

No-cost ₹1-cr insurance cover for govt employees: Dy Cm Bhatti

HYDERABAD: Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Thursday said that the Rs 1 crore insurance scheme being provided to state government employees, contract and outsourcing staff, and pensioners was the first of its kind in the country and several state governments have approached inquiring about the scheme details. The minister stated that the scheme was being implemented with the humanitarian objective of ensuring financial security for an employee's family, preventing them from facing destitution in the unfortunate event of the employee's death. He informed the House that the scheme was being executed with the co-operation of banks, without imposing any financial burden on either the government or the employees. The minister was replying to a question on the insurance scheme during the Question Hour in the Assembly on Thursday. The Deputy Chief Minister mentioned that the state government had entered into agreements with 16 banks to provide insurance coverage to regular employees, pensioners, and contract and outsourcing staff.

BGUS sees chinks in Hyd'bad Ganesh fest coordination armour

Committee warns govt of responsibility for any untoward incident

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Committee (BGUS) has expressed concern over the alleged lack of coordination among government departments ahead of the annual Ganesh festival, scheduled to be celebrated between September 14 and 25 in Hyderabad.

BGUS General Secretary Dr Ravinutala Shashidhar, along with committee president G Raghava Reddy Pulla Reddy, said preparations were being undertaken for the grand immersion procession of Ganesh idols on Anant Chaturdashi on September 25.

Shashidhar alleged that despite statements being issued by the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and the police regarding arrangements, there was little visible activity on the ground with only two days left for the festival to begin. He warned that the government would be held responsible for any untoward incident arising out of poor coordination between de-



Bhagyanagar Ganesh Utsav Committee (BGUS) General Secretary Dr Ravinutala Shashidhar addressing a press conference at the Press Club in Hyderabad along with committee members, highlighting alleged lack of government coordination and police high-handedness ahead of the annual Ganesh festival

partments.

He said the celebrations would be conducted in a devotional atmosphere while adhering to Sanatan traditions. Expressing displeasure over the alleged treatment of committee vice-president Narayan Rathi by the Sultan Bazaar police, Shashidhar said it was "unacceptable" and claimed that such an incident had occurred for the first time in the committee's 47-year history. He questioned whether this was

what was meant by "friendly policing".

He alleged that some police personnel at the lower level were unnecessarily imposing restrictions, including binding over devotees and registering cases, in connection with the movement of Ganesh idols.

He said there were no restrictions on bringing Ganesh idols into the city but alleged that some officers were behaving aggressively with devotees.

Shashidhar suggested Hyderabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar to review the arrangements, alleging that he may be receiving misleading information from lower-level officials.

He also questioned the selective invocation of Supreme Court guidelines on sound pollution during Ganesh festivities, arguing that the regulations should be implemented uniformly across all communities and places of worship.

Lakshminarayana lake cries for revival

VILLAGERS BLAME JAWAHARNAGAR WASTE RUNOFF FOR FISH DEATHS AND GROUNDWATER POLLUTION

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

RESIDENTS and fishermen of Edulabad village in Ghatkesar mandal of Medchal-Malkajgiri district urged HYDRAA to take urgent measures to protect and restore the historic Lakshminarayana Lake, alleging severe pollution has transformed the once-vital water body into a health and environmental hazard.

Following complaints submitted through Prajavani, HYDRAA Commissioner AV Ranganath, along with Additional Commissioner D Anand Kumar and Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, inspected the lake on Thursday. The officials also reviewed arrangements being made for upcoming Ganesh idol immersion activities at the site.

Locals explained that the lake, spread over more than 600 acres, once played a crucial role in supplying drinking and irrigation water to the region. However, water contamination has led to widespread fish deaths and polluted groundwater in surrounding borewells, causing severe public health concerns. Villagers alleged that toxic wastewater carrying run-off from the Jawaharnagar dumping yard enters the lake directly, drastically worsening pollution levels.

They pointed out that diverting the sew-



age drain carrying Jawaharnagar wastewater away from the water body would substantially address the crisis. Requesting systematic development similar to other revived lakes, residents urged immediate interventions. Assuring prompt action, AV Ranganath promised locals that a dedicated meeting will be convened soon to prepare a comprehensive plan to restore the historic water body to its former state.

Eatala fumes over Cantonment civic affairs

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

MALKAJGIRI MP Eatala Rajender expressed strong displeasure on Thursday over the functioning of the Secunderabad Cantonment Chief Executive Officer, describing his administrative demeanor as a major obstacle to regional development. Speaking after laying the foundation stone for cement concrete roads in SBI Colony, Chandulal Bowli, and Jaya Nagar Colony, Rajender observed that despite being one of the most beautiful, hygienic, and well-equipped areas in the twin cities, the newly appointed official attitude has created confusion and inaction. He noted that contractors are reluctant to undertake developmental projects, causing available central allocations to lapse while prompting local residents to question whether a merger with GHMC would prove more beneficial.

Rajender commended nominated board member Banuka Narmada Mallikarjun for striving to deliver civic amenities, adding that his persistent efforts secured

Rs 18 crore from the Central Government alongside pending tax and stamp duty funds. However, he urged Cantonment authorities not to jeopardize the livelihoods of poor and middle-class residents running banana carts, small eateries, or kiosks through absurd regulations. Stating that making a living has become a heavy burden even for educated individuals, Rajender stressed that officials must facilitate small-scale traders, street vendors, and shopkeepers rather than belittling or harassing them.

Reminding administrative authorities that state and central officials are public servants rather than autocratic bosses, Rajender cautioned that negligence and an anti-people attitude risk transforming public administration into a menace.

He affirmed that it is neither desirable nor tolerable for any official or public representative to toy with the lives of the poor, calling for effective fund utilization, upgraded civic infrastructure, and immediate protection for vulnerable small traders operating across the Cantonment area.

Jaju orders robust paddy procurement plan

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

CHIEF Secretary Sanjay Jaju on Thursday directed officials to make robust arrangements for paddy procurement during the 2026-27 monsoon (Kharif) season and ensure farmers face no hardship.

Jaju, who chaired a coordination meeting with senior officials, said paddy was cultivated across around 57.7 lakh acres this season, with estimated production of 119.57 lakh metric tonnes. The government has formulated an action plan to procure around 65 lakh metric tonnes.



He said 8,283 grain procurement centres would be established in coordination with IKP, Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) and other agencies. As arrivals are expected to begin in October and peak in November, officials were told to complete arrangements well in advance.

The CS stressed the need to ensure adequate transport, hamals, warehouses and storage capacity, besides providing essential infrastructure for farmers at procurement centres.

He directed officials to assign a unique identification number to every farmer visiting procurement centres and

properly link Aadhaar details with the bank accounts used for payments.

Jaju called for close inter-departmental coordination to prevent delays in procurement, transportation, storage and payments, and directed officials to ensure transparent and speedy services to farmers.

Eatala seeks overhaul of Jan Aushadhi network

HYDERABAD: MALKAJGIRI MP Eatala Rajender highlighted systemic issues hindering the effective functioning of Jan Aushadhi Kendras, suggesting key structural measures to strengthen operations. Presenting before the Parliamentary Standing Committee in the national capital recently, the BJP parliamentarian urged urgent reforms to ensure an uninterrupted supply of quality medicines while maintaining financial viability

for store operators. Addressing supply chain bottlenecks, Rajender emphasized the necessity of timely payments to medical suppliers, noting that current settlement delays span three to five months. He proposed establishing a strict 30 to 45 day payment window alongside the immediate clearance of outstanding bills to bolster supplier confidence and facilitate smooth network operations.

Stressing the balance be-

tween affordability, quality, and accessibility, Rajender stated that every generic store must adhere to minimum stock standards. He called for dedicated mechanisms to maintain high-demand drugs, preventing stock-outs of essential medicines. Calling quality assurance non-negotiable, he advocated stringent batch testing, random sampling, independent lab verification, and rapid grievance response systems

for complaints. Furthermore, Rajender proposed expanding regional distribution centres and implementing track-and-trace systems for real-time monitoring to expedite drug deliveries.

Regarding specialized healthcare, Rajender urged the phase wise integration of cancer care medicines into the generic network to provide affordable alternatives for rare, costly treatments through dedicated procurement.

MMC chalks out plans for Ganesh festivities

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

A coordination meeting was held at the Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation (MMC) headquarters under the chairmanship of Commissioner T Vinay Krishna Reddy with representatives of Bhagyanagar Utsav Samiti to discuss arrangements and the action plan for the peaceful, safe and smooth conduct of the upcoming Ganesh festival and immersion programmes.

The meeting discussed the safety of devotees during idol installation, processions and immersion, besides traffic management, sanitation, electrical safety, roads, lighting, medical and emergency services and infrastructure at immersion points. The Commissioner directed each department to identify works to be taken up in its jurisdiction in advance and complete them in coordination with other departments. Officials were instructed to ensure the availability of cranes, am-

balances, fire safety equipment, adequate staff, control rooms, lighting and other facilities required for devotees at immersion points.

He called for coordination with the police and traffic departments to ensure smooth movement of vehicles along immersion procession routes. Special priority should be given to sanitation at immersion points, with continuous cleaning undertaken to prevent garbage accumulation. The Commissioner also directed the Electricity Department, police and other concerned departments to strictly monitor compliance with electrical safety standards at Ganesh mandapams.

The meeting was attended by Malkajgiri Police Commissioner Sumati, Uppal Zonal Commissioner Radhika Gupta, Malkajgiri Zonal Commissioner Sanchit Gangwar, LB Nagar Zonal Commissioner Vikas Mahato, Traffic DCP Rahul Reddy, HYDRAA Additional Director Papaiah and others.

RTC trade union polls date to be announced soon: Ponnam

HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

TRANSPORT Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Thursday said that the state government would soon announce the date for the trade union elections in the Telangana Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC).

The minister was responding to questions raised by several MLAs regarding the RTC during the Question Hour in the Assembly. Prabhakar said that while railways serve as a lifeline for the poor and middle class across the country, the RTC acts as a lifeline for the people of Telangana.

Telangana RTC buses cover approximately 30 lakh kilometres daily, transporting 65 lakh passengers to their destinations. He said that the election process for RTC labor unions is currently underway; once the elections conclude, representatives from the winning union will be included in the official committee to advance the merger process. He assured that careful steps were being taken to ensure that the dif-



iculties encountered during RTC mergers in other states do not recur in Telangana.

The minister criticised the previous government for neglecting and undermining the RTC over the past decade. The minister recalled that after the Congress government assumed office on December 7, 2023, the 'Mahalakshmi' scheme was launched on December 9, providing free bus travel for women. He stated that the Mahalakshmi scheme not only reduced the financial burden on women but also revitalised the RTC. He added that following the scheme's implementation, bus occupancy and passenger footfall at bus stations have increased significantly.

The minister revealed that, till date, 347.47 crore

women had availed themselves of free travel, saving a total of Rs 12,171 crore. He announced plans to introduce 2,200 electric buses in Hyderabad city under the PM E-Drive scheme. The minister clarified that CCTV cameras have already been installed in premium-category buses and electric buses operated by the RTC.

Responding to requests from pilgrims visiting the Yadadri temple, he assured that measures would be taken to ensure express buses halt at Vangara. The minister clarified that the government has no policy to hand over RTC lands to private individuals, stating instead that RTC assets would be safeguarded and utilised for the organisation's development.

GANESHA IDOLS GALORE AHEAD OF FESTIVITIES



Lord Ganesha idols in various hues, designs and sizes on display ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations in Hyderabad
Photos: Srinivas Setty

