassroots leaders who actively engage with the community and effectively communicate the welfare and development programs initiated by the Central government.

He pointed out that the BJP has become the largest political party in the country, having formed governments in 21 states, and that its governance model and organizational strength are gaining widespread recognition.

On Prime Minister Narendra Modi's political journey, Madhav noted that the Prime Minister rose through the ranks due to his dedication and hard work, illustrating that development-oriented governance earns lasting public trust.

Mentioning the flagship programmes of the Union

government, including the Swachh Bharat Mission, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, rural infrastructure development, and maternal and child welfare schemes, he said that these initiatives have significantly improved the lives of the people.

Reiterating the BJP's commitment to the philosophy of Antyodaya, Madhav called on party workers to bring the Central government's welfare schemes to every household and work towards hoisting the BJP flag in every village through service, dedication, and principled politics.

BJP state general secretaries Matta Prasad and Ramesh Naidu, state Kisan Morcha president Kumaraswamy, state vice-presidents Bitra Siva Narayana, Sandi Reddy Srinivas and Kola Anand, Matta Prasad coordinated the program, while Karanam Sanjeev gave a digital presentation on the campaign.

VIJAYAWADA AIRPORT New terminal to be completed by Dasara

- Airport Advisory Committee for more domestic and international flights, including Dubai and Sri Lanka
- Road connectivity, passenger amenities and pending land issues also discussed at high-level meeting

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VIJAYAWADA

THE Airport Advisory Committee reviewed crucial development projects at Vijayawada International Airport located in Gannavaram on Thursday. The primary focus was on enhancing domestic and international air connectivity, completing the long-awaited new terminal building, improving passenger amenities, and strengthening road access to the airport.

The meeting took place at the airport director's conference hall in Gannavaram and was chaired by Machilipatnam MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry, who leads the committee. Other attendees included Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni), committee co-chairman, government



Machilipatnam MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry, Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni), government whip and Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao, airport director Lakshminanth Reddy and officials at the Airport Advisory Committee meeting held at Vijayawada International Airport in Gannavaram on Thursday

whip and Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkata Rao, vice chairman, airport director Lakshminanth Reddy, RDO Subrahmanyam, SP V Vidyasagar Naidu, airport officials and representatives from various departments.

After the meeting, Balashowry informed the media that the Centre had appointed a new contractor for the long-delayed terminal building, and construction is moving forward more rapidly. He expressed confidence that the terminal would be completed by Dasara or, at the latest, by November, significantly improving passenger capacity and

overall travel experience.

He mentioned that the committee proposed expanding international connectivity by introducing direct flights to Sri Lanka and establishing an Emirates service to Dubai. This would facilitate seamless global travel to destinations across the United States, Europe, Africa and the Middle East, he said. The proposal has already been discussed with civil aviation minister K Ram Mohan Naidu, he added.

Furthermore, he said that the committee meeting additionally requested more domestic flights from Vijayawada to

Varanasi, Kolkata, Kochi, Goa and Mumbai. They also proposed morning and evening services to Mumbai to accommodate the increasing passenger demand.

To boost airport accessibility, Balashowry stated that a Detailed Project Report (DPR) is being prepared for a seven-km, four-lane road connecting the airport to the Vijayawada West Bypass. Once complete, this road is expected to significantly reduce travel time for passengers heading to Amaravati, Guntur, and Hyderabad. This proposal would be presented to Union Road

Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari, he added.

Airport Advisory Committee co-chairman and Vijayawada MP Sivanath said the Vijayawada International Airport has been accorded priority under the double-engine government, with efforts underway to complete the new terminal by Dasara.

He said the committee recommended direct flights to Kochi for Sabarimala pilgrims and additional services to Surat, Ahmedabad and Mumbai, besides supporting a direct Dubai flight to strengthen the airport's international connectivity.

Venkata Rao urged the authorities to expedite the settlement of pending compensation and land record issues of families who had surrendered land for the airport.

He also proposed an alternative road linking the airport to NH-16 via HCL Road, stating that the Rs.37.70-crore project would reduce travel time to Amaravati by 15 to 20 minutes.

The MLA further called for the early development of 45,000 square metres of greenery between the airport and Ramavarappadu and urged better coordination among departments to speed up infrastructure works.

AP ready to meet power demand despite less rains

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VIJAYAWADA

ENERGY department special chief secretary K Vijayanand on Thursday said the state government is fully prepared to meet the state's growing electricity demand despite the challenges posed by the delayed southwest monsoon and deficient rainfall, while ensuring uninterrupted and quality power supply to consumers.

Chairing a high-level review meeting through video conference with senior officials of APGenco, APTransco and power distribution companies, Vijayanand reviewed the prevailing power situation, hydel generation, thermal power preparedness, reservoir water availability and coal stocks.

He said poor monsoon progress had severely affected hydel power generation, with output dropping from 25-30 million units (MU) per day during the corresponding period last year to just 5-6 MU per day due to inadequate inflows into reservoirs.

- Special CS Vijayanand says uninterrupted and quality power supply remains govt's top priority
- Thermal stations directed to maximise generation as hydel output drops sharply due to poor rainfall



Special chief secretary K Vijayanand

eration this season. He instructed all power utilities to strictly implement the guidelines issued by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) to minimise the impact of deficient rainfall on the power sector.

To bridge the shortfall in hydel generation, Vijayanand directed APGenco to operate all thermal power stations at maximum capacity, except units undergoing

scheduled annual maintenance. He instructed officials to complete overhaul works on schedule, improve plant performance, minimise forced outages and strengthen preventive maintenance.

The special chief secretary also directed thermal stations to maintain coal stocks sufficient for at least 10 days of operation and ensure uninterrupted fuel supply through close coordination with the Railways and ports.

Reiterating that reliable and quality power supply remains the state government's foremost priority, Vijayanand called for close coordination among the energy department, APGenco, APTransco and distribution companies to effectively manage demand and ensure uninterrupted electricity supply across the state despite challenging weather conditions.

Genco in-charge managing director and APCPDCL CMD P Pulla Reddy, Genco directors M Sujaya Kumar, P Ashok Kumar Reddy, V Usha and APDCL director Srinivas Rao attended the meeting.

AEE recruitment will be merit-based only: APTransco

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VIJAYAWADA

APTransco joint managing director (vigilance & HRD) G Surya Sai Praveen Chand on Thursday assured that recruitment of assistant executive engineers (AEEs) in Andhra Pradesh power utilities will be fair, transparent and strictly merit-based. He urged aspirants not to fall for rumours or middlemen promising jobs.

The notification issued on June 25 has drawn nearly 23,000 applications for posts in APTransco, APGenco and distribution companies. Chand dismissed false claims on social media suggesting postponement of the computer-based test (CBT), changes in syllabus or jobs through monetary influence. He confirmed the CBT will be held as scheduled from August 22 to 29.

He said the exam will follow the same standards of confidentiality and security as national-level tests like GATE, UGC-NET, CAT, CUET, CDS and JEE. Strict measures are in place to prevent impersonation and malpractice. Clarifying syllabus concerns, Chand said no changes were made. Only



APTransco joint managing director G Surya Sai Praveen Chand

the 30 marks earlier allotted to Analytical Aptitude were redistributed among General Intelligence & Reasoning, English, Quantitative Aptitude and Computer Knowledge.

He stressed that written exam performance alone will decide selection. Candidates were advised to report fraudsters and use the 24x7 grievance redressal system on the AP Power Recruitment Portal for queries.