

40 tribal workers rescued from bonded labour

Medical care, food, and special transport arranged to send victims back to Maharashtra

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PUTTAPARTHI

SRI Sathya Sai district administration has dismantled an interstate racket that trafficked impoverished tribal (ST) workers from Maharashtra and forced them into bonded labour in charcoal kilns. Acting on district Collector A Shyam Prasad's orders after a complaint by Srikanth Janju Koli, resident of Maharashtra, task force teams raided sites across two RDO divisions and rescued 40 victims, including infants, from Adivasiwadi village in Nizampur Taluka, Raigad district. Teams led by Puttaparthi



District Collector A Shyam Prasad with the rescued bonded labourers

RDO P Suvarna rescued four people, including a four-month-old, from Talamarla village. Penukonda RDO

T Ananda Kumar's teams freed 36 others, aged up to 63, from sites in Gorantla Mandal.

Contractors Ramesh Taru Rathod and Prakash Devichand Rathod had lured the families with debt, confined

them in unsanitary tents without water or toilets, and forced them to work day and night in smoke-filled kilns without wages. Victims said the officials saved their lives. RDOs issued release certificates under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, waiving illegal debts. The rescued received food, medical care, financial aid and safe transport home. A non-bailable case has been registered at Gorantla police station under relevant BNS, SC/ST and bonded labour laws. The Collector warned that no one exploiting tribals would be spared.

YSRCP stages paddy sapling protest seeking LLC water release

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KURNOOL

THE YSR Congress Party staged an innovative protest with paddy saplings at Yemmiganur on Friday, demanding immediate release of water from Tungabhadra Dam into Low-Level Canal (LLC) to support agricultural operations. As part of its 'Porubata' programme highlighting farmers' issues, YSRCP in-charge Rajeev Reddy led a dharna at LLC office. Protesters brought paddy saplings to underline the plight of farmers unable to begin cultivation due to inadequate irrigation. They alleged that the delay in releasing water was causing serious difficulties during the ongoing agricultural season and warned that further



YSRCP leaders staging a protest at LLC office in Yemmiganur on Friday

postponement could lead to crop losses. Farmers, who had already invested heavily in inputs, urged authorities to release water from the dam and ensure supply to tail-end areas as well. Addressing the gathering, Rajeev Reddy accused the government of neglecting

farmers' problems. He demanded immediate water release into the LLC and prompt compensation for those who had suffered crop damage. He warned that YSRCP would intensify its agitation if the government failed to respond with concrete measures.

New IOB branch inaugurated at Gorantla

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KURNOOL

JOINT Collector Noorul Qamar inaugurated a new Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) branch at Gorantla village in Kodumur mandal on Friday. The branch was set up as per Department of Financial Services guidelines for gram panchayats with over 5,000 population. The Joint Collector appreciated IOB for bringing banking closer to rural people and urged villagers to utilise the facilities. District Lead Bank Manager P Mohan said it would benefit farmers, small traders and self-employed persons with easier access to



Joint Collector Noorul Qamar inaugurating the new IOB branch at Gorantla on Friday

loans. IOB Regional Manager Sanjay Kumar Jha noted the branch takes the bank's Kurnool tally to six and will offer crop loans, gold loans and credit for

agricultural allied activities. Sarpanch Balakrishna, Branch Manager Rajasekhar, bank officials, public representatives and others attended.

Grand welcome to MLC Ramadevi



Newly elected MLC Dalavayi Ramadevi, MLA Daggupati Prasad and MP Ambica Lakshminarayana participating in a roadshow in Anantapur on Friday, as a grand welcome arranged by Vaddera community members and TDP activists in Anantapur on Friday

Development works aimed at 'Viksit Bharat'



SE Chinna Subbarayudu

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ANANTAPUR

PANCHAYAT Raj Superintending Engineer (SE) Chinna Subbarayudu stated that large-scale development works are being undertaken in the district with the goal of achieving 'Viksita Bharat 2047'. He shared details regarding various development projects at the PR Circle office on Friday. The SE announced that approvals have been granted to execute 29 road projects covering 191.81 km in Anantapur district at a cost of Rs 78.93 crore under SASKI scheme. In Sri Sathya Sai district, 58 projects

spanning 234.92 km will be undertaken at a cost of Rs 114.06 crore. He revealed that under PMGSY-4, 11 road projects covering 28.78 km will be constructed in Anantapur district for Rs 27.01 crore, while 5 road projects covering 11.2 km will be taken up in Sri Sathya Sai district for Rs 10.41 crore. Additionally, two bridges will be built through the PIU at a cost of Rs 9.81 crore, and three bridges will be constructed using NABARD funds amounting to Rs 46 crore. He stated that measures are being taken to ensure all road works are completed by next March.

MEWA seeks action on Urdu education issues in Anantapur

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ANANTAPUR

LEADERS of the District Minority Employees' Welfare Association (MEWA), led by State associate president Fakruddin, submitted a detailed representation to District Educational Officer Ayub Hussain

on Friday at Teachers' Bhavan, Anantapur. They highlighted non-implementation of mother-tongue education and Three-Language Formula, absence of Urdu options in many schools, and unfilled Urdu teacher posts in Telugu-medium high schools with over 25% Muslim students. Many



Urdu primary schools end at Class 5, causing dropouts especially among girls;

they demanded upgrades to upper primary level in every mandal.

Long-serving Second Grade Urdu teachers remain unpromoted, and

vacant AAMO (Urdu) posts hamper supervision. They sought volunteers, timely textbooks, a special DSC for Urdu posts and a dedicated Urdu coordination wing. The DEO assured steps after assessing ground realities and urged minority parents to utilise government schemes.

18 stolen bikes recovered, six arrested



Two-wheeler thieves arrested by Chandragiri police

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TIRUPATI

CHANDRAGIRI police on Friday busted an inter-district two-wheeler theft gang, arresting six suspects and recovering 18 stolen bikes and one auto, worth about Rs 20 lakh. The arrested were identified as Pathan Afroz (21) of Padarupalli, Nellore district; Enimeti Lochan Nivas (19) of Chittoor district; Krishnappa Achari Sai Krishna (18) of Chandragiri mandal, Tirupati district; Madarapu Vamsikrishna (19) of Chandrayyapalle, Chittoor district; Neerukon-

da Jitendra Banerjee (20) of Chandragiri mandal, Tirupati district; and Pandala Satish Babu (28) of Nellore district were arrested at Seshapuram Sivalayam on Naravaripalli-Bheemavaram road. Revealing case details to the media here on Friday, district SP L Subba Rayudua said that police recovered vehicles hidden at reserve forest area near Srinivasa Mangapuram village, based on the information obtained from the suspects. The recovered vehicles were linked to thefts reported across several police station areas including Chandragiri

(7 cases), SVU Campus (3), Tirupati Rural (2), Tiruchanur (1), Srikalahasti-I Town (2), Nellore Rural (2), Vedayapalem (1) and Manubolu (1), he informed. The SP further said some bikes were stripped for parts while others were kept intact for resale. He praised the team's effective investigation and said special vigilance against two-wheeler theft rings will continue across the district. He advised people to secure vehicles with locks or immobilizers, park in well-lit areas, and report suspicious persons or activities immediately.

Furniture repairs underway at Nellore GGH

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NELLORE

REPAIR works on furniture and patient support equipment are being carried out on a war footing at the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Nellore to improve facilities for patients. Following the State government directions to enhance amenities in government hospitals, the works are progressing on the instructions of Nellore Rural MLA Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy. Repairs to patient chairs,

wheelchairs, stretchers and other damaged items are advancing rapidly. Hospital Superintendent Dr Kondeti Madhavi Latha, RMO Srinivasulu and Hospital Development Committee Coordinator Madaparthi Srinivasulu personally supervised the efforts on Friday. Dr Madhavi Latha said the repairs aim to prevent inconvenience to patients and that the refurbished chairs and equipment will be distributed to various hospital departments once completed.



Over 1,800 devotees join mass Varalakshmi Vratam at Srisailem



Women participating in the Varalakshmi Vratam at Srisailem on Friday

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SRISAILAM

SRISAILA Devasthanam organised a free mass Varalakshmi Vratam at Chandravathi Kalyana Mandapam on Friday, drawing over 1,800 devotees as part of its dharma prachara activities. Authorities supplied puja

materials and individual kalashas. The programme began with Maha Ganapati Puja and Shodashopachara to utsava idols of Sri Mallikarjuna Swamy and Sri Bhramaramba Devi. Devotees performed Kalasha Shapana and invoked Goddess Varalakshmi; priests conducted Sri Sukta rituals,

recited Vrata Katha, and concluded with Neerajanam and Mantrapushpanam. Participants were presented with sarees, blouse pieces, flowers, bangles, sacred threads, Tulasi plants, Sri-saila Prabha magazine and prasadam. Special darshan queues and Annadanam were arranged.