READYING FOR SUMMER

OVER 500 PEOPLE DIED DUE TO HEAT STROKE THIS YEAR IN TELANGANA

Equipping TS to face heat wave

Nikhila Henry

Next summer, Telangana will be better equipped to beat the heat. The State where over 500 people died due to heat stroke this year will have a government approved action plan to take on the heat wave by March 2016.

A 11-member committee headed by the State Disaster Management wing and supported by departments including health, medical, family welfare, school education, panchayat raj and rural development and institute of preventive medicine among others, will work on the plan during the months that lead up to summer.

The State Government decided to draft an action plan as per the directive from the Centre.

The action plan will chart out a timeline for training health care professionals across the 10 districts in management of heat related illnesses. It will lay emphasis on construction and maintenance of shade and shelter for vulnerable groups along with an investigation into the vulnerability factor among slum dwellers and others employed in professions where sun exposure is high. The plan will also moot massive mass media campaigns for spreading heat illness awareness.

First meeting

The plan will be along the lines of those that Odisha and Gujarat already have in place. The instructions were issued to draft a comprehensive action plan on heat wave as per GO MS No.3. The committee is expected to have its first meeting after August 24.

A senior officer from the department of disaster management said, "The meeting will be held before the coming legislative assembly session. After the meeting, experts from institutions including Environment Protection Training and Research Institute (EPTRI) will be consulted."

As on June this year 511 people in the State, succumbed to heat wave related illnesses. Nalgonda and Khammam districts were the worst hit in Telangana, officials said. However, the numbers were higher in Andhra Pradesh with over 1,300 people succumbing to the heat wave by June.

"Last year the government took precautionary measures during summer. As deaths were reported despite awareness and welfare programmes the State has decided to come up with an action plan on tackling heat wave," said B R Meena, principal secretary, Revenue who is heading the committee.

ACTION PLAN

To adapt Odisha, Gujarat plan on heat wave

11 member committee formed

First meeting prior to Assembly session

FOCUS AREAS

- To conduct awareness drive
- To make available adequate medical supplies in State dispensaries and health centres
- Risk neighbourhoods to be identified ahead of summer to concentrate government support
- Health care training for professionals in rural mandals
- To make available ice packs and IV fluids for people

An army against agri pest attack

Bengaluru-based NBAIR has several weapons up its sleeve

Chitra V. Ramani

BENGALURU: A strange white substance on a few rambutan fruits puzzled the officials at the quarantine cell in the Kempegowda International Airport. They immediately sent a batch to the National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources (NBAIR) for it to be tested.

The entomologists at NBAIR identified the white substance as the Sapota mealybug, a pest that had seriously affected crops in the Philippines. As suggested by them, the quarantine cell officials destroyed the entire consignment of the rambutan fruit.

"This timely detection helped save loss amounting to crores. The mealybug never established itself here, as we nipped it in the bud," noted Abraham Verghese, director of NBAIR.

The mandate of the city-based NBAIR is to ensure that no insects or pests affect agriculture and is on constant vigil. Currently, the entomologists are working towards mitigating the threat posed by the cassava mealybug and the coconut hispine beetle. While the cassava mealybug is a major threat to tapioca plantations in Africa, especially East Africa, the coconut hispine beetle has affected coconut plantations in neighbouring Myanmar and many Southeast Asian countries.

Expeditions

"We frequently take out expeditions, while our own facilities in Assam, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and many other States are on the vigil for these insects. NBAIR is on the alert all the time and is equipped to identify the insects both molecularly and morphologically," said Dr. Verghese.

NBAIR also works on improving bio-security by producing products that will kill the insects naturally, without the use of any insecticide. For instance, NBAIR used entomopathogenic nematode to kill the root grub of white grub that had affected cash crops, sugarcane, groundnut and maize. "The tiny worm-like insect affected the root grubs and multiplied within it. We developed a talc-like substance with the inactive nematode. The nematodes get activated when applied to the affected field with a little moisture. We have Intellectual Property Rights over the product," he said. Similarly, NBAIR has also developed traps for the tomato pest – Tuta absoluta.

Dr. Verghese said that NBAIR was now encouraging small-scale entrepreneurs, graduates, farmers to sign a memorandum of understanding with NBAIR, following which the strain for the nematode will be shared. "The government will also get a royalty after the strain is shared. We, however, are not selling it to multi-national companies," he added.

Telangana: free education leads to surge in college admissions

R. Ravikanth Reddy

HYDERABAD: Free education up to class 12 by Telangana government, the first in the country, has paid handsome dividends as admissions in the government junior colleges have witnessed a surge by nearly 10,000 this year. The numbers have risen from 68,968 last year to 75,942 now and the admissions are still on. Till last year, the government sector was losing students at 10 per cent per year.

As corporate colleges increase their domination in the intermediate education luring students with marketing glitz, and the government junior colleges facing a precarious scenario with dwindling numbers, the Telangana government came out with a revolutionary decision offering free education and free textbooks to students.

The student-friendly move will cost an additional Rs. 9 crore to the State exchequer and another Rs. 6 crore for free textbooks. Till now, students admitted in science courses were paying Rs. 893 while those in humanities were paying Rs. 535 as tuition fee.

"We are keen to strengthen the government colleges and also attract students from weaker sections dropping out due to financial constraints. Our effort is to save parents from the exorbitant fee collected by the private colleges," said the Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister, Kadiyam Srihari. "The government will also construct permanent structures for all the 402 junior colleges and all will be equipped with lab and library facilities by the next academic year," he said.

"It is a revolutionary decision that will attract students even in urban centres," said P. Madhusudhan Reddy, president of Government Junior Colleges Lecturers Association (GJLA). Admissions have increased even in urban areas of Medak, Ranga Reddy and Nalgonda districts surrounding the city.

With 1,750 junior colleges, Telangana has a capacity of 15 lakh seats, but only 4.5 lakh students joined in the first year thus taking the total to around 9 lakh in the two-year course. Among these 1.4 lakh are in 402 government colleges, 20,000 in 177 model colleges, 18,000 in 42 aided colleges, 30,000 in 220 residential colleges and the remaining in private colleges including the 200 branches of the corporate colleges.

Dr. Reddy says free textbooks are also an attraction. "Telugu Akademi has decided to supply books at concessional rates and the government's initiative is also supported by Medha Charitable Trust led by a philanthropist Yugandhar Reddy who has decided to earmark 20 per cent of his business profits for these books."

Warmth of spirituality

The birth anniversary celebrations of Sri Aurobindo commenced with a bonfire at Auroville near Puducherry on Saturday. Hundreds of Aurovilians and visitors gathered at the amphitheatre in front of the Matrimandir. Special flower arrangements also marked the day as people experienced sunrise in an atmosphere of collective spirituality.
– PHOTO: S.S. KUMAR

Electronic eyes watch traffic cops

Rahul Devulapalli

HYDERABAD: The Telangana government has given 100 hand-held cameras to the Hyderabad traffic police. These cameras be used to record traffic policemen's interaction with the public. The officials are hopeful that this move, the first in the country, would not only curb corruption but also enhance the department's image.

At the launch event, Hyderabad Police Commissioner Mahender Reddy said the cameras would also help nail those citizens who are on the wrong side of the law but complain of police high handedness.

Central database

The video files, he said, would be automatically stored in a central database and there was no scope for any manipulation since they would be encrypted and protected.

Telangana Home Minister N. Narasimha Reddy, the chief guest at the launch ceremony, said the cameras would help in the makeover of the State police department.

The perception of the police, he added, was changing as the policemen were acting responsibly.

He said that the city police were now competing with their counterparts in the West as such cameras are a rarity even in few of the developed nations.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Hyderabad Traffic Police) Jitender informed that though the devices, which are from the United Kingdom, were procured by March, an additional three months was spent on training the staff and on installation related work.

Four hand-held cameras were in use since August last year and the feedback on its impact was encouraging, he added.

TOWARDS EFFECTIVE POLICING

A policeman displays a body worn camera introduced by the Telangana Government in Hyderabad on Friday. —Photo: Mohammed Yousuf

100 body worn cameras introduced; video files will be kept for **30 days**

The cameras with **32 GB external memory** and **2.5 inch LCD screen** were procured from UK

They will record every interaction of the staff with the public

HOPEFULLY, THIS WOULD NOT ONLY CURB CORRUPTION AND NAIL CITIZENS WHO ARE ON WRONG SIDE OF THE LAW BUT ALSO RECORD POLICE HIGH-HANDEDNESS.

OFFICIALS

Vizhinjam plan: Chandy consults church officials

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy on Saturday held discussions with representatives of the Latin Catholic church in an effort to assuage their apprehensions over the Vizhinjam project.

The meeting was held at the Chief Minister's residence here.

A Church spokesperson later said that Chandy had given them a patient hearing and they were expecting a 'favourable' response from the government.

The Latin church had stated that nearly 50,000 fishermen would have to be rehabilitated due to the project and would lose their livelihood once it becomes a reality.

The church wants the government to address the concerns of the fishermen community and has also threatened to launch an indefinite agitation from August 17, when the government will be signing an MoU with Adani Vizhinjam Ports Ltd, the SPV floated by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd.

The fishermen have demanded a better rehabilitation package for those getting affected by the deep water seaport. – PTI

India's Mars mission exceeds expectations

Special Correspondent

BENGALURU: Newly released images of the Martian surface taken by the Indian Mars orbiter show Ophir Chasma, a canyon 317 km long to the south of the Martian equator.

The 'chasma' is part of Valles Marineris, which scientists say is the largest canyon system in the entire solar system.

A 'chasma' is a long, steep-sided depression as designated by the International Astronomical Union.

The three-dimensional images of the terrain of interest were taken by the Mars Colour Camera on July 19 from a distance of 1,857 km and with a resolution of 96 metres, the Indian Space Research Organisation said on Saturday. "The walls of the chasma contain many layers and the floors contain large deposits of layered materials," it said.

Ophir Chasma

The Ophir Chasma lies in the Coprates square (quadrangle) and is named after Mars enthusiast Ophir Bentov of Los Angeles, who has invested in Mars expeditions for eventual human exploration.

3D images of the mother canyon, the 4,000 x 200 km Valles Marineris, have been released earlier.

The first Indian Mars Orbiter Mission, costing around Rs. 450 crore, has been going round the red planet since September 2014 and has exceeded the planned life of six months.

The camera is one of the five scientific instruments it carries as it orbits Mars in an elliptical path of 470 km by 71,000 km once in about three Earth days.

Enormous data

Its mission is to look for tell-tale signs of atmospheric methane, which could indicate ancient life on Mars, and to map its terrain and minerals.

Earlier this month, ISRO threw open the enormous data coming out of the mission to national scientific community and invited proposals from researchers in universities, institutions and relevant government bodies.

Apart from the camera, the orbiter carries a Thermal Infrared Imaging Spectrometer, a Methane Sensor for Mars, a Lyman Alpha Photometer and a Mars Exospheric Neutral Composition Analyser.

[Site link : http://www.isro.gov.in/pslv- c25-mars-orbiter-mission/ 3d-portrayals-of-ophir-chasma-terrain]

Tiruchi airport gets e-tourist visa system

S. Ganesan

TIRUCHI: The Tiruchi International Airport on Saturday became one of the gateways for foreign tourists entering the country with e-tourist visas, an online visa issue system introduced by the Union government.

Tiruchi is now one of the 16 designated airports in the country, which have been approved as entry points for foreigners arriving in the country with e-tourist visas. While nine airports, including Chennai, were already approved, Tiruchi and six other airports - Amritsar, Gaya, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, and Varanasi - have been added to the system now. Tourists from 113 countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Georgia, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Spain, Portugal, Seychelles, The Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom, could use the e-tourist visa facility.

Under the system, foreign tourists can apply for visas through the website www.indianvisaonline.gov.in minimum four days in advance of their arrival. They can pay the fee online and would be required to arrive at the designated airports with a print out of the e-TV (tourist visa) generated online. The visas would have a validity of 30 days from the date of arrival. Biometric details of the applicant will be mandatorily captured on arrival in India. The facility can be availed for a maximum of two visits to the country in a calendar year.

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
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ಶಿರಸಿ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಶಿರಸಿ.
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ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:1001 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 01.07.2015 ರಂದು ಉತ್ತರ ಕನ್ನಡ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಶಿರಸಿ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಗೋಕರ್ಣ ಪಡ್ಡಿ ದೇವನಳ್ಳಿ ರಸ್ತೆ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಹೆದ್ದಾರಿ–142 ರ ಕಿ.ಮೀ. 65.00 ರಿಂದ 68.00 ರವರೆಗೆ ಮಧ್ಯಮಪಥದ ರಸ್ತೆಯನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ (ಆಯ್ದ ಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ) ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದ ಟೆಂಡರನ್ನು ಮುಂದೂಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅಂತೆಯೇ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ವಿಚಾರಣೆಗೆ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 17.08.2015 16.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 19.08.2015 16.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 21.08.2015 16.30 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 24.08.2015 16.00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ ಉಳಿದ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳಿಲ್ಲ.
DIP/CP/C-2/696

Kerala now declares itself 'complete digital State,' thanks to e-district initiative

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Declaration of Kerala a 'complete digital State' and announcement of a new youth programme in memory of former President, the late A P J Abdul Kalam marked Independence Day celebrations in the State.

With the State making remarkable strides in the implementation of various e-governance initiatives, Chief Minister Oommen Chandy declared Kerala the 'complete digital State.'

"The State has achieved 100 per cent mobile density, 75 per cent e-literacy, highest digital banking rate and broadband connection up to panchayat level," Mr. Chandy said in his 69th independence day speech at the Central Stadium here.

Chief Minister announces launch of a youth programme in memory of Kalam

"The implementation of e-district programmes in all districts and linking of Aadhaar and bank accounts have laid a strong foundation for Digital Kerala. I am proud to declare the State the complete digital state, based on these indicators," he said.

Wi-Fi hotspots

The government would set up Wi-Fi hotspots in all local self-government institutions and implement complete mobile governance in the next phase to achieve the best results of the Digital Kerala initiative, he said.

The State government would launch an innovative programme in the name of Dr. Kalam to enable youth to translate their innovative ideas into successful business ventures.

Seeking to check widespread exploitation of natural wealth and create mass awareness for their conservation, government plans to set up an inclusive development council, he said.

"Mammoth development projects to the tune of Rs. 16,000 crore, including Kochi Metro, Kannur Airport and Vizhinjam projects are becoming a reality," he said. – PTI

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