CM seeks UAE, Japanese investments in food processing, critical minerals, energy sectors

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

ELABORATING on the vast investment opportunities available in Andhra Pradesh and the State's potential in food processing sector, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu invited several industrialists and company representatives from Dubai and UAE to invest in AP, particularly in food processing.

UAE Minister of Economy and Tourism Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri, who arrived in Visakhapatnam to participate in CII Partnership Summit, met Chief Minister Naidu on the eve of CII Partnership Summit in Visakhapatnam.

During meeting, the CM explained that the State is developing Rayalaseema into a global horticulture hub with an investment of Rs 1 lakh crore. He called upon Silal, a leading UAE-based agri food company, to participate in the food cluster proposed to be established by the UAE.

Chandrababu Naidu highlighted that Andhra Pradesh offers immense opportunities for investment in agriculture, procurement of agricultural and food products, processing and exports. The proposed grounding of Dubai-based Floormaster Industries in Chittoor district also came up for discussion.

The CM urged the UAE Minister to facilitate an early decision on the proposed food cluster.

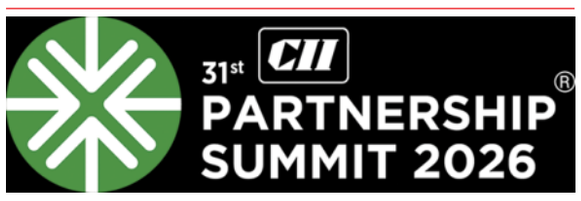
The CM also encouraged UAE companies to explore investment opportunities in various sectors, including maritime, aerospace and defence. He assured that Andhra Pradesh is ready to work closely with the UAE to strengthen bilateral economic cooperation. UAE Minister of Economy and Tourism Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri responded that the UAE is keen to invest along India's eastern coast and that Andhra Pradesh would emerge as a key destination for investments from his country.

The UAE delegation also evinced interest in importing shrimp and other aquaculture products from Andhra Pradesh.

Chief Minister Naidu was further informed that another



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu in discussions with UAE Minister of Economy and Tourism Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri along with other UAE company officials in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday



12 UAE-based companies were keen to invest in the proposed food cluster in the State. In a separate meeting with Japanese Ambassador Keiichi Ono, Chief Minister Naidu explored cooperation in skill development, critical minerals, steel and green energy. Japanese representatives offered to support industry-oriented training for Andhra Pradesh's youth and sought cooperation in securing rare earth mineral supplies and uninterrupted imports of semi-finished steel for processing at the ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India plant.

In a meeting with Singapore Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Energy, Trade and Industry Gan Siow Huang, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu discussed advancing AP-Singapore partnership, with particular emphasis on Amaravati's integrated township development, digital governance through RTGS, institutional capacity-building, logistics and international trade.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu also met World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) Director General Daren Tang to explore ways to secure international recognition for innovation, research and creativity in Andhra Pradesh and enhance awareness of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) among startups and entrepreneurs in the State.

The discussions focused on establishing a WIPO–Andhra Pradesh Academy and conducting joint programmes to provide training on Intellectual Property Rights, patents, trademarks, industrial designs and technology protection to students, researchers, startup founders and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

The CM sought WIPO's support in securing Geographical Indication (GI) tags for the State's handloom products, handicrafts and other local products. He also requested assistance in expanding markets for existing GI-tagged products and taking their quality standards and branding to the international level.

Vijaya Sai Reddy launches Parivartan Rajaniti Party

MV Syam Sundar
Vijayawada

FORMER Rajya Sabha member V Vijaya Sai Reddy on Wednesday formally announced the launch of a new political party, named Parivartan Rajaniti Party (PRP), declaring that its primary objective would be to provide an alternative to family-based politics in Andhra Pradesh.

The party's name, flag and agenda were unveiled at a programme held at A-1 Convention Centre in Vijayawada at 11.11 am. Party flag features white and saffron colours, with a Dharma Chakra at its centre. The party will be known by the acronym PRP.

Announcing the party's vision, Vijaya Sai Reddy said it would work towards ending the dominance of family-based politics in the State and provide greater opportunities for young people. He promised that 60 per cent of opportunities in the party would be given to youth and that they would be encouraged to take up leadership responsibilities.

He said development and welfare would form the core of the party's agenda, with particular emphasis on addressing public issues, education, employment, agriculture and the overall development of Andhra Pradesh. Providing free electricity to farmers, increasing water storage capacity and improving people's incomes would be among its key priorities.



V Vijaya Sai Reddy launching a new political - Parivartana Rajaniti Party - in Vijayawada on Wednesday
Photo: Ch Venkata Mastan

Stating that the party would protect the pride and self-respect of Rayalaseema while ensuring balanced development across all regions of the State, he said the PRP would strive to build a political platform focused on public welfare and good governance.

Vijaya Sai Reddy maintained that anyone doing good work should be appreciated, while those committing mistakes must be questioned with evidence, irrespective of their political position. Whether it was himself, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu or YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, wrongdoing should be questioned without bias, he said.

Questioning whether Andhra Pradesh should continue to be ruled by just two political families, he clarified that becoming Chief Minister was not his personal ambition. Instead, he said he would identify a capable young leader with the necessary talent, potential and leadership qualities and groom that person to become the Chief Minister.

The launch of PRP is expected to add a new dimension to the political landscape of Andhra Pradesh, with its proposed focus on youth leadership and an alternative to family-centric politics.

Jagan accuses Naidu of 'scam' in medical college privatisation

Hans News Service
Amaravati

YSR Congress Party president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Wednesday accused Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu of attempting to hand over government medical colleges to private players under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, alleging that the move amounted to a massive scam involving public assets.

In a post on X, Jagan said his government had established 17 new medical colleges, of which five were opened and another three were made ready to commence classes.

The remaining nine could have been completed by investing Rs 1,000 crore annually, he said, questioning the need for privatisation.

Alleging irregularities in the proposed PPP arrangement, Jagan claimed that government land worth hundreds of crores was being leased for just Rs 100 per acre, while Rs 1,630 crore in public funds would be provided as Viability Gap Funding (VGF).

He also alleged that the government would bear staff salaries for two years, involving an expenditure of around Rs 120 crore per college.

He maintained that colleges were designed as teaching hospitals offering free multispecialty treatment, with half medical seats under convenor quota and remaining seats at fees substantially lower than private institutions.

They would also be linked to area hospitals, CHCs, PHCs and village clinics to strengthen healthcare delivery. Jagan further accused Naidu government of weakening public healthcare system by delaying Aarogyasri payments, allowing medicine shortages, increasing doctor vacancies, stopping Nadu-Nedu hospital works and neglecting village clinics and 108 and 104 ambulance services.

Claiming that one crore people had signed his party's petition opposing the privatisation, he demanded that the government withdraw its decision.

Jagan warned that if YSRCP returned to power, it would initiate legal action against those involved in the deal and would not hesitate to make arrests.

He said his party would continue its campaign against the privatisation of government medical colleges.

Cross-voting, invalid votes mark NDA sweep in Tirupati dist

- Cross-voting evident in Tirupati Rural, with voters favouring different parties in MPTC and ZPTC polls
- Invalid votes outnumbered victory margins in KV Puram and Renigunta ZPTC constituencies
- NDA wins 205 of 302 MPTC seats and 24 of 31 ZPTC seats

Pradeep Vennelakanti
Tirupati

A sweeping victory for the NDA alliance in Tirupati district has not told the entire electoral story.

A constituency-wise analysis of the ZPTC and MPTC results points to cross-voting, sizable NOTA support, invalid ballots exceeding victory margins in some places and a striking urban-rural divide in voter participation. Tirupati Rural mandal recorded a clear instance of cross-voting, with voters appearing to favour different parties in the MPTC and ZPTC elections. In the MPTC polls, the NDA alliance secured 30,617 votes, accounting for 50.6 percent, against 27,590 votes (45.6 percent) polled by the YSR Congress party. The alliance also won 19 MPTC seats in the mandal.



File photo

However, the trend was reversed in the ZPTC election. YSRCP candidate Chevireddy Harshit Reddy secured 41,296 votes (49.5 percent) to defeat NDA alliance candidate Mucheli Dhanalakshmi, who polled 40,733 votes (48.8 percent), by a narrow margin of 563 votes. The contrasting outcomes suggest that a section of voters opted for different parties in the two elections.

Another notable feature was the number of votes polled for NOTA in the MPTC elections. NOTA received 4,641 votes, marginally more than the combined 4,625 votes secured by the Congress and other parties.

Invalid votes also assumed significance in some constituencies, particularly where the winning margins were narrow. In KV Puram, the TDP ZPTC candidate won by 301 votes, while 1,315 votes were declared invalid.

Similarly, in Renigunta, BJP ZPTC candidate secured victory by a margin of 337 votes, against 942 invalid votes.

Polling percentages revealed a marked difference between areas on the outskirts of Tirupati and remote rural mandals. Tirupati Rural recorded some of the lowest polling figures in the district. Avilala-2 MPTC registered just 37.3 percent polling, followed by Gandhipuram at 40.6 percent and Srinivasapuram at 41.7 percent.

In contrast, remote villages witnessed significantly higher voter participation. Graddagunta in Tada mandal recorded the highest polling percentage at 87.4 percent, followed by Sripuram in Dakkili mandal at 86.1 percent and Kasimitta in Narayanavanam mandal at 85.7 percent. At the district level, the NDA alliance secured 3,18,217 votes in the MPTC elections, accounting for 53.4 percent of the total, and won 205 seats.

The YSRCP polled 2,42,799 votes (40.7 percent) and secured 85 seats. Independents received 25,559 votes and won 12 seats.

The alliance maintained its lead in the ZPTC elections as well, securing 3,98,568 votes (52.5 percent) and winning 24 seats. The YSRCP received 3,30,864 votes (43.6 percent) and won six seats. Independents secured one seat with 17,678 votes. Other parties failed to win any seats in either election.

TMC wins National 'Super Swachh League' award

Vani Mallela
Tirupati

BRINGING major honor to Andhra Pradesh, the Tirupati Municipal Corporation has won the prestigious national-level 'Super Swachh League' award in the Swachh Survekshan 2025-26 rankings.

The award was presented by President Droupadi Murmu during a national ceremony held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Wednesday. Minister Narayana, Chief Secretary Suresh Kumar, and Tirupati Municipal Corporation Commissioner M Jayakrishna formally received the accolade on behalf of the city administration.

This milestone marks the fourth consecutive year that Tirupati has secured a top-tier national award in the Swachh Survekshan survey, reflecting its sustained excellence in urban sanitation since 2019. Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner M Jayakrishna stated that receiving the honor from the President was a proud and memorable moment for Tirupati. He attributed the achievement to the active cooperation of local residents, the relentless hard work of sanitation workers, and the coordinated efforts of municipal staff.

He urged citizens to maintain their support to keep the temple city clean and green.



President Droupadi Murmu presenting the national 'Super Swachh League' award to Minister Narayana, Chief Secretary Suresh Kumar, and Tirupati Municipal Corporation Commissioner M Jayakrishna at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Wednesday

The national recognition acknowledged Tirupati's robust performance across multiple urban cleanliness parameters, including 100 percent door-to-door waste collection, efficient public toilet maintenance, advanced solid waste management, reduction of legacy waste at dumping yards, artistic wall beautification, waste-to-wealth conversion, and structured e-waste collection drives.

'Vigilance Awareness Week 2026' organised

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

AS part of 'Vigilance Awareness Week 2026,' the Indian Overseas Bank, Regional Office, Visakhapatnam organised a walkathon on Wednesday at VMRDA Central Park to create awareness among the public.

Speaking on the occasion, senior regional manager Ravi Kumar Gupta stressed that every citizen should strive hard for a corruption-free society.

He informed that as cyber frauds are increasing, customers should be aware of the frauds and not share OTPs or credentials with anyone.

Indian Overseas Bank has 79 branches in the Visakhapatnam region and offers all kinds of MSME and AGRI products catering to the needs of all customers, he added. The event highlighted the theme of 'probity for prosperity' and citizen engagement for a corruption-free India.

Rs 81K donated for thalassemia patients

M Srinivasa Rao
Nellore

IN a major boost to healthcare philanthropy, donors have stepped forward to support the Thalassemia care project managed by the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) Nellore district branch by contributing Rs 81,000 towards children's medical expenses.

During a program organized at the IRCS office on Wednesday, philanthropist Kota Surendra donated Rs 75,000, while IRCS Secretary P Mastanaiah contributed Rs 6,000 to aid the cause.

The financial assistance will be utilized to procure essential medicines and meet healthcare requirements for children suffering from Thalassemia, a condition requiring regular blood transfusions and continuous medical supervision.

IRCS has been making sustained efforts to deliver improved medical care while mitigating the heavy financial burden placed on affected families. Expressing deep gratitude, IRCS representatives commended Kota Surendra and P. Mastanaiah for their timely generosity, emphasizing that private contributions play a vital role in securing the health and future of underprivileged children.



Philanthropists handling over Rs 81,000 cheque to the IRCS members in a programme organised in Nellore on Wednesday

Union Minister dedicates Port Promenade to public

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

UNION Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal dedicated Port Promenade to public and inaugurated and laid foundation stones for a series of infrastructure and development projects at Visakhapatnam Port Authority (VPA) on Wednesday.

The projects included dedicating Port Promenade to public, upgrading and refurbishing existing Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) from 10 MLD to 15 MLD and operating and maintaining WQ-1 & WQ-1RE, WQ-2 & WQ-3 and EQ-3 terminals under public-private partnership (PPP) model.

The programme was attended by Visakhapatnam MP M Sribharat, Visakhapatnam; Golla Baburao, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha); MLAs Ch Vamsi Krishna Srinivas and P Vishnu Kumar Raju, Jasmeet Singh Bindra, Chairperson, Visakhapatnam Port Authority; Roshni A Korati, deputy chairperson, VPA; among others.

Visakhapatnam Port Authority developed Port Promenade near International Cruise Terminal as a pedestrian-friendly waterfront destination, offering citizens and visitors a unique opportunity to experience the harbour, watch ship movements and witness port operations from a safe and designated viewing area.



Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, MPs and MLAs and VPA officials at the launch of Port Promenade at the port in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

Man held for illegal ganja possession

TIRUPATI : IN an enforcement drive against drug trafficking, Srikalahasti Rural police arrested a man on Wednesday for possessing and illegally selling ganja near the Akkurthi railway gate in Srikalahasti mandal. Acting on the directives of Tirupati District Superintendent of Police L Subba Rayudu, special police teams have intensified district-wide raids to curb the movement, sale, and consumption of narcotic substances. Based on credible intelligence regarding illegal ganja trade, Srikalahasti Rural Circle Inspector G Ibrahim, along with police and revenue officials, conducted search operations at Akkurthi. During the operation, officers intercepted and arrested Barri Mohan Reddy, a resident of Muchuvolu village. Upon searching the suspect, police recovered approximately 1,100 grams of ganja, along with a mobile phone and a motorcycle used for transport.

Preliminary interrogation revealed that the accused sourced the contraband from a supplier identified as Seenu, based in Chatrapur town, Odisha, and was hawking it to local buyers in the district.