



Shut down: Textile merchants downed shutters in General Bazaar in Secunderabad and other parts of Andhra Pradesh in protest against the imposition of 4 per cent value-added tax on Tuesday. The 'bandh' will continue on Wednesday too. — P.V. Sivakumar

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, Nov. 15

The Andhra Pradesh Government has appointed Joint Collectors as District Relief Officers in all the drought-hit districts. The Government, which has declared 550 mandals as drought-hit, would add 50 more mandals to the list in a day or two.

"We will come out with an order to this effect," said Mr N. Raghuvendra Reddy, Minister for Revenue.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, he said district-level control rooms too would be set up with District Collectors and Joint Directors of Agriculture as members. "Enumeration process to assess the losses due to drought has been delayed because of Rachchabanda programme," he said.

"We have asked them to complete the process in a week so as to compile the State-wide data and send a report to the Union Government," he said.

He said the Government was ready to discuss drought in the ensuing Winter Session of Assembly scheduled to begin on December 1.

Rajesh Exports posts 45% growth in profits

Our Bureau

Bangalore, Nov. 15

Jewellery manufacturer and exporter Rajesh Exports Ltd's recent and increased focus on its retail business has resulted in a 45 per cent growth in profits. The retail business brought in about 20 per cent of the profits, Mr Rajesh Mehta, Chairman of Rajesh Exports, said.

The profits rose to Rs 107 crore in the quarter ended September 30 compared with Rs 73 crore last year.

The company which began as a manufacturer and exporter of jewellery rolled out its retail venture about five years ago under the 'Laabh' and 'Shubh' brands to sell gold and diamond jewellery.

"The primary reason for growth in profits is the growth in revenues and profit from the retail business," Mr Mehta said.

75 SEZs in AP attract Rs 15,000-cr investment

Exports expected to double during the current financial year

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, Nov. 15

Andhra Pradesh which has 75 notified special economic zones (SEZs), which is the highest number of SEZs in any State in the country, has attracted investment of about Rs 15,000 crore.

These SEZs registered exports of Rs 13,000 crore during the financial year 2010-11 and exports are expected to double during the current financial year, according to statement.

Apart from attracting investment and helping create new infrastructure, these SEZs provided direct em-

Fact-file

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Besides the SEZs, Andhra Pradesh is having 258 export-oriented units, which accounted for exports of about

Rs 9,000 crore during 2010-11. These provide employment to nearly 20,000 persons. While EOUs scheme was introduced by the Government of India in 1980, they are at liberty to set up their unit at any location of their choice.

In order to encourage SEZ developers and EOUs, export awards for 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 were announced on Monday. Eighty-six awards were announced.

DLF, Aurobindo Pharma, Solar Semiconductor, Wipro, Rain CII Carbon, APIIC are among the list of awardees for their performance.