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CESU seeks higher tariff

Bhubaneswar: The Central Electricity Supply Utility (CESU) has proposed a higher averaged tariff increase for subsidised category, voltage wise loss stipulation for computing revenue requirement, category wise tariff to bridge revenue gap, a service charge for dishonoured cheques, single point supply to all apartments, demand charge recording during a month at the same rate as applicable to industries for emergency power supply to Captive Power Plants (CPPs) and Delayed Payment Surcharge (DPS) for Low Tension (LT) consumers at Rs 1.25 per month.

The proposal of the power utility came at a hearing before the Orissa Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) here on Thursday.

The Commission heard the Annual Revenue Requirement and Tariff proposal of CESU for the 2007-08 fiscal.

The Annual Revenue Requirement of CESU excluding previous losses amounted to Rs 1123.52 crore.

CESU argued that tariff gap should be bridged by Government subsidy and consideration of the actual Aggregated Technical & Commercial (AT&C) loss as base level for future reduction in case of insufficient revenue.

A total of 17 objectors filed their submission to CESU's tariff proposal.

The broad issues raised by objectors were the un-audited licensee's account for 2004-05 and 2005-06, failure on the part of CESU in providing details required under regulation and its failure to arrest high distribution loss.

Besides, the objectors also pointed out that the consumer should not be burdened for inefficiency of licensees in collection and the AT & C concept should not be implemented.

More BPL families to be covered under IAY

Bhubaneswar: The state government has decided in principle to cover 80,288 ST and SC BPL families under the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) during 2006-07 fiscal.

A decision to this effect was taken at a high-level meeting presided over by chief secretary Ajit Kumar Tripathy at the State Secretariat here on Thursday.

It was revealed in the meeting that a total of 75,000 families were covered under the Centrally sponsored Bharat Nirman Yojana in which a beneficiary gets Rs 25,000 of which 75 percent of the amount is contributed by the Centre and the rest by the state government.

State to have nine more polytechnic institutes

Bhubaneswar: The Centre has sanctioned nine more full-fledged polytechnic institutes in Orissa to meet the increasing need of technical manpower both inside and outside the state.

These institutes would be set up during the 11th Plan period starting from 2007-08.

The Centre would sanction Rs 14 crore each of these institutes for infrastructure development and recurring expenditure for the first five years while the state government would bear the recurring expenditure after completion of five years.

According to official sources, seven institutes would be located in the backward districts of Kalahandi, Koraput, Boudh, Nabarangpur, Kandhamal and Nuapada or Sonapur while Ganjam, Sambalpur and Balasore districts will have one each.

However, a decision on the choice between Nuapada and Sonapur would be taken after an assessment of the demographic profile of the two districts.

Besides, the Centre has also decided to set up a few special technical institutes in Orissa. A plumbing institute would be set up at Pattamundai in Kendrapada district while Ganjam district will have a special institute for gems and jewellery processing.

The only institute the Centre had sanctioned for the state during 10th Plan is under construction in Malkangiri district that would start functioning from the coming academic session.

It may be mentioned here that apart from 14 government ITIs and 10 women polytechnics, there are 147 private industrial training centres in Orissa at present.

Medicinal trees in schools

Bhubaneswar: The state government has decided to plant medicinal trees in 32 schools in the first phase.

Official sources said that a decision has been taken that if the medicinal trees die due to sheer negligence, the money spent for this purpose, would be deducted from the salary of the concerned teachers.

Around 10 types of medicinal tree would be planted in the school premises in an area of 100 square feet.

The state government would provide Rs 14,000 to each school where Rs 10,000 would be spent for plantation while the rest amount would be earmarked for construction of boundaries, the sources added.

Rajarani Music Fest

Bhubaneswar: The 5th annual Rajarani National Music Festival would start in the city here from February 26.

The three-day festival, jointly organised by the state tourism department and Bhubaneswar Music Circle would continue till February 28.

The festival will showcase three major Indian classical music styles - Hindustani, Carnatic and Odissi and audience would enjoy performances of artistes of national repute, both in vocal and instrumental.

The inaugural evening will feature Odissi vocalist Ramahari Das and young flutist Jawahar Mishra of the State followed by Hindustani vocal recital by Pandit Ulhas Kashalkar from Kolkata.

Similarly, Hindustani vocalists Harihar Rath of Bhubaneswar and Bhopal-based Shashwati Mandal Paul will perform the next evening.

Rudra Veena exponent Ustad Bahaud'din Dagar from Mumbai will be the main highlight of the evening.

The concluding evening would feature popular Odissi singer Mohapatra Minati Bhanja followed by Hindustani singer Hema Upasani from Mumbai.

Vocalist Vidushi Jayashri would represent Carnatic music tradition from Chennai.

Inter-state cultural and film exchange programme

Bhubaneswar: The Orissa inter-state cultural and film exchange programme would be held at Chuwadia theatre in Bangalore from March 7 to 9.

The three-day programme would be organized by the Orissa I&PR department.

Earlier the programme had been held successfully in Thiruvantapuram, Panaji in Goa and Mumbai.

The programmes are being organised to create awareness about the State's culture, traditions, literature among the Oriya people residing in various states and showcase the proud cultural heritage of our state.

It will also lead to exchange of views and thoughts among the State's artists with artists from other states.

A team of officials of the state I&PR department had recently visited the place under instructions and have already made the necessary arrangements.

Shifting of IIT: Agami Orissa to gherao Parliament

Bhubaneswar: Taking strong exception to the step-motherly attitude of the Union HRD ministry for dilly-dallying its decision to set up an IIT institute in Orissa, Agami Orissa, a city-based NGO on Thursday announced to gherao the Parliament and stage a demonstration in New Delhi if the decision for setting up of an IIT in Orissa is reversed. In a statement here on Thursday, Agami Orissa convener Santosh Tripathy said that the NGO would stage a demonstration here involving all the students' community and after that a protest rally would be conducted at New Delhi against the conspiracy of the HRD ministry.

Besides, the organization would also launch mass mobilisation rally in order to gain public support with the help of students, teachers and intellectuals of the state, he added.

Taking a dig at the Centre, Tripathy said that since the decision to shift the proposed IIT to Andhra Pradesh has confirmed the anti-Orissa attitude of the Centre, all should strongly oppose the move.

Vigilance raid on women's college

Bhubaneswar: The State Vigilance sleuths on Thursday raided the office of the Nalini Devi Women's College here in response to allegations that some girl students had managed to get their admission at the college by furnishing fake certificates in the last academic session.

The anti-corruption bureau officials seized all official documents of the college during the raid.

A group of girl students of the college had furnished copies of the forged mark-sheets and other certificates before the State Vigilance and demanded a probe into the incident.

The details of the raid were not immediately known till the reports last came in.

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