

Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
H 27° C L 14° C	H 30° C L 19° C	H 26° C L 21° C

No One at Fault: Allu Arjun on Incident



**Allu Arjun Calls Incident Unintentional
Apologies Extended to Victim's Family
Refutes Allegations, Seeks Understanding**

TPN Correspondent
Hyderabad, Dec 22

Actor Allu Arjun, alongside his father Allu Aravind, held a press conference to respond to Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's controversial comments regarding the stampede at Sandhya Theater. The incident, which led to the tragic death of a woman named Revathi and injuries to others, has sparked widespread debate, especially after the Chief Minister alleged Allu Arjun's role in the mishap.

Speaking at the conference, Allu

Arjun termed the incident as an unfortunate accident and extended heartfelt apologies to Revathi's family. He also wished a speedy recovery to Sree Tej, another victim of the tragedy. The actor clarified that no one is at fault in the incident and expressed deep sorrow over the lives affected.

Allu Arjun strongly refuted the allegations of visiting the theater without police permission, stating he had obtained all necessary clearances. He expressed disappointment over being defamed in the national media and criticized what he described as attempts to

damage his reputation. "I made this film to enhance the pride of Telugu people, but I am deeply hurt by the accusations," he said.

The actor also addressed the emotional toll the incident has taken on him, revealing that he has been grappling with grief at home for the past 15 days. He expressed pain over CM Revanth Reddy's comments, describing them as hurtful and unwarranted.

Concluding his address, Allu Arjun emphasized his desire to avoid disputes with the government and expressed hope that the focus would shift toward healing and support for the victims' families. The press meet highlighted the actor's call for understanding and accountability devoid of personal blame.



"We Are Committed to Serving All, Regardless of Votes"

**Striving for a Dolly Mota-Free AP During
Tribal Village Visits**

TPN Correspondent
Paderu, Dec 22

On Saturday, December 21, Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan visited Ballagaruvu and Gummanthi villages in Anantagiri Mandal of Alluri Seetharamaraju district. He made a significant impact during his visit, walking to the Ballagaruvu hilltop to meet local tribal communities. The villagers warmly welcomed Pawan Kalyan with traditional dances, and he participated by joining in the Thinsa dance and playing the traditional drum.

During the visit, Pawan Kalyan highlighted the Andhra Pradesh government's commitment to improving the lives of tribal communities. He announced that Rs. 350 crore would be allocated annually for the construction of roads and other infrastructure in tribal areas. Additionally, the Panchayat Raj Department has allocated Rs. 105 crore for road construction in Alluri district.

Pawan Kalyan expressed his dedication to alleviating the hardships faced by the tribals, stating, "We are here not for elections or votes but to address the struggles and pain of the people." He emphasized the importance of tribal youth in creating change, noting that 19 development projects have already been launched in Ballagaruvu and Gummanthi villages.

In line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

vision, Pawan Kalyan mentioned that the government is focused on building roads to connect tribal villages with a population of at least 100 people. Rs. 250 crore will be allocated by the Center for road construction, starting in January, and the state will continue to fund these initiatives.

Pawan Kalyan also addressed the growing issue of cannabis cultivation in tribal areas, calling it a social problem. He condemned its commercialization, which has led to an increase in youth and children becoming addicted. He cited a recent incident in Kadapa where students, under the influence of cannabis, misbehaved with a teacher. He urged the people to abandon the cultivation of cannabis and promised to provide alternative livelihoods for the communities involved.

On a positive note, Pawan Kalyan expressed his admiration for tribal customs and traditions. He also urged the Telugu film industry to establish itself in Andhra Pradesh. He pointed out that the agency areas, with their scenic beauty, could serve as ideal locations for film shoots. This, he believes, would not only showcase the beauty of the region but also create employment opportunities for the local tribal population. Pawan Kalyan emphasized that the state's development relies on the collective efforts of the government and the people, stressing that good work in the service of the community should always be recognized and protected.

AP Fibernet Issues Notices to Ram Gopal Varma Over Alleged Illegal Funding for 'Vyuham'

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

The Andhra Pradesh government has sent a shockwave through filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma by issuing notices regarding the alleged illegal funding of his movie Vyuham. The notices were sent by the AP Fibernet Corporation following an inquiry into the payment of Rs. 1.15 crore for the telecast of the film on the Fibernet network, despite no views being recorded.

On the orders of the current Fibernet Chairman, GV Reddy, notices were issued to the then Managing Director of Fibernet and five other officials. According to the notices, the funds were released to Varma's movie Vyuham during the YSRCP regime, without any viewership or corresponding revenue. The notices claim that the payment was made contrary to the established rules and procedures, prompting the Corporation to demand the repayment of the amount, along with interest, within 15 days.

The AP government is taking swift action to address the alleged misuse of public funds. The film's telecast was reportedly part of a broader controversy regarding mismanagement in government spending during the previous administration.

It remains to be seen how Ram Gopal Varma will respond to the notices, as he has yet to



comment on the issue. The case continues to unfold, with the Fibernet Corporation emphasizing that the payment was made without proper justification. The development has raised questions about the transparency and accountability of government-funded projects under the previous regime, with this case serving as a reminder of the scrutiny now being applied to such practices.

CM Chandrababu Reviews Situation Amidst Heavy Rains, Issues Key Instructions

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

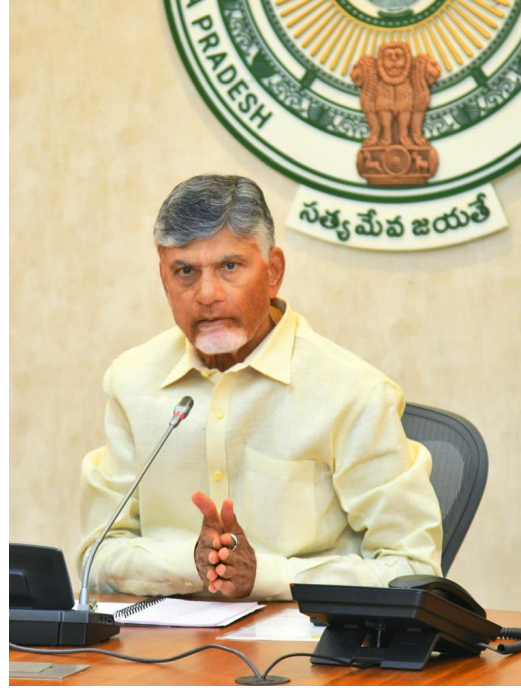
In light of the heavy rains affecting North Andhra due to the influence of low pressure, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu held a review meeting with officials from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). The intense rainfall and rough seas have caused significant concern across the region.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister was briefed on the current situation in various districts, including the steps being taken by district collectors and officials to manage the crisis. CM Naidu was informed about the actions being implemented at the district level to mitigate the impact of the rains.

Noting that several crops had already suffered damage, the Chief Minister ordered the collection of detailed reports on crop losses once the rains subside. He emphasized the need to provide immediate assistance to affected farmers, ensuring they receive support during this difficult time.

Additionally, CM Naidu declared a holiday for schools in the affected areas to ensure the safety of students and prevent any potential harm due to the inclement weather.

He further instructed all levels of government officials to remain on high



alert and to continue monitoring the situation closely. Information related to the ongoing rainfall and weather conditions should be regularly communicated to farmers, he added, ensuring they are well-informed and can take necessary precautions. The CM's instructions reflect the government's commitment to assisting those impacted by the rains and minimizing any further disruptions to the lives of the people in the affected areas.



Liquor Prices Reduced in AP Ahead of New Year and Sankranti Festivals

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

In a significant development for liquor enthusiasts in Andhra Pradesh, liquor companies have drastically reduced their basic liquor rates. The reduction comes just ahead of the New Year and Sankranti festivals, providing a boost to liquor lovers who will celebrate with lower prices.

Under the newly implemented liquor policy of the coalition government, about 11 liquor companies have cut their basic rates, with reductions affecting various brands. These price cuts follow allegations that the previous YSRCP government had increased the base liquor prices to allow for commissions, a claim the current government has sought to

address with a more transparent pricing approach.

The reduction in rates is notable, with the price of a quarter of liquor decreasing by up to Rs. 30 at the MRP, and the price of a full bottle dropping by Rs. 90 to Rs. 120, depending on the brand. This price drop is being celebrated by many, especially as it coincides with the upcoming festivities, giving liquor consumers a more affordable option for their celebrations.

The change reflects the coalition government's new liquor policy aimed at addressing transparency in pricing and reducing the burden on consumers. With the holiday season approaching, this reduction in liquor rates is expected to be well-received by the public.



Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar Reviews Rain Impact and Power Supply Preparedness

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

Andhra Pradesh Power Minister, Gottipati Ravi Kumar, held a review meeting with officials from the Andhra Pradesh Eastern Power Distribution Company Limited (APEPDCL) to assess the situation in districts affected by heavy rainfall. The minister inquired about the current status of power supply and the preparedness of the department in rain-affected areas.

With the forecast predicting more heavy rains, Minister Ravi Kumar instructed officials to stay alert and take necessary precautions to ensure minimal disruption in power services. He emphasized the importance of informing residents in low-lying areas about potential risks and to be ready with relief measures in case of emergencies.

The minister also directed officials to focus on clearing fallen electricity poles and uprooted trees, which could obstruct power lines and disrupt the supply. Ensuring the uninterrupted power supply to the public during the rains was identified as a key priority, and Minister Ravi Kumar made it clear that efforts must be made to quickly restore power in affected areas.

As part of ongoing preparations, the Power Minister emphasized the importance of coordination between various departments to mitigate the impact of the rains and maintain smooth electricity services for the people of Andhra Pradesh.

MD Akram Elected President, Nerusu Krishna Anjaneyulu as Vice President of Heavy Earth Movers Dealers and Technicians Welfare Association

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

Nerusu Krishnanjaneyulu, also known as Anjaneyulu, has been elected as the Vice President of the Heavy Earth Movers Dealers and Technicians Welfare Association in a recent election held on the 11th of this month at Vijayawada Autonagar. MD Akram was elected as the President during the same election process.

Already serving as the Vice President of the Automobile Technician Association (ATA) in Vijayawada Autonagar, Krishnanjaneyulu has been a vocal advocate for workers' rights in the region. He played a pivotal



role in highlighting the issues faced by workers in Autonagar, especially the infrastructure challenges and the impact of five key government orders (GOs) announced by the previous government. His efforts gained the attention of Jana Sena Party President Pawan Kalyan, with whom he collaborated to address the concerns of workers, trade unions, and elders

in the area. Known for his unique speaking style and his exceptional ability to bring people together, Krishnanjaneyulu has become a well-respected figure in the district. He has strong contacts across the region, and his dedication to the welfare of the people has earned him admiration from various communities. The election of Krishnanjaneyulu to this key position is seen as a significant achievement for Autonagar, the largest auto hub in Asia, which provides employment and sustenance to lakhs of people. His leadership is expected to further strengthen the welfare of workers and the growth of the area.

Celebration of International Meditation Day Organised by Ramakrishna Guruji

At Sri Vishwavnana Vidya Spiritual Peetham in Tadepalligudem



TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

On the occasion of the first International Meditation Day, a grand celebration was held on Saturday, December 21, from 6 am to 8:30 am at the Ashram of Sri Vishwavnana Vidya Spiritual Peetham, located at Satyavati Nagar, Road No. 9, Tadepalligudem. The event featured an Agnihotram ceremony conducted by Yoga Master Karibandi Ramakrishna Garu at sunrise, followed by a meditation session.

The program was attended by yoga practitioners from the Aara Foundation, including Ayurveda expert Dr. Kancharla Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy, Patanjali Yogaalayam Yoga Guru Injamuri Madhavrao, and the Aara Foundation founder, Sri Karibandi Ramakrishna, along with his disciples: Aparna Prasad, Maka Srinivas, Ae Ramakrishna, Subhadra

Gupta, Sujatha, Ramanjaneyulu, Renuka, Nunna Nageswara Rao, Ramababu, Venkateswara Rao, Mallikarjuna, and others.

Following the morning session, meditation was taught to students at YSR Horticulture University under the auspices of the Kindness Lines Club and with the support of the Aara Foundation. The significance of International Meditation Day was shared with the students, guiding them toward the path of yoga. Later, a similar session was held at the Degree College of Aditya Vidya Sansthan, where students were introduced to the benefits of meditation.

The event was attended by Kindness Lines Club President Ghattim Praveen Krishna, Secretary Pilla Venkanna Babu, and Associate Member Panduranga Rao, who also participated in the program.



At Aditya Degree College in Tadepalligudem

The meditation camp at Aditya Degree College in Tadepalligudem, conducted by Aara Foundation founder Ramakrishna Guruji, motivated students to embrace meditation as a tool for personal growth and wellness. The session served as an introduction to the practice of yoga and its life-enhancing benefits.

Dr. YSR horticulture University venkataramanagudem



The Benefits of Meditation:

Meditation offers numerous benefits for mental and physical well-being, including:

1. Reducing Stress: Meditation helps in managing stress by providing new perspectives on stressful situations.
2. Improving Focus: It aids in staying present and directs thoughts away from distractions.
3. Enhancing Self-Awareness: Meditation increases awareness of oneself and one's surroundings.
4. Improving Sleep: Regular practice can lead to better sleep patterns.
5. Supporting Heart Health: Meditation can lower resting heart rate and blood pressure.
6. Fostering Creativity and Patience: It encourages creativity and patience in daily life.
7. Reducing Negative Feelings: Meditation helps in minimizing negative emotions.

1. Mindfulness Meditation: Involves staying aware of the present moment without letting your mind wander.
2. Mantra Meditation: Focuses on repeating a sacred word or phrase to promote relaxation.
3. Transcendental Meditation: Involves silently repeating a word or phrase to achieve a deep state of consciousness. Specialized training from a certified teacher is required.
4. Guided Meditation: A meditation instructor or audio recording leads the practitioner through a structured session. This type is especially helpful for beginners.



Minister Atchannaaidu Issues Warning to YSRCP MLC

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

Minister Atchannaaidu, in a fiery media interaction on Saturday, gave an indirect warning to YSRCP MLC Duvvada Srinivas, addressing the political tensions in the state. Reflecting on his past experiences, Atchannaaidu claimed, "My anger nerve was cut some time ago. They put me in jail during the YSRCP regime and caused me many problems. Everyone thought I would retaliate after coming to power, but cultivating factions is not my policy."

He further warned, "If I think about it, not a single one will be left. The one who did wrong will not escape. The law will do its job." This remark, although veiled, was perceived as a warning to his political adversaries.

The minister also criticized the YSRCP for deceiving farmers over the past five years, alleging that the party's claims about the success of farmer assurance centers were false. He accused Former Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy of borrowing Rs. 13 lakh crore without addressing the issues of farmers, including



delayed payments and unpaid dues.

Atchannaaidu emphasized that under the current government, farmers' dues are being settled promptly, with money being deposited into accounts within hours. He assured farmers who had suffered due to recent cyclones that their crops would be purchased at fair prices. He also targeted the YSRCP's "Nadu Nedu" program, alleging financial mismanagement, and vowed that an investigation would be conducted. Furthermore, Atchannaaidu announced plans to enhance infrastructure, including the construction of a four-lane road connecting Moolapet Port to

Bhogapuram airport, with the first ship expected at Moolapet port next year. The development of 10,000 acres for industrial growth around the port is also underway.

Additionally, he revealed plans to implement mid-day meals for intermediate students from January 1 and ensure faster progress on key development projects.

Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu Criticizes YCP Governance

Highlights NDA Govt's Plans for Strengthening Irrigation

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

Irrigation Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu held a press conference today, where he expressed concerns about the weakening of the irrigation system under the previous YSRCP government and outlined the coalition government's plans to restore it. Ramanaidu emphasized that the irrigation system had been severely neglected during Jagan Reddy's five-year rule, citing that no maintenance or repairs were done on canals, gates, or other infrastructure.

"The irrigation system was destroyed under Jagan Reddy's rule. Not even a horseshoe or a hoe was used to clean the canals, nor were the gates greased," Ramanaidu said, highlighting the neglect of essential maintenance. He further explained that the coalition government was working tirelessly to put the system back on track and accelerate the completion of key irrigation projects to provide water to the last acre of land.

Ramanaidu pointed to the victory of coalition candidates in the irrigation union elections as a major triumph. "The overwhelming success of our candidates with a 100% strike rate in the irrigation union elections is a slap in the face to Jagan Reddy and the YSRCP. This victory shows that the entire farmer community stands with the coalition," he stated.

The Minister also expressed gratitude to the farmers for their participation in the elections, with over one crore farmers supporting the coalition candidates. He



lauded the system introduced by former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, which empowers farmers through irrigation associations, and affirmed that the coalition government's efforts would reinvigorate the irrigation sector in the state.

Ramanaidu outlined key projects, including the completion of Polavaram by December 2027, the transfer of Godavari water to Uttarandhra by June 2025, and the Rayalaseema water supply project, with the aim of tackling water scarcity and ensuring equitable water distribution across the state.

Our Govt Will Take Forward CM's Aspirations for Farmers - MLA Yarapathineni

TPN Correspondent
Palnadu District, Dec 22

Gurajala MLA Yarapathineni Srinivas Rao, speaking at the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Nagarjuna Sagar Right Canal Project Committee, expressed strong criticism of the YSRCP government's neglect of the Nagarjuna Sagar project over the past five years. The election, held on Saturday, saw Pulukuri Kanta Rao unanimously elected as Chairman and Uppalapati Chakrapani as Vice-Chairman, with Collector Arun Babu presenting the certificates.

In his address, Yarapathineni highlighted the significance of the Nagarjuna Sagar project for farmers in Guntur and Prakasam districts, stressing that the people of these areas will not face issues with drinking and irrigation water under the coalition government's watch. He expressed frustration with the YSRCP's focus on "anarchy" during their tenure, which he believes hindered development in the region.

The MLA also acknowledged the cooperation of local MLAs from Palnadu, Guntur, Bapatla, and Ongole in organizing the election. He assured the farmers that



the coalition government remains committed to their welfare and promised to carry forward the aspirations of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, particularly in protecting and promoting the interests of farmers. Yarapathineni emphasized that the coalition government would work swiftly and effectively to support the farmers, ensuring their continued access to vital resources and opportunities for growth.

YS Sharmila Criticizes Govt for Delaying Free Bus Scheme for Women

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

YS Sharmila Reddy, the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) Chief, has criticized the coalition government for its failure to implement the free bus scheme for women, a promise made during the election campaign. In a statement on Saturday, Sharmila accused the government of procrastination and insincerity, claiming that the delay was indicative of their lack of responsibility.

She pointed out that despite being in power for six months, the government had not taken meaningful steps to fulfill its promise. "They have skipped festivals and other important events under the guise of various reasons. They claimed they were buying buses, but now they are stretching the matter further, citing the formation of a cabinet sub-committee," Sharmila remarked.

The Congress leader raised several critical questions about the government's delay, asking, "Why is there so much unnecessary debate over a small scheme like free bus travel for women? Why is this simple initiative being dragged on for so long?" She compared the current situation with the swift implementation of



similar schemes by Congress-led governments in Telangana and Karnataka, which provided free bus travel to women within a week of coming to power.

Sharmila further questioned the government's financial capabilities, asking, "Does the government not have Rs. 300 crore per month to fund free bus travel for women? Or does it not care about women's safety?" She highlighted that the RTC management had expressed readiness to implement the scheme at any time, suggesting that there were no real obstacles.

In a final call to action, Sharmila demanded that the government honor its commitment to women by implementing the scheme, preferably as a New Year's gift, to prove its sincerity and dedication to women's welfare.

JD Lakshminarayana Congratulates Pawan Kalyan for Visiting Bahujola, Laying Foundation for Tribal Welfare

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 22

Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan visited the remote tribal village of Bahujola in Parvathipuram Manyam district on Friday, where he laid the foundation stone for the construction of BT roads. This initiative is part of the government's efforts to improve infrastructure in tribal areas.

In response to Pawan Kalyan's visit, former CBI JD and Jai Bharat National Party president VV Lakshminarayana praised the Deputy CM's commitment to the development of tribal communities. In a tweet, Lakshminarayana congratulated Pawan Kalyan for his dedication to improving the living conditions of the people in rural and tribal villages.

"Your dedication for the development of the people of the villages is truly commendable," Lakshminarayana said. He also referred to the constitutional provisions, such as Articles 46, 244, 244A, and 275(1), which are aimed



at promoting the welfare of tribals by providing education, land rights, and other social benefits.

Lakshminarayana emphasized the importance of utilizing various funds allocated for tribal welfare, including the Tribal Sub-Plan, Central Government Schemes, and the District Mineral Foundation. He expressed hope that under Pawan Kalyan's leadership, these resources would be effectively utilized to ensure that tribal communities benefit directly from government schemes and initiatives.

Peethala Sujatha Slams Jagan Reddy's Handling of Education

TPN Correspondent
Mangalagiri, Dec 22

Speaking at a press conference held at the TDP central office, Former Minister Peethala Sujatha sharply criticized the YSRCP government for its neglect of the education sector during its tenure. She alleged that Jagan Reddy's regime had done nothing to improve government

schools and had instead belittled the education system, leaving it in a deteriorated state.

Sujatha pointed out that under the previous government, parents had little faith in government schools, but now, thanks to the coalition government's efforts, parents were enrolling their children in government schools. She praised the hard work of Minister Nara Lokesh for improving the education sector, particularly his initiatives to make government schools competitive with corporate schools. She highlighted efforts like the mid-day meal scheme for intermediate students and the mega DSC notification as significant steps towards addressing long-standing issues in education. The Former Minister also accused Jaganmohan Reddy of insulting teachers by posting them in front of liquor shops and not providing them with proper support. Sujatha contrasted

this with the coalition government's approach, where teachers were empowered and supported to fulfill their duties.

Sujatha criticized Jagan Reddy for failing to keep his promise of conducting a DSC every year, noting that no DSC was announced during his five years in power. In contrast, she emphasized that during the tenure of Chandrababu Naidu

(2014-2019), two DSCs were conducted, leading to the appointment of thousands of teachers.

The FORMER MINISTER further claimed that the YSRCP government had disrupted the education of poor students, especially those from tribal and marginalized communities, and had introduced a "drug mafia" culture in schools and colleges. She claimed that Jagan's government failed to provide proper fee reimbursement and left many teachers with unpaid dues. Sujatha lauded the coalition government's efforts to improve education, including timely salary payments for teachers, the introduction of "school festivals," and a stronger focus on the development of education. She concluded by reaffirming the coalition government's commitment to making Andhra Pradesh a "knowledge state" under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu.



CM Relief Fund Cheques Distributed in Mangalagiri

Victims Thank Minister Nara Lokesh for His Efforts



TPN Correspondent Mangalagiri, Dec 22

CM Relief Fund (CMRF) cheques for medical expenses were distributed to those suffering from illness in Mangalagiri on Saturday. The cheques, sanctioned from the CMRF upon the recommendation of Minister Nara Lokesh, were delivered directly to the victims' homes by local leaders, as per the minister's instructions. A total of Rs. 2.25 lakhs in CMRF cheques were handed over to Amudala Swapnapriya from Nidamaru village, Mangalagiri mandal, while Rs. 80,000 worth of cheques were given to Kattepogu Nayomi from Baptistpet, Ward 15 of Mangalagiri town. Speaking on the occasion, Mangalagiri

Town Chief Secretary Sheikh Riaz encouraged the recipients to seek better treatment and prioritize their health. He emphasized that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's relief fund is a valuable support for people in distress. The event was attended by several local leaders, including city executive secretary Kodamala Simon, state Christian cell executive secretary Polumatla Prem Kumar, constituency SC cell vice presidents, Nidamaru village party president Kurra Brahmam, village party general secretary Kattepogu Srinivasa Rao, and leaders Matangi Ravi Kiran, Bulla Ramu, Ravuri Vijayanand, Kattepogu Dasu, and Kagga Pichaiyya. The recipients expressed their gratitude for the minister's efforts in securing the relief funds.

Police Commissioner & Govt Officials Arranged Comprehensive for Bhavani Diksha Cessation

TPN Correspondent Vijayawada, Dec 22

The City Police Commissioner, Sri S. V. Rajasekhara Babu IPS, announced comprehensive arrangements for the cessation of Bhavani Diksha, ensuring a smooth and safe experience for devotees. A press conference was held at the command control center near Durga Ghat, attended by Municipal Commissioner Sri Dhyan Chand IAS, DCPs Gautami Shali IPS, Krishna Murthy Naidu, and Ramakrishna Garu.



Key highlights include:

Bhavani Deeksha Khairat Program: The program commenced at the Indrakiladri Ammavari Temple on December 21 and will continue until December 25. Authorities estimate over seven lakh devotees from across the state will participate.

Security Arrangements:

- 6,000 police personnel are deployed, supported by 1,900 CCTV cameras for real-time monitoring.
- Drone surveillance is being utilized extensively under the Cloud Patrols program for live monitoring and traffic regulation.
- Holding areas have been fortified with security arrangements similar to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams.

Technology Integration:

- The Astram app is in place for dynamic traffic management.
- The Endowment Department's Deeksha Khairat app

- aims to assist devotees in planning their journey.
- A child safety app, CMS, allows tagging children with scannable wristbands containing parent contact details, ensuring lost children are quickly reunited with their families.

Sanitation and Facilities:

- 150 toilets have been set up across eight districts, monitored 24/7.
- Provision of 10 lakh water bottles and 5 lakh water packets ensures adequate drinking water.
- Dedicated teams are assigned for regular cleaning, including the removal of red cloths left by devotees post-retirement.

Traffic and Crowd Management: Coordination with RTC and railway officials is in place to manage the influx of devotees effectively. A robust communication system has been implemented, supported by the ITMS system installed in 17 key locations.

Both the Police Department and Municipal Administration are working in harmony with other departments, using past experiences to enhance this year's arrangements. Authorities have appealed to media and the public to cooperate in making this event a grand success.

Fancy Dress Competitions Held at Ravindra Bharathi Public School in Vijayawada

TPN Correspondent Vijayawada, Dec 22

Ravindra Bharathi Public School, Sathanarayana Puram branch, Vijayawada, hosted a two-day Fancy Dress Competition, aimed at nurturing creativity and inspiration among students. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from both students and their parents, making the competition a grand success. Chairman Veeramachaneni Vamsi Krishna emphasized that the primary goal of the program was to encourage students to express their creativity and imagination. The students showcased a variety of costumes, including an appeal by Jalkanvi to save aquatic animals, a child portraying the harmful effects of exces-



sive mobile phone use, and various costumes representing different professions and animals. These performances captivated the audience and showcased the students' thoughtful expressions on contemporary issues. The event was graced by the presence of Veeramachaneni Vamsi Krishna, Chairman of Ravindra Bharathi, and Smt. Veeramachaneni Shanti, the Academic Director, who attended as the chief guests. Their support and encouragement further motivated the students to put their best foot forward. The competition not only entertained but also educated the audience on important social and environmental causes, highlighting the potential of such events to inspire young minds.

Banner Removed in Gudivada on Former CM Jaganmohan Reddy's Birthday

TPN Correspondent Gudivada, Dec 22

A banner erected by YSR Party leaders at the Raja Bapayya Chowk Center in Gudivada, marking the birthday of former Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, was removed by unidentified individuals. The banner, which was set up by Ganta Suresh, a YSR Party leader from Motur village in Gudivada Rural Mandal, was installed late last night

to celebrate the occasion. However, by this morning, the banner was found missing, sparking a sense of curiosity and concern among local party members. The identity of those responsible for removing the banner remains unknown, and authorities have yet to comment on the incident. The event has raised questions within the local political community as to whether this act was politically motivated.



NTR District Aims for 2 Lakh Solar-Powered Homes Under PM Surya Ghar Scheme



TPN Correspondent NTR Dist, Dec 22

In a landmark initiative to promote sustainability and financial independence, the NTR District administration has set a target of establishing two lakh solar-powered homes under the PM Surya Ghar scheme by March 31, 2025. District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmi Sha spearheaded an awareness program on the scheme at Tummalapalle Kalakshetra, attended by women from rural and urban self-help groups. Dr. Lakshmi Sha highlighted the scheme's dual benefits of reducing environmental impact and providing economic relief. She explained that a 3 kW solar panel, worth ₹2 lakh, can be installed with a ₹78,000 subsidy, with beneficiaries paying only ₹20,000 upfront. The remainder can be financed through low-interest loans. The investment is recouped within 4-5 years, offering 20 years of free electricity. Excess power can be sold to the grid, generating ₹2.09 per unit. Currently, 601 Surya Ghar

connections have been established in the district, generating ₹22 lakh for participants in just three months. Dr. Lakshmi Sha urged women self-help groups to play a pivotal role in reaching the two-lakh goal, making the district a leader in the scheme's implementation. The program also addressed the scheme's environmental benefits, aiming to prevent 720 million tons of CO₂ emissions over 25 years. Free solar panels will be provided to SC and ST families consuming up to 200 units of electricity. Registration is simplified through the www.pm-suryaghar.gov.in portal, secretariats, or electricity offices. During the event, detailed presentations, live demonstrations, and Q&A sessions were held. Senior officials and bank representatives also attended the event, emphasizing the financial and ecological benefits of the scheme. Dr. Lakshmi Sha concluded, "A small step on Saturday will help create a prosperous and sustainable future for the next generation."

NTR District YCP Leaders Celebrated YS Jagan Birthday in Vijayawada

TPN Correspondent Vijayawada, Dec 22

The birthday of former Chief Minister and YSR Congress Party (YCP) chief YS Jagan was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Vijayawada on Saturday. The party ranks gathered near the YSR statue at the control room in the city, where they cut a large cake to mark the occasion.



NTR District YCP President Devineni Avinash played a key role in the celebrations, distributing sarees to women as part of the party's ongoing welfare initiatives. This gesture was aimed at honoring the contribution of women in society and symbolizing the party's commitment to their empowerment. Prominent party leaders attended the event, including Western and Central constituency in-charges Vellapalli Srinivas and Malladi Vishnu, MLC Ruhulla, Mayor Rayana Bhagalakshmi, Deputy Mayors Shailaja, Bellam

Durga, and Sheikh Asif. The celebration saw a large turnout of party workers and supporters, who expressed their admiration for YS Jagan's leadership and the achievements of his government. The event was not only a moment to reflect on the leadership of YS Jagan but also served as an opportunity to bring the party ranks together, reinforcing their unity and resolve to work for the betterment of the people of Andhra Pradesh.

Colleges Give Life to Everyone - MLA Venigandla Ramu at Alumni Meet

TPN Correspondent Guntur, Dec 22

Gudivada MLA Venigandla Ramu emphasized the transformative power of education during the Alumni Meet 2024 held at R.V.R & J.C College of Engineering in Chodavaram, Guntur district. The event saw active participation from alumni, including Palasa MLA Gauthu Sirisha, who joined Ramu and other distinguished guests in celebrating the college's contributions to their personal and professional growth. Addressing the gathering, MLA Ramu fondly recalled his own college days, saying, "As soon as I entered the college premises, I forgot about being an MLA and became a student again. No matter where life takes us, when we return to the place where we studied, we always remember our roots and the memories we created." Ramu also spoke about the upcoming Technology Hexagon System, which will soon be announced by the government. He highlighted how the sys-



tem will benefit students in fields like IT, AI, machine learning, and mechanical engineering, providing them with essential tools for their future careers. Expressing his gratitude, Ramu assured the students that he would actively participate in ensuring the system reaches them. He encouraged the students to excel in their studies and aim for higher achievements. The alumni meet ended with students honoring MLA Ramu and other distinguished guests, celebrating their connection to the college and reaffirming the importance of education in shaping their futures.

Revenue Conferences Highlight Administrative Issues in Tadepalligudem Constituency

TPN Correspondent, Tadepalligudem : Revenue conferences across Andhra Pradesh are addressing critical administrative issues, with constituency MLAs actively participating to ensure citizen-centric governance. On Saturday, Government Whip and MLA for Tadepalligudem, Sri Bolisetty Srinivas, attended a revenue conference held at Pedda Tadepalli in the Tadepalligudem constituency.



During the event, MLA Bolisetty Srinivas instructed officials to organize similar revenue conferences in every mandal within the constituency. He

emphasized the importance of involving both officials and citizens in these discussions to foster accountability and improve governance.

“These conferences are an opportuni-

ty to address public grievances, rectify administrative errors, and work towards the welfare of the people,” stated MLA Srinivas. He highlighted that many mistakes made by the previous government are being exposed

during these conferences, paving the way for corrective actions.

The MLA has taken a hands-on approach, ensuring the timely participation of officials and overseeing the proceedings personally. His proactive involvement aims to bridge the gap between the administration and the public, ensuring transparency and efficiency.

Through these revenue conferences, Srinivas aims to create an environment where officials and citizens can work collaboratively to address

issues. The MLA's commitment to transforming these sessions into meaningful dialogues reflects his dedication to public welfare.

The initiative has received positive responses from the community, who see these conferences as a step toward resolving long-standing issues and improving governance at the grassroots level. Srinivas's vision for these conferences underscores his belief in public participation and administrative accountability, demonstrating a model for effective governance in the state.

Human Trafficking Ring Busted in Visakhapatnam, 11 Rescued



TPN Correspondent, Visakhapatnam : A major human trafficking ring was dismantled by the railway police in Visakhapatnam, leading to the rescue of 11 individuals, includ-

ing girls trafficked from remote areas of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and even Nepal. The operation unfolded at the Visakhapatnam railway station when authorities intercepted

suspicious activity on the Kirandol-Visakhapatnam Express. Upon investigation, they discovered that the traffickers were using fake Aadhaar cards to transport the victims. The main accused, Ravikumar Bisoy, is now in the custody of the railway police. Bisoy is believed to be part of a larger network that has trafficked over 100 girls so far, exploiting vulnerable individuals from impoverished regions.

The victims rescued in this operation were primarily from Odisha's Navrangpur district, highlighting the trafficking network's reach into remote and underserved areas. Authorities

are working to identify other members of the gang and trace the full extent of their operations.

The railway police have commended the swift action of their personnel in preventing the traffickers from escaping and ensuring the victims' safety. Efforts are underway to provide rehabilitation and support to the rescued individuals while a detailed investigation continues. This incident underscores the need for stricter monitoring of human trafficking networks and greater vigilance at transit points like railway stations to protect vulnerable populations from such heinous crimes.

Four Dead, Nine Injured in Tragic Road Accident Near Bullasamudram



TPN Correspondent, Anantapur Dist : A horrific road accident occurred in the early hours of Saturday near Bullasamudram in Madakasira Mandal of Sri Sathya Sai District, leaving four people dead and nine others seriously injured.

The accident took place when a tempo traveler carrying 13 passengers collided with a parked lorry. The victims, identified as residents of Kummaranagepalli village in Gudibanda Mandal, were returning from a pilgrimage to the Tirupati Venkanna Swamy temple.

Among the deceased are Prem Kumar (30), Atharva (2), Ratnamma (70), and Manoj (30). Villagers immediately rushed the injured to Madakasira Government Hospital, where four critically injured passengers were later transferred to Hindupur Government Hospital for advanced treatment. The tempo was transporting family members and relatives, turning the joyous pilgrimage into a devastating tragedy. According to initial police reports, the accident occurred due to poor visibility and the parked lorry's lack of hazard indicators.

Local residents played a crucial role in the rescue efforts, using autos to transport the injured to nearby hospitals. Authorities are investigating the incident and have urged drivers to exercise caution, particularly during nighttime travel, to avoid similar mishaps.

The loss of lives and critical injuries have cast a pall of gloom over Kummaranagepalli village. The police and district administration have assured that all necessary support will be extended to the affected families.

Clashes Erupt Between YSRCP and TDP Leaders in Avulapalle Village

TPN Correspondent, Madanapalle : A violent clash broke out between YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leaders in Avulapalle village, Malepadu Gram Panchayat, Madanapalle Rural Mandal, on Friday night. The dispute arose over the installation of flexi banners for YSRCP chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's birthday celebrations.



Madanapalle Government Hospital by their families and later transferred to Tirupati's Ruia Hospital for advanced treatment due to the severity of their injuries. TDP leaders, including Town Bank Chairman

Nadella Vidyasagar, Ratakonda Madhubabu, Advocate Ganapathi, and Raghupathi Naidu, visited the victims at the hospital and condemned the attack. Speaking to the media, they alleged that YSRCP activists deliberately targeted TDP members and accused them of provoking violence in the village.

The ongoing feud between YSRCP and TDP leaders in the area is believed to stem from longstanding political rivalries. The Madanapalle Taluka Police have launched an investigation into the incident and are working to identify all individuals involved.

The clashes have heightened tensions in the region, with political parties urging their supporters to exercise restraint to prevent further violence. Authorities have assured strict action against those responsible for the attack.

Tensions escalated when TDP leader Ramesh objected to YSRCP leaders erecting banners in his agricultural field. This led to an altercation, during which YSRCP members, including Banala Kitta, Kanasandram Srinath, and Kanasandram Venkataramana, allegedly attacked Ramesh and another TDP supporter with stones and sticks, leaving them seriously injured.

The injured individuals were rushed to the

Police Investigate Gruesome Yandagandi Dead Body Parcel Case in Undi Mandal

TPN Correspondent, West Godavari Dist : The mysterious case of a dead body found in a parcel in Yandagandi village, Undi Mandal, has left the police scrambling for answers. The investigation has taken multiple turns as authorities probe the incident from various angles.



The case began when a parcel containing a dead body, with a rope tied around its neck, was delivered to the home of a woman named Tulsi via an auto. The parcel also contained a letter demanding ₹1.30 crore, raising questions about whether it was an act of intimidation or extortion. Tulsi's younger sister's husband, who arrived at her home after the parcel was delivered, has been missing ever since. The police are actively investigating his disappearance and exploring possible connections to the case.

The auto driver who transported the parcel has been identified. According to him, a woman hired him for the delivery, but he claimed to have no further knowledge about the contents of the parcel or the individuals involved.

The investigation has also uncovered details

about Tulsi's family, including her younger daughter Revathi, who had a love marriage with someone from a different caste (Agni caste Kshatriya). Speculation has arisen that the incident may be linked to family disputes over property. Rangaraju, a relative with a three-acre farm, is being investigated to determine if there is a connection between him and the crime.

Authorities are also examining similarities between the letter in the parcel and a previous letter Tulsi received when she applied to the Kshatriya Foundation for assistance. While the foundation denied extending help to individuals outside Rajahmundry, the handwriting in both letters appears identical, raising suspicions of a deliberate attempt to mislead or intimidate Tulsi. The case has become a major challenge for the police, who are working to uncover the truth behind this gruesome and perplexing crime.

Unanimous Elections Held for Water Associations in Peddapuram

TPN Correspondent, Kakinada : Elections for water associations were held unanimously on Saturday at the Peddapuram Irrigation Department office, marking a significant milestone in local water management. Basava Veera Venkata Apparao, a senior TDP leader from Jaggampet constituency, was elected as the chairman of the Eleru Project Distributors Committee. Oota Adi Vishnu, a senior leader of the Janasena Party from Pithapuram constituency, was chosen as the vice chairman. Along with them, four directors were also elected to the committee.



Vishnu expressed his commitment to addressing the challenges faced by farmers. “I come from a farming family, so I understand the struggles of our farmers. I will work tirelessly to solve their problems,” he assured.

The newly elected chairman and vice chairman received their election certificates from Peddapuram Irrigation Department Executive Engineer Seshagiri Rao in a formal ceremony. Prominent leaders, including Jaggampet MLA Jyothula Nehru, Pattipadu MLA Varapula Satyaprabha, Peddapuram MLA Nimmakayala Chinrajappa, Kauda Chairman Tummala Babu, and Jaggampet Janasena Party Incharge Tummalapalli Ramesh, extended their congratulations to the newly elected members. Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chairman Adi

He also emphasized his intention to follow the principles and leadership of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, aiming to bring positive changes to the agricultural sector. The unanimous elections and the collaboration between leaders of different parties signify a collective effort to strengthen water resource management and support the farming community in the region.



India's Middle East Strategy: What Kuwait Brings To The Table



Kuwait, though small in size, is a major player on the global stage due to its vast oil reserves and formidable sovereign wealth fund. It plays a significant role in India's Middle East strategy, a region that has become crucial to India's economic and geopolitical interests. Recent remarks by Kuwait's Foreign Minister, who hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi as "one of the wisest leaders in the world," underscore the growing recognition of India's global stature and the desire for deeper ties between the two nations.

India's position in the Gulf has evolved dramatically over the years, moving from being a passive participant to becoming a key player in the region. The Gulf, once primarily seen by India as a source of energy and a destination for its expatriate workers, is now integral to India's "extended neighbourhood." Prime Minister Modi's efforts to

engage with the Gulf nations have turned India into a central player in the region's economic and political landscape. This transformation is not just a result of diplomatic finesse but is also driven by shared economic and security interests.

For India, the Gulf is essential not only for its energy needs but also as a crucial market for its exports and as a source of investment. With some of the world's largest oil reserves, the Gulf nations are vital to India's energy security. However, India is also increasingly seen as a strategic partner in trade, security, and infrastructure development. This shift is reflected in the growing diplomatic and economic exchanges between India and the Gulf countries, with Kuwait being a key example.

Kuwait, with its immense wealth and stable political environment, offers India the

opportunity to deepen its economic ties in energy, infrastructure, and trade. The country's sovereign wealth fund, one of the largest in the world, provides potential for significant investments in India's infrastructure, particularly in sectors like energy, technology, and manufacturing. Furthermore, Kuwait's strategic location in the Gulf makes it a valuable partner in regional security discussions, particularly with regard to stability in the wider Middle East and the Indian Ocean region.

In conclusion, India's engagement with Kuwait and the wider Gulf region reflects a shift in India's foreign policy priorities, marking the Gulf as an essential partner in its economic and security strategies. As India continues to rise as a global power, Kuwait's role in this narrative will only become more significant.

One Nation, One Election: A Bold Idea, But Will It Work?

The concept of 'One Nation, One Election' (ONOE) involves synchronizing the Lok Sabha (lower house of Parliament) and state legislative assembly elections across India. This idea has been discussed for years but has gained significant traction in recent times, sparking vigorous debates on its potential benefits and drawbacks. Proponents argue that ONOE could streamline the electoral process, save costs, and enhance governance, while critics point to the political, constitutional, and logistical challenges that could arise from implementing such a system.



One of the primary advantages of ONOE is cost savings. Conducting elections separately for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies every few months incurs substantial financial costs. These include the expenses for conducting separate campaigns, the use of resources like personnel and technology, and the logistics involved in organizing multiple elections. By holding simultaneous elections, India could potentially save billions of rupees. Additionally, the burden on administrative machinery, which is stretched during elections, would be significantly reduced, allowing for a more efficient use of resources.

ONOE could also improve governance by minimizing election-related disruptions. Elections are often followed by prolonged periods of political campaigning, which can divert the focus of elected representatives from governance to electioneering. If elections are held together, it could reduce the frequency of elections, ensuring that governments spend more time in office focusing on their administrative and developmental duties rather than being caught in election cycles. This continuity in governance might lead to more stable and long-term policies, benefiting the country's development.

Furthermore, simultaneous elections might promote political stability. In India, regional parties play a crucial role,

often leading to fragmented mandates in state assemblies. Conducting elections at the same time could encourage parties to form broader coalitions and alliances, leading to more cohesive governance at both the state and national levels. It could also discourage the opportunistic behavior of parties who leverage state elections to gain an advantage in the national political landscape.

However, implementing ONOE is not without its challenges. India's political landscape is diverse, and holding simultaneous elections could favor larger, national parties with better resources, sidelining regional parties and smaller political players. Moreover, the constitutional amendments needed to synchronize elections across different levels of government would require careful deliberation and consensus-building, which could be a time-consuming process.

In conclusion, while 'One Nation, One Election' offers several potential benefits, including cost savings and improved governance, its successful implementation would require addressing substantial political, constitutional, and logistical challenges. As the debate continues, it remains to be seen whether the advantages outweigh the complexities of this ambitious proposal.

Political Row Over Remarks on B.R. Ambedkar Escalates to a Scuffle



A recent row over remarks made about B.R. Ambedkar inside the Indian Parliament has escalated into a heated scuffle outside the House, filled with childish accusations and counterclaims.

The controversy began when Union Home Minister Amit Shah, in the Rajya Sabha, criticized the Congress party for what he described as its false posturing about Ambedkar, the architect of India's Constitution. Shah claimed that Congress had failed to honor Ambedkar properly, and this criticism of the Congress quickly became a political flashpoint.

However, the way Shah phrased his remarks opened the door for criticism of his party's sincerity. He controversially stated that chanting God's name would be more appropriate than chanting Ambedkar's name. This comment was perceived as an attack on the legacy of Ambedkar, provoking

fierce reactions across the political spectrum. Shah later claimed that his words were taken out of context, but in the world of politics, language is often weaponized, and words can have far-reaching implications.

The dispute centers around the figure of Ambedkar, a symbol of social justice and the driving force behind India's secular, egalitarian Constitution. Politicians across the spectrum, including the ruling BJP, have increasingly sought to claim Ambedkar's legacy, but Shah's comments have exposed the contradictions in such political posturing. His remarks were seen as hypocritical, as no party can accuse others of false reverence for Ambedkar without inviting the same criticism for itself.

Ambedkar's political journey was marked by disagreements and debates with various leaders and ideologies, including Mahatma

Gandhi, the Congress, and Hindu orthodoxy. His advocacy for the Hindu Code Bill, which he later resigned over in frustration, and his opposition to leaders like Vinayak Savarkar, demonstrated his firm stance on social reforms. Ambedkar's vision for India, grounded in social justice and secularism, often put him at odds with mainstream political ideologies of his time.

While the BJP has only recently embraced Ambedkar as part of its ideological pantheon, his true legacy lies not in electoral symbolism but in his steadfast commitment to shaping a progressive and inclusive society. The ongoing political drama surrounding Ambedkar's name underscores the enduring challenge of aligning his vision with contemporary political agendas. His contribution to India's Constitution remains his greatest legacy, and it is essential to honor it without reducing it to political theater.

Parliamentary Disrespect: A Disservice to the Constitution

Barely 15 months after the inauguration of the new Parliament building, parliamentary decorum has suffered a severe blow. The recently concluded Winter Session will be remembered not for productive debate or meaningful dialogue but for the disgraceful clash between ruling and opposition MPs. What started as a war of words over Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks about Dr. B.R. Ambedkar quickly spiraled into a chaotic physical altercation, marked by shoves and pushes among elected representatives. In this disheartening spectacle, both government and opposition MPs tarnished their image, disgracefully undermining the institution they were elected to serve.

Shah, in his remarks, implied that



chanting Ambedkar's name had become a political trend, an ill-advised comment that ignited an immediate backlash. By dragging the revered 'Father of the Constitution' into an un-

necessary and unsavory debate, he gave the opposition a perfect opportunity to hit back. This exchange quickly escalated, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi intervening to defend

Shah and criticize the Congress party for perpetuating 'malicious lies' and a 'rotten ecosystem.'

Dr. Ambedkar, a towering figure in India's history and the architect of the Constitution, is an icon that transcends political affiliation. Both the ruling party and the opposition are guilty of turning his legacy into a political tool, aiming to score points off each other at the cost of his monumental contribution to the nation. This petty squabble over Ambedkar's legacy, particularly during the ongoing celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the Constitution's adoption, is not only distasteful but irresponsible.

The Constitution of India stands as a testament to the nation's unwavering

commitment to democracy, justice, and equality. It is the duty of every parliamentarian to protect these ideals, ensuring that discussions in the House focus on inclusive development and social justice. Instead of resorting to mud-slinging and trivial political games, lawmakers must remember that they are accountable to their voters, and the nation's democratic ideals must remain their primary focus.

If the behavior witnessed in this session continues, India's Parliament—once considered the temple of democracy—risks becoming a spectacle of chaos. The dignity of the House, integral to India's global image as a responsible democratic power, must not be reduced to a battleground for political one-upmanship.

PM Modi Embarks on Landmark Visit to Kuwait to Strengthen Bilateral Ties

TPN CORRESPONDENT KUWAIT
DECEMBER.22

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, before departing for Kuwait on Saturday, highlighted the significance of his upcoming visit, marking the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 43 years. Modi described his visit as an opportunity to set the stage for a "futuristic partnership" between the two nations, aimed at benefiting both India and Kuwait as well as the broader region.

In a statement issued prior to his departure, Modi expressed optimism about the potential of his two-day visit, emphasizing that it would be a chance to build a comprehensive roadmap for collaboration in areas of trade, energy, security, and regional stability. He stated, "It would be an opportunity to chalk out a roadmap for a futuristic partnership for the benefit of our people and the region."

Reflecting on the longstanding relationship between India and Kuwait, Modi pointed out that the two countries not only share strong trade and energy ties but also have mutual interests in promoting peace, security, and stability in the West Asia region. He stressed that the visit would further enhance these bonds and deepen cooperation in various sectors.

Modi also took the opportunity to acknowledge the historical and cultural connection between the two nations, which has been fostered over generations. He expressed confidence that the visit would strengthen the existing ties, reinforcing the friendship and mutual respect between India and Kuwait.



Kuwait has been an important partner for India, especially in the energy sector, with significant Indian expatriate communities working in the Gulf nation. Modi's visit aims to elevate the bilateral relationship to new heights, focusing on economic collaboration, regional security, and cultural

exchanges.

As India seeks to strengthen its presence and influence in the Gulf region, this visit serves as a critical step towards solidifying India-Kuwait relations, paving the way for a more robust and diversified partnership in the years to come.



Congress Slams Modi for Visit to Kuwait While Manipur Remains Ignored

TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
DECEMBER.22

The Congress party on Saturday criticized Prime Minister Narendra Modi for prioritizing a visit to Kuwait over addressing the ongoing crisis in Manipur. Modi's two-day trip to Kuwait, aimed at strengthening ties in sectors such as defense and trade, sparked a sharp response from Congress, which accused him of neglecting the people of Manipur.

In a social media post, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh took a swipe at the Prime Minister, calling him the "frequent flyer PM" for his overseas trips, while the people of Manipur continue to suffer. Ramesh posted a rhyming remark on X (formerly Twitter), stating: "Such is their fate, As Mr. Modi refuses to find a date, The people of Manipur continue to wait, While the Frequent Flyer PM is off to Kuwait."

The Congress has repeatedly urged the Prime Minister to visit Manipur, claiming that his presence could help restore peace and bring much-needed attention to the violence-stricken state. The ongoing ethnic violence in Manipur, which began on May 3 of the previous year, erupted after a tribal solidarity march in the state's hill districts, protesting the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status.

The violence has left the region in turmoil, with the Congress party and other opposition groups pressing the government to take swift action to resolve the crisis. Despite these calls, the Prime Minister's focus remains on international diplomacy, with his visit to Kuwait marking another chapter in his series of foreign trips.



FM Nirmala Sitharaman Chairs 55th GST Council Meeting in Jaisalmer

TPN CORRESPONDENT RAJASTHAN
DECEMBER.22

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is currently chairing the 55th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, on Saturday. The meeting includes several key participants, including Pan-kaj Chaudhary, the Minister of State for Finance, as well as Chief Ministers from Goa, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya, and Odisha. Additionally, Deputy Chief Ministers from Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Telangana are in attendance, along with Finance Ministers from various States and Union Territories, senior officials from the Finance Ministry, and members of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

The Finance Ministry's official social media account shared that Sitharaman is leading the GST Council's discussions in Jaisalmer. The GST Council is responsible for making decisions on critical aspects of the GST system, such as tax rates, exemptions, and administrative procedures.

While the official agenda for the meeting has not been disclosed, sources indicate that a key issue on the table will be the proposed rationalization of GST rates on health and life insurance products. The Group of Ministers (GoM) on insurance, headed by Bihar Minister Samrat Chaudhary, has already submitted its report to the Council regarding the matter. The GoM was tasked with reviewing the GST rates on medical and life insurance, both of which are currently taxed at a rate of 18%.

Opposition leaders, including West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, have been vocal in urging the Finance Minister to reduce GST on medical and life insurance premiums. During the monsoon session of Parliament in August, members of the INDIA alliance staged a protest demanding a rollback of the GST on these products, with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi participating in the protest. The issue was previously discussed in the 54th GST Council meeting held in September 2024, which led to the formation of the GoM to examine the concerns and make recommendations.

Winter Session Ends, Lok Sabha Sees 57% Productivity, Rajya Sabha At 40%



TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
DECEMBER.22

Parliament was adjourned sine die on Friday, bringing an end to a tumultuous Winter Session marked by heated debates, political confrontations, and low productivity. The session, which saw significant discussions on the country's constitutional journey and the introduction of two key bills on simultaneous elections, was overshadowed by a bitter exchange between the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and opposition parties, particularly following allegations of disrespect towards B R Ambedkar.

On the final day, the Lok Sabha session was adjourned within minutes due to ongoing political tensions, with Speaker Om Birla unable to even summarize the session's highlights. In contrast, the Rajya Sabha session saw opposition parties allowing Chairman Jagdeep Thakkar to deliver his valedictory remarks before adjourning.

According to reports, the Lok Sabha's productivity stood at just 58%, a sharp decline from previous sessions where productivity often exceeded 100%. Rajya Sabha fared slightly better with 40.03% productivity, marking only 43 hours and 27 minutes of effective functioning throughout the session.

In his concluding remarks, Thakkar urged parties to rise above political differences and restore the sanctity of parliamentary discourse. However, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju blamed the opposition, particularly the Congress, for the low productivity, accusing them of disrupting Parliament despite prior agreements to allow the session to function smoothly.

The session witnessed the introduction of five bills in the Lok Sabha, with four of them being passed, while the Rajya Sabha passed three bills. A key highlight was the two bills on simultaneous elections for Lok Sabha and state assemblies, referred to a Joint Committee of Parliament for further deliberation. The session's most contentious moment occurred on Thursday, when a physical altercation broke out between rival MPs, leading to police complaints and an FIR against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. Both the opposition and BJP accused each other of insulting Ambedkar's legacy, leading to protests inside and outside Parliament. As the session concluded, opposition parties filed notices for breach of privilege against Home Minister Amit Shah and Rahul Gandhi, leaving unresolved tensions for future parliamentary proceedings.



Time Has Come For Change In Approach Of Police In Northeast: Amit Shah

TPN CORRESPONDENT AGARTALA
DECEMBER.22

Union Home Minister Amit Shah called for a shift in the police force's approach in the Northeast, following the end of insurgency in the region. Speaking at the 72nd plenary of the North Eastern Council (NEC) on Saturday, Shah emphasized the need to ensure speedy justice for the people, highlighting the significant progress the region has made in terms of peace and security.

Shah noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership had led to peace in the Northeast, underscoring the signing of 20 peace accords over the last decade. These accords, Shah said, contributed to the surrender of over 9,000 militants. With the insurgency now behind the region, he called for a new strategy within the police force to ensure justice is served quickly. He advocated for reforms to guarantee that cases are resolved within three years of an FIR being lodged, marking a shift from the focus on counter-insurgency operations to enhancing law enforcement efficiency.

In addition to the shift in law enforcement, Shah highlighted the significant investments made by the central government in infrastructure development across the region. He stated that ₹81,000 crore had been allocated for rail connectivity, while ₹41,000 crore had been invested in improving the road network in the Northeast.

Shah also pointed out the government's focus on boosting organic farming in the region. To support this initiative, the Centre has established the National Organic Corporation Ltd (NOCL). He encouraged the Chief Ministers of the Northeastern states to sign agreements with NOCL to help with the packaging, marketing, and export of organic products. This move aims to enhance the economic prospects of the region while promoting sustainable agriculture practices.



Syria's New Leaders Appoint Foreign Minister to Strengthen International Relations



SYRIA: Syria's new rulers have appointed Asaad Hassan al-Shibani as the country's foreign minister, as they work to strengthen international ties and bring peace and stability to the war-torn nation. This development comes two weeks after the ousting of Bashar al-Assad, marking a significant shift in Syria's political landscape. The ruling General Command made the announcement on Saturday, with Syrian state news agency SANA reporting that the move reflects the aspirations of the Syrian people to rebuild the country and establish diplomatic relations worldwide.

Ahmed al-Sharaa, the de facto leader following Assad's removal, has actively engaged with foreign delegations since taking power. He has hosted the UN's Syria envoy and senior US diplomats in recent weeks. Sharaa has emphasized that his primary goals are reconstruction and economic development, signaling a willingness to engage diplomatically with international envoys while avoiding further conflicts.

Sharaa's forces, led by the group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), seized control of Damascus on De-

ember 8, forcing Assad to flee after more than 13 years of civil war. This marked the end of the Assad family's decades-long rule. The situation in Syria remains uncertain, as it is still unclear whether HTS will impose strict Islamic rule or allow for more democratic governance. HTS had ties with al-Qaeda until Sharaa broke those links in 2016.

The United States, along with other Western powers and many Syrians, welcomed the fall of Assad. However, the future of Syria under Sharaa's rule is still unfolding. Sharaa, who previously served under the command of al-Qaeda in Iraq, has been designated a terrorist by the US since 2013 but had his \$10 million bounty removed by Washington on Friday.

The Syrian conflict has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths, a major refugee crisis, and the widespread destruction of cities, leaving the economy in ruins. The new administration's efforts to rebuild and establish international relations are crucial to Syria's future.

Canada PM Trudeau looks set to lose power after key ally vows to topple him

CANADA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's minority government is facing a potential collapse after a key ally, New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh, announced plans to bring down the government early next year. Singh, who has supported Trudeau's Liberal government in the past, declared that he would introduce a formal motion of no-confidence when the House of Commons reconvenes from its winter break on January 27.



Singh's decision marks a significant shift in the political landscape, as the NDP has been instrumental in keeping Trudeau's government afloat in recent years. However, tensions have risen between the two parties over several issues, including economic policies and government spending. Singh's move is a direct challenge to the leadership of the Liberal Party and could trigger a federal election if the motion passes.

The no-confidence motion, if successful, would force a gen-

eral election, potentially ending Trudeau's tenure as Prime Minister. The move comes as Trudeau's government has faced increasing scrutiny over its handling of various issues, including inflation, health-care, and environmental policies.

Singh's announcement has added fuel to the ongoing political debate in Canada, with critics of Trudeau's leadership calling for change. The NDP leader's decision to present the motion signals his determination to hold the government

accountable, particularly on issues that have resonated with his party's supporters, such as social justice, health-care reform, and addressing economic inequality.

As the country heads into the winter break, political observers will be closely watching how the situation develops in the coming weeks. If the no-confidence motion gains support, it could lead to a snap election that would test Trudeau's political survival and shape the future direction of Canadian politics.

India and France Collaborate on 'World's Largest Museum' Near Rashtrapati Bhavan

DELHI: India and France have joined forces to create the world's largest museum, set to be located on Raisina Hill, just in front of the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar hailed the project as "a project of great national importance" during the signing ceremony, emphasizing its significance in showcasing India's rich heritage and cultural legacy. The museum, named the Yuga Yugeen Bharat National Museum, will provide an immersive timeline of India's history, spanning over 5,000 years.

The museum will occupy the North and South Blocks of Raisina Hill, currently home to several key government ministries, including foreign affairs, defense, and finance. These



historic buildings, designed by British architects Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker between 1911 and 1931, will be transformed into a cultural

landmark. The museum will cover an area of 1.17 lakh square meters, featuring 950 rooms spread across a basement and three stories.

Jaishankar noted that the collaboration with France highlights a vital expression of international cooperation, blending the best practices from both nations. He added that the transformation of the North and South Blocks into a museum would serve as an inspiration for the future of India, referred to as "the remaking of Bharat."

France's involvement in the project is rooted in its own expertise with the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, exemplified by the renowned Louvre Museum in Paris. The French govern-

ment has been instrumental in offering insights into how to repurpose significant structures for modern uses while preserving their historical value.

Minister of Culture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat announced that mapping and blueprinting work for the North Block is almost complete, with similar efforts underway for the South Block. The grand vision for the museum is expected to be a beacon of cultural exchange and historical preservation, symbolizing the deep ties between India and France. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also shared an illustration video highlighting key features of the upcoming museum project.

North Korea Criticizes South Korea-US-Japan Talks on Indo-Pacific as 'Insult' to Peace



SEOUL: North Korea has strongly condemned a trilateral meeting between South Korea, the US, and Japan, which focused on strengthening security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. The meeting, held in Tokyo on December 11, aimed to address the growing threats posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. However, Pyongyang labeled the talks as an "insult" to peace.

In a harsh editorial, North Korea's official newspaper *Rodong Sinmun* attacked the United States, describing it as a "gangster-like" nation that destabilizes global peace. The paper criticized the US's history of war and its foreign policy, which it claims involves invad-

ing other countries and undermining peace. The editorial also accused Japan and South Korea of being complicit in these actions.

North Korea's criticism particularly focused on Japan's defense posture, which has grown closer to the US in recent years. The paper rejected Japan's claims of seeking peace, pointing to its defense cooperation guidelines with the US and its security laws that allow for collective self-defense. These measures, North Korea argues, make Japan a threat to regional stability.

The editorial also took aim at South Korea, calling it the "vanguard" of US policies of invasion and war, accusing it of being a mere puppet of Washington. It condemned Seoul's alignment with US military strategies, further escalating tensions between the two Koreas.

This outburst reflects the heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula, as North Korea continues to develop its missile and nuclear capabilities, while the US, Japan, and South Korea have worked to bolster their security cooperation in response. Pyongyang's rhetoric underscores the deepening divides and the ongoing diplomatic standoff in the region.

French President Macron Faces Backlash Over Cyclone Response During Mayotte Visit



MIRERENI: French President Emmanuel Macron faced intense criticism from residents of Mayotte during his visit to the Indian Ocean archipelago, which is still recovering from the devastation caused by the region's strongest cyclone in nearly a century. The cyclone, which caused signifi-

cant damage, has left many of the island's residents grappling with severe shortages, including a lack of access to basic essentials like water.

As Macron toured the affected areas, frustrations boiled over when some residents shouted, "We want water, we want water," demanding immediate assistance. In response, Macron, visibly upset, retorted angrily, "You're happy to be in France... If it wasn't France, you'd be 10,000 times more screwed!" He went on to defend France's response, claiming, "There's no place in the Indian Ocean where people get so much help!" Despite his attempts to defend the government's actions, tensions between Macron and the locals were palpable. One woman was heard disagreeing with the president, signaling that his words did little to alleviate the frus-

tration felt by many on the island. The exchange underscored the growing discontent over the slow and inadequate response to the cyclone's aftermath.

Mayotte, a French overseas department, has long been one of the poorest regions in France, and the cyclone has exacerbated existing challenges. Residents have criticized the government's relief efforts, citing delays and a lack of resources in the face of the disaster. Macron's visit, meant to reassure the public and demonstrate solidarity, instead became a flashpoint for anger and dissatisfaction.

The incident highlights the broader issues facing Mayotte and other overseas territories, where residents often feel neglected or sidelined by mainland France, especially in times of crisis.



India Launches Probe into Surge in Steel Product Imports

India has launched an investigation into the rising imports of certain steel flat products following a formal complaint from the Indian Steel Association (ISA). The Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), operating under the Ministry of Commerce, is currently examining imports of non-alloy and alloy steel flat products, which are crucial in industries like construction, automotive, and electrical panels.

The ISA, representing leading steel producers such as ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel, JSW Steel, and Steel Authority of India, submitted a petition on December 15 under the Customs Tariff Act, 1975. The petition calls for the imposition of safeguard duties on these steel imports, aiming to protect the domestic steel industry from potential harm caused by the surge in foreign products.

The DGTR's investigation will focus on whether unforeseen circumstances have led to a significant increase in imports and if this influx poses a threat to the domestic industry. The inquiry will cover the period from October 2023 to September 2024.

The investigation has been triggered by concerns



over surplus steel production capacity in countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea. These nations have been exporting large quantities of steel, which may be affecting Indian steel manufacturers by driving down prices and increasing competition. The outcome of the probe will determine if any safeguard measures are necessary to protect the Indian steel sector from undue harm.

The DGTR is expected to conclude its investigation within eight months. This move comes at a time when the government is looking to ensure the long-term sustainability of India's domestic steel industry, which is facing pressure from global market dynamics.

Reliance Digital Health Acquires 45% Stake in Health Alliance Group for \$10 Million

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) announced on Saturday, December 21, that its subsidiary, Reliance Digital Health Ltd (RDHL), has entered into definitive agreements to acquire a 45% equity stake in Health Alliance Group Inc. (HAGI) for a total consideration of \$10 million.

According to a regulatory filing with the stock exchanges, the investment will allow Reliance Digital to develop a virtual diagnostic and care platform, expanding healthcare access to underserved communities. The transaction is not a related party deal, and none of Reliance's promoters or related entities are involved in the transaction, the filing confirmed.

The deal, which is subject to customary closing conditions, is expected to be completed within two weeks. No governmental or regulatory approvals are required for the acquisition, RIL stated.

HAGI is a US-based healthcare company, incorporated on December 21, 2023, and focuses on technology-driven solutions for underserved populations in the United States, India, and globally. It operates at the intersection of healthcare, IT, and innovation, striving to make healthcare



more accessible and efficient through technological advancements.

This acquisition is part of Reliance Digital's broader strategy to enhance its footprint in the healthcare sector, particularly in digital health services. The move further aligns with RIL's focus on expanding into diverse sectors such as telecom, retail, and digital platforms.

In other news, Reliance Industries recently reported a 3.6% year-on-year decline in consolidated net profit, totaling ₹19,101 crore for the July-September quarter, compared to ₹19,820 crore in the same period last year. However, the company saw a 9.5% sequential rise in profit from ₹17,448 crore in Q1 FY25. On Friday, RIL's shares closed down 2% to ₹1,206 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).

GST Council Defers Decision on Insurance Premium Tax Cuts

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, in its 55th meeting held in Jaisalmer on Saturday, deferred the decision on potential rate cuts for life and health insurance premiums, citing the need for further technical discussions. This decision follows a long-standing demand from the insurance industry to reduce or exempt GST on premiums, which would ease the tax burden on both insurers and policyholders.

During the meeting, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, members of the Group of Ministers (GoM), led by Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary, debated the issue extensively. While most members of the GoM favored a full exemption on health and life insurance premiums, some suggested reducing



the GST rate from the current 18% to 5%.

Chaudhary shared with reporters that further discussions were necessary before a final deci-

sion could be made. The GoM is expected to reconvene in January for additional deliberations. Among the proposals under consideration is a GST exemption for premiums paid for term life

insurance policies. Another recommendation is to exempt GST on premiums paid by senior citizens for health insurance policies. Additionally, health insurance premiums for policies up to ₹5 lakh could be exempt from GST, while the 18% rate would apply to policies with coverage above ₹5 lakh.

The GST Council will continue discussions on these recommendations in its next meeting, as there are still technicalities to be resolved.

Another important agenda item for the GST Council is whether the 5% GST on food delivery platform delivery charges should apply retrospectively from 2022. Currently, food delivery services do not pay GST on delivery charges. The Council is also expected to discuss the inclusion of aviation turbine fuel within the GST framework.

RBI Report Highlights Financial Strain of DISCOMs on State Finances

A recent report by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has raised concerns over the ongoing financial burden of electricity distribution companies (DISCOMs) on State finances. The report reveals that by 2022-23, the total accumulated losses of state DISCOMs had reached a staggering Rs 6.5 lakh crore, which represents 2.4% of India's GDP.

The RBI noted that despite various reform efforts, DISCOMs remain a significant financial challenge for States. To address this issue, the RBI emphasized the need for measures to improve productivity, reduce transmission and distribution losses, and align tariffs with the actual cost of power supply. Additionally, the report stressed the importance of unbundling the electricity supply industry and privatizing power generation and distribution, which could help strengthen the financial health of DISCOMs and improve State finances overall.

The report also highlighted that, despite several financial restructuring attempts, the outstanding debt of DISCOMs has been growing at an average annual rate of 8.7% since 2016-17. To improve this situation, the RBI recommended prioritizing operational efficiency by minimizing distribution losses, improving metering systems, ensuring timely tariff revisions, and incentivizing the power sector to reduce dependence on government subsidies.



On a more positive note, the RBI report pointed out improvements in fiscal discipline among States. In 2023-24, the gross fiscal deficit (GFD) of States was contained at 2.91% of GDP, well below the 3% limit mandated by the Fiscal Responsibility Legislation (FRL). Furthermore, States increased their capital outlay to 2.6% of GDP in 2023-24, up from 2.2% the previous year, signaling stronger investments in infrastructure.

Looking ahead, the report predicts that States are likely to maintain fiscal discipline in 2024-25, with the GFD budgeted at 3.2% of GDP, indicating a continued focus on sustainable financial management.

Indian Exporters to See Gains from Rupee's Depreciation, but Challenges Remain for Import

Indian exporters in sectors like garments, handicrafts, and engineering goods are expected to see 5-10% gains from the recent depreciation of the Indian rupee, according to trade insiders. The rupee hit an all-time low of 85.09 against the US dollar on Thursday and further dropped to 85.10 on Friday. The depreciation of the rupee is likely to benefit traditional export sectors, such as textiles and leather, which form a significant portion of India's export market.



However, the benefits of the rupee's decline may not be universal. Sectors that rely heavily on imports, such as gems and jewelry and electronics, may see rising oil and commodity prices offsetting any potential gains. For these industries, the falling value of the rupee may increase the cost of raw materials and components, potentially limiting the advantages of a weaker currency.

Moreover, the depreciation of the rupee comes amid a broader trend of currency weakening among other major economies. The Chinese yuan, Japanese yen,

and Mexican peso have all seen sharper depreciations against the US dollar, which may reduce the competitive edge that Indian exporters gain from a weaker rupee. Trade insiders also noted that buyers could exert pressure on Indian exporters to pass on these currency-related benefits, further diminishing any long-term advantages from the rupee's fall.

India conducts nearly 60% of its goods trade in US dollars, and the recent depreciation is expected to help traditional sectors that rely on exports. However, challenges such as rising import costs and competitive pressures from other currencies may dilute the overall impact on India's trade performance.



OpenAI Tests New AI Models o3 and o3 Mini to Compete with Rivals



OpenAI announced on Friday that it is testing its new AI models, o3 and o3 mini, marking a significant step in its efforts to develop more advanced reasoning capabilities. The move signals increasing competition with major players like Google, as OpenAI aims to create smarter models capable of handling more complex tasks.

CEO Sam Altman revealed that OpenAI plans to launch the o3 mini model by the end of January, with the full o3 model set to follow shortly thereafter. These new models are expected to outperform OpenAI's previous large language models, attracting new users and investment by offering more robust solutions to difficult problems.

Earlier this year, OpenAI released its o1 AI models, designed to spend more time processing queries and tackling challenging problems across fields like science, coding, and mathematics. According to OpenAI, the o1 models have proven to be more capable of reasoning through complex tasks than previous iterations.

The upcoming o3 and o3 mini models, which are currently undergoing internal safety testing, are expected to surpass the capabilities of the o1 models. OpenAI has also opened an application process for external researchers to test the o3 models ahead of their public release, with the application window closing on January 10. The announcement of the o3 models follows OpenAI's successful launch of ChatGPT in November 2022, which helped ignite an AI arms race in the industry. OpenAI's rapid growth and innovative product releases culminated in a \$6.6 billion funding round in October, cementing its place as a leading force in artificial intelligence development. The company's ongoing advancements with the o3 models underscore its ambitions to push the boundaries of what AI can achieve in solving complex, real-world problems.

Ancient Bronze Statues Unearthed from Etruscan Healing Spring in Italy



Archaeologists have uncovered a remarkable collection of bronze statues and sacred artefacts from the hot spring at San Casciano dei Bagni in Italy, a site believed to have been used for ancient rituals. Located about 120 kilometers northwest of Rome, the site has been under excavation since 2019. It is thought to have been a place of sacred practices dating back to the third century B.C., originally used by the Etruscans and later by the Romans for making votive offerings, often in hopes of divine protection or healing.

Among the significant discoveries made during the 2024 excavation are several bronze snake statues, some measuring up to 90 centimetres in length. These statues were found in the deeper layers of the spring, likely symbolising the protection of the sacred waters. The presence of these serpentine figures suggests their role in safeguarding the sanctity of the spring, which was a focal point for rituals and offerings.

Other fascinating finds include a bronze statue of a nude male figure inscribed with the name "Gaius Roscius," as well as a depiction of a child priest holding a ball. The child priest figure is believed to have been associated with divination rituals, further illuminating the spiritual practices of the time.

In addition to the statues, the excavation also revealed exceptionally well-preserved organic remains, such as eggs with visible yolks, pine cones, and various plant matter. According to the Italian Ministry of Culture, these organic materials are believed to have held symbolic meaning related to rebirth and regeneration, common themes in ancient rituals. The preservation of these items can be attributed to the rapid burial of the materials in sediment, which helped protect them over the centuries.

These discoveries provide valuable insights into the religious and cultural practices of the Etruscans and Romans, shedding light on how they sought divine favor and connection through sacred offerings and rituals.

Crystal gazing: Could we essentially preserve our species forever?

In AE van Vogt's 1948 sci-fi short story *"The Monster"*, an alien race lands on a dead Earth. Before they can colonize the planet, they resurrect a human being to understand what caused the extinction of humankind. While this concept of resurrecting the dead may have seemed purely speculative at the time, it now feels eerily timely in light of recent advancements in science.

This September, researchers at the University of Southampton achieved a major milestone in their decade-long project to preserve human data in a form that could last indefinitely. Led by Peter Kazansky, a professor of optoelectronics, the team inscribed the complete human genome — all three billion base pairs of DNA — onto a tiny, coin-sized memory crystal. This "five-dimensional" crystal is made from fused quartz, one of the most durable materials known to man.

The memory crystal, dubbed the "Superman crystal," was designed to withstand extreme conditions that would destroy any other form of data storage. Using ultra-fast lasers, the team encoded the human genome into self-assembled nanostructured voids within the silica, making it capable of surviving temperatures up to



1,000 degrees Celsius, cosmic radiation, and even impacts with a force of up to 10 tonnes per cm². For context, the great white shark's bite force is about 1.8 tonnes, making the crystal vastly more resilient.

The team's work on the Superman crystal is an extraordinary step in preserving human history and knowledge for future generations — a concept not too dissimilar from van Vogt's

story. While *"The Monster"* imagines an alien race resurrecting humanity to learn from its mistakes, today's technological achievements may offer a way for future civilizations to safeguard humanity's legacy long after we are gone. This merging of sci-fi imagination and real-world scientific progress hints at a future where human knowledge can outlast even the most catastrophic events.

Lab-Grown Mini Brains Not Only Survived In Space But Grew Healthier



In an astonishing discovery, researchers found that mini human brains, or organoids, not only survived in space but also grew healthier and matured faster than their Earth-bound counterparts. This groundbreaking experiment, conducted in 2019, aimed to understand how microgravity affects brain development, and the results have opened new doors for studying brain disorders.

The researchers had sent small brain organoids to the International Space Station (ISS) to observe how they would respond to the unique conditions of space, including the absence of gravity. The organoids were made from human brain cells and designed to replicate the complex processes that occur in an actual brain. The primary goal of the

experiment was to examine how space conditions might influence the progression of brain diseases, such as Parkinson's disease, and to understand the impacts of microgravity on neuron function.

After a month aboard the ISS, the mini brains returned to Earth, where scientists were stunned by the findings. Not only had the organoids remained healthy despite being exposed to weeks of weightlessness, but they had also matured at an accelerated rate compared to the same organoids grown on Earth. This faster maturation is significant, as it suggests that space conditions might stimulate certain aspects of brain development.

The researchers noted that while the brain organoids grew healthier, they also exhibited changes that were not expected. These unexpected results are leading scientists to reconsider the potential benefits of studying the effects of space on the human brain. The accelerated growth of the organoids may provide insights into how neural development can be enhanced, potentially offering new strategies for treating neurological diseases.

This experiment marks a major step in understanding how microgravity affects the brain and offers promising avenues for future research, particularly in relation to brain health and disorders. As scientists continue to explore the mysteries of space and its effects on the human body, this discovery adds an exciting layer to the field of space biology.

YouTube Cracks Down on Clickbait Titles and Thumbnails

YouTube is taking significant steps to improve the user experience by addressing a major frustration for viewers: clickbait. The platform has announced plans to crackdown on deceptive titles and thumbnails, especially in India, which have long been a source of dissatisfaction. The move targets videos that mislead viewers with exaggerated or false promises, often in the form of sensational headlines that do not align with the actual content.

Clickbait titles and thumbnails are designed to lure viewers by promising something eye-catching or sensational, only for the video to fail to deliver on those expectations. These deceptive practices often exploit curiosity, leading to frustration when the video doesn't meet the viewer's needs.

In a recent blog post, YouTube outlined its intention to combat clickbait by increasing enforcement against misleading titles and thumbnails, partic-



ularly in videos about breaking news or current events. The company stated, "You'll start to see us slowly rolling this out in India over the coming months," highlighting that this initiative will initially focus on new video uploads.

Egregious clickbait refers to instances where a video's title or thumbnail makes bold claims or sensational promises that the content fails to live up to. For example, a thumbnail reading "The President Resigned!" that leads to a video with no mention of the president's resignation, or a title like "Top Political News" that leads to

an irrelevant video. This kind of clickbait is particularly damaging when it involves important or timely information, as viewers seeking credible news can easily be misled.

This change aligns with YouTube's broader goal of improving the trustworthiness of its platform, particularly for news-related content. Inaccurate or misleading videos can have serious consequences when people rely on YouTube for real-time information. By cracking down on clickbait, YouTube seeks to create a more transparent environment for creators and viewers alike.

For content creators, this shift underscores the importance of authenticity and relevance in video production. While some may find the new policies challenging, they also present an opportunity to foster trust and build a loyal audience by delivering genuine, engaging content.



Hardik Pandya to Join Baroda Squad for Vijay Hazare Trophy Knockouts



India all-rounder Hardik Pandya is set to make his return to Baroda's squad for the knockout stages of the Vijay Hazare Trophy, provided the team qualifies. Pandya, who was not part of the squad for the initial rounds of the tournament, will join the team if Baroda advances to the next stage, the Baroda Cricket Association (BCA) confirmed. Kiran More, a member of BCA's Cricket Improvement Committee (CIC), shared the news, stating, "He will play from the knockouts; he has informed us."

Pandya's involvement in the ongoing 50-over domestic tournament is significant as it could impact his chances of selection for next year's Champions Trophy. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the national selection committee, led by Ajit Agarkar, have emphasized the importance of players participating in domestic competitions unless specifically exempted. Pandya recently represented Baroda in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT), where he impressed by scoring 246 runs and taking six wickets, helping his team

reach the semifinals.

At 31 years old, Pandya has not played in a non-T20 match for over 14 months. His last appearance in a 50-over game was during the ODI World Cup on October 19, 2023, against Bangladesh. He sustained an ankle injury in that match, leading to an extended absence. Since then, he has not participated in red-ball cricket. Pandya's return to 50-over cricket is seen as an important step towards regaining full fitness and form.

Kiran More addressed speculation regarding Pandya's focus on T20 cricket, emphasizing that Pandya's commitment to the 50-over format is strong. "He participated in all the SMAT matches, and he will play in the 50-over games too," More said. Baroda, captained by Hardik's brother Krunal Pandya, is currently competing in Group E of the Vijay Hazare Trophy. The knockout rounds are scheduled to begin on January 9 in Baroda, with the final set for January 18.

Indian Hockey Shines in 2024: Olympic Medals, PR Sreejesh's Retirement, and HIL Revival

2024 was a remarkable year for Indian hockey, marked by historic achievements and emotional farewells. The Indian men's hockey team secured back-to-back Olympic medals, a feat not accomplished in over 50 years, with a bronze at the Paris Olympics. This victory solidified the Tokyo Games bronze as no fluke, highlighting the team's consistency. Under the leadership of Harmanpreet Singh, the team proved their mental and tactical strength, especially in thrilling matches like the quarterfinal win over Great Britain, where they played for 43 minutes with 10 men. PR Sreejesh's stellar performance in goal was instrumental throughout, making key saves that propelled India to the semifinals and a second consecutive Olympic podium finish.



PR Sreejesh, who decided to retire after the Paris Games, bid farewell to the sport in style, leaving behind a legacy as one of the greatest goalkeepers in Indian hockey history. His leadership and dedication were crucial in India's successes, and his new role with the junior teams promises to continue his contribution to Indian hockey's future.

Harmanpreet's leadership on the field also earned him the FIH Male Hockey Player of the Year award for the third time, further cementing

his status as a key player in the sport. Alongside him, young Deepika emerged as a rising star for the women's team, showcasing her skills as both a striker and dragflicker.

Another major highlight was the revival of the Hockey India League (HIL) after a seven-year hiatus. The league's return, featuring both men's and women's tournaments, is expected to serve as a major development platform for Indian players. The men's league will be held in Rourkela from December 28, while the women will play in Ranchi from January 12.

While the women's team faced a setback by failing to qualify for Paris 2024, their success in the Asian Champions Trophy, alongside the men's title, brought the year to a hopeful close, ensuring a bright future for Indian hockey.

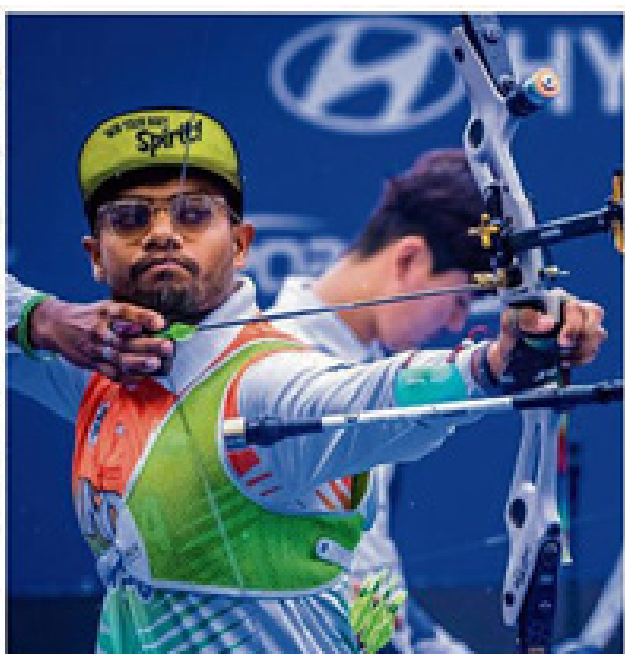
Dhiraj Bommadevara and Deepika Kumari Win Recurve Titles at Senior Nationals

Olympian archers Dhiraj Bommadevara and Deepika Kumari clinched the men's and women's recurve titles at the Archery Senior National Championship in Jamshedpur on Friday, overcoming tough competition from their opponents.

Representing the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB), Deepika, who has faced challenges in her Olympic campaigns, bounced back to secure the women's title. In a thrilling final, she defeated her Paris Games teammate, Ankita Bhakat, with a 6-2 victory. While Ankita, hailing from Jharkhand and representing Kolkata, managed to win the second set as Deepika faltered, the seasoned archer regained her focus and rhythm to close out the match and take the title.

In the men's recurve final, Dheeraj Bommadevara also had a tough contest against rising star Divyansh Chaudhary from Haryana. The young archer held his ground in the first two sets, creating an anxious moment for Dheeraj. However, the experienced Services archer came back strongly, winning the next two sets to clinch the title with a 6-2 victory.

Both athletes displayed exceptional skill and mental resilience, showcasing their experience and determination to triumph under



pressure. Deepika's victory was particularly significant as it marked a strong return after her challenging Olympic campaigns, while Dheeraj's win added another feather to his illustrious career.

These victories not only highlighted the athletes' individual talents but also reaffirmed their positions as key players in India's archery scene, with an eye on future international competitions.

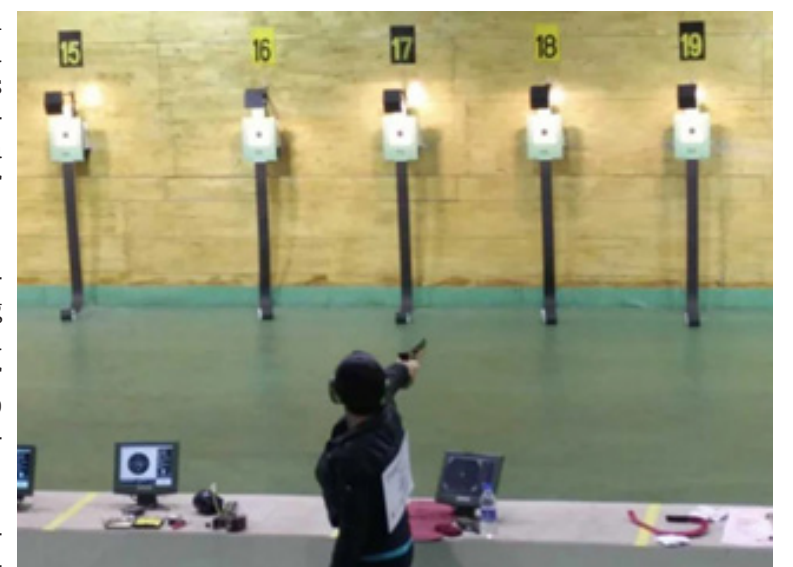
India Set to Host ISSF Junior World Cup for the First Time in 2025

India will host the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup for the first time in the second half of 2025. The ISSF awarded the hosting rights for this prestigious event, which will feature rifle, pistol, and shotgun competitions, to the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI). This announcement marks another milestone for India in the realm of shooting sports.

India has previously hosted senior-level ISSF events, including the 2023 ISSF World Cup in Bhopal and the season-ending ISSF World Cup Final earlier this year, which have solidified the country's position as one of the leading destinations for international shooting competitions. The Junior World Cup will be the third major ISSF event to take place in India, adding to the nation's growing reputation in the sport.

NRAI President Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo expressed excitement over the confirmation of the event, which followed a positive outcome from an ISSF executive committee meeting in Rome. Singh Deo noted the appreciation from the ISSF President and member federations for India's excellent track record in hosting top-tier shooting events. He also credited the Government of India and the Ministry of Sports for their ongoing support in the growth of shooting sports in the country.

NRAI Secretary General K. Sultan Singh shared that the ISSF has requested India to propose two possible dates for the event: one in September-October and another at the end of October or early November. The final schedule will be con-



firmed after internal discussions. The ISSF Junior World Cup is expected to attract rising stars of the shooting world, offering an exciting platform for young talent to showcase their skills.

In addition to the Junior World Cup, 2025 will be a busy year for Indian shooting sports, with the inaugural Shooting League of India (SLI) scheduled for the first half of the year, alongside regular national competitions. This series of events is set to provide a significant boost to grassroots shooting in India.

India U-19 Women's T20 Asia Cup Final with Dominant Win Over Sri Lanka

India continued their impressive run in the U-19 Women's T20 Asia Cup by securing a four-wicket victory over Sri Lanka, advancing to the final of the tournament. The win in their final Super Four encounter extended their unbeaten streak, demonstrating their dominance throughout the competition.

Sri Lanka, put into bat after captain Niki Prasad won the toss, struggled to build partnerships against India's potent bowling attack. Aayushi Shukla was the standout performer, delivering a sensational four-wicket haul. The left-arm spinner was brilliant with the ball, conceding just 10 runs in her four overs, as she dismantled the Sri Lankan batting line-up. Shukla's efforts restricted Sri Lanka to a modest total of 98 for 9.

Parunika Sisodia, also a left-arm spinner, provided valuable support with two wickets, contributing to Sri Lanka's downfall. India's bowlers exhibited exceptional control, with only two batters, Sumudu Nisansala (21) and captain Manudi Nanayakkara (33), managing to reach double figures. Despite their efforts, Sri Lanka's total was always well below par, leaving India with a relatively easy target to chase.

In response, India's batters showed resilience, chasing down the target with ease to seal the win. The victory not only secured their place in the final but also showcased



their depth and strength in all departments of the game.

India's comprehensive performance in this match further cements their status as one of the strongest teams in the tournament, with Shukla's brilliant bowling and a well-rounded team effort proving too much for Sri Lanka to handle. The Indian team will now look ahead to the final, where they aim to continue their dominant form and clinch the title.



Tamannaah's Fearsome Naga Sadhu Look Stuns in Latest Poster for Odela 2

As Tamannaah Bhatia gears up for the release of her much-anticipated film *Odela 2*, the excitement surrounding her role in the movie continues to grow. Directed by Ashok Teja, with Sampath Nandi overseeing the project, *Odela 2* is set to be a powerful addition to Tamannaah's already impressive portfolio. Her intense first look as Shiva Shakthi has already generated widespread praise, with many fans and critics eagerly awaiting the release.

To add to the birthday celebrations of the actress, the makers of **Odela 2** have unveiled a striking new poster that is bound to leave viewers in awe. This new image showcases Tamannaah in a gripping Naga Sadhu avatar, a powerful and fearsome look that marks a significant departure from her previous roles. In the poster, she is seen walking with confidence and authority across a chilling sea of skulls, with vultures ominously circling above her. The atmosphere is thick with an air of menace, setting the tone for the intense character she is set to portray.

The Naga Sadhu look, with its intense and mysterious aura, perfectly captures the essence of Tamannaah's role in *Odela 2*. The visual promises a portrayal that is not just physically commanding but emotionally raw, with the actress set to explore a darker, more complex side of her craft. The symbolic imagery of the skulls and vultures hints at the struggles and challenges that Shiva



Shakthi must overcome in the film, drawing audiences in with the promise of a gripping narrative filled with twists and turns.

Fans are eagerly anticipating how Tamannaah will bring this formidable character to life. With the intense visuals and her proven talent, *Odela 2* is shaping up to be a must-watch, and Tamannaah's captivating Naga Sadhu look is already generating buzz as one of the most talked-about aspects of the film.

Pooja Hegde Shares S Final Day of Filming for 2024 on Thalapathy Vijay 69

Pooja Hegde, who is currently busy shooting for the highly anticipated film **Thalapathy Vijay 69** alongside the superstar Vijay, took to her Instagram story to share an exciting update with her fans. In the post, she revealed that it was the "final day of the shot for 2024" for the film, giving fans a glimpse of the final moments of the year's filming schedule.

The Instagram story, posted at 12:20 AM, showed the feet of both lead actors, offering a subtle yet intriguing look into the shoot. Vijay was seen wearing black shoes, while Pooja donned a traditional white dress paired with jutis, a distinct and elegant look that added a touch of cultural charm to the update. Fans were quick to react to the post, with many speculating about the significance of this moment, especially since it was uploaded during the late hours of the night.

The revelation of the "final day of shot for 2024" has left fans buzzing with anticipation, as they now wonder if this marks the absolute end of filming for **Thalapathy Vijay 69** or if the production will continue into 2025 before taking a break for the holiday season. Given that Christmas and New Year's are fast approaching, there is curiosity surrounding the next steps for the film's schedule. While Pooja's post leaves some questions unanswered, it has certainly added to the growing excitement surrounding the film's progress.

As fans eagerly await further updates, the sneak peek has only intensified the anticipation for



Thalapathy Vijay 69. The film has been one of the most talked-about projects of the year, and with this latest update, everyone is eager to see what the next chapter holds for Vijay and Pooja on screen.

UI movie : Upendra's bold satire examines a dystopian philosophy



In films like *A*, *Upendra*, and *Super*, actor-director Upendra became known for using unconventional filmmaking techniques to captivate and entertain audiences. With *UI*, he expands on these earlier templates while weaving in contemporary political and societal issues. In this film, Upendra takes a more action-driven approach, using his unique style to deliver a thought-provoking message.

The plot of *UI* is simple yet poignant: driven by greed and selfishness, humans have ravaged the environment, resulting in a fragmented society. Political and fundamental divisions have torn apart communities, and illusions have clouded the minds of the people, leaving them oblivious to the harsh realities of life. This illusory world gives birth to absurdities, and the cycle of senselessness seems endless.

At its core, *UI* is a political satire that holds a mirror up to society, challenging viewers to confront the consequences of humanity's destructive tendencies. The film critiques how greed and ignorance perpetuate societal fragmentation and environmental

degradation. It highlights the urgent need for a collective awakening in the face of such crises.

Upendra cleverly employs metaphors to convey his social and political philosophy. His bold, unapologetic storytelling mocks the entrenched preferences, beliefs, and behaviors that have come to define society. He uses satire not only to entertain but also to provoke thought, urging viewers to question their own values and societal norms.

The film presents two potential solutions in its climax, inviting the audience to choose between them. This open-ended approach allows viewers to reflect on their own perspectives and engage with the broader social commentary. By doing so, **UI** becomes more than just a film; it is a call for introspection and change.

With **UI**, Upendra once again proves his ability to blend entertainment with meaningful commentary, offering a bold critique of contemporary society and its flaws. His work continues to challenge conventions, inviting audiences to think critically about the world they inhabit.

Unni Mukundan's 'Marco' Set to Dominate Mollywood with Blockbuster Opening

Malayalam film **Marco**, headlined by Unni Mukundan, has taken the Kerala box office by storm, making a remarkable debut as one of the most violent films ever produced in Mollywood. Directed by Haneef Adeni, the film was heavily promoted with its posters, teasers, and a lyrical song all hinting at a blood-soaked narrative, and the makers have delivered on their promise.

On its opening day, **Marco** made an astonishing Rs. 4.5 crore gross at the Kerala box office, a number that far exceeds the usual collections of Malayalam films, which are generally not frontloaded. This impressive opening sets **Marco** apart, as only star-studded films typically rake in such numbers on day one. Actor Unni Mukundan, with this performance, has proven his star power and cemented his position as a force to reckon with in the industry.

The film's reach extended beyond Kerala, performing strongly in international



markets and the rest of India. Worldwide, **Marco** grossed nearly Rs. 10 crore, with the Gulf region emerging as a major contributor to its success. Trade experts believe that the film could have achieved even higher numbers in Kerala had there been more showings available.

On its second day, **Marco** continued its stellar performance across all stations, with weekend projections suggesting even greater success. The film features a talented ensemble cast, including Jagadish, Siddique, Anson Paul, Yukti Thareja, Sreejith Ravi, and Kabir Duhan Singh, who all contribute to the intense, action-packed storyline.

With **Marco** taking the box office by storm and showing signs of a massive hit, it's clear that Unni Mukundan's latest venture is poised to break records and redefine the boundaries of Malayalam cinema, making a significant impact both in India and internationally.

Bunny Conquers Bollywood with Record-Breaking Success of Pushpa 2

Allu Arjun, known as Bunny, is making waves in Bollywood with his blockbuster **Pushpa 2**, which is shattering records and setting new benchmarks in Indian cinema. Traditionally, Bollywood has been dominated by the Khans and Kapoor, but with **Pushpa 2**, Bunny has firmly established his presence in the industry, surpassing major milestones and reaching new heights.

In just 15 days, **Pushpa 2** has raked in an impressive 632.50 crores in the North, making it the highest-grossing film in Bollywood for this year. This remarkable achievement marks a

significant turning point for the film, as it outpaces **Stree 2**, which previously held the record at 627 crores. **Pushpa 2** has not only made a mark in the North but has also become the first film to cross 200 crores in Mumbai alone, a feat that further solidifies its place at the top.

With these record-breaking numbers, Bunny has proven that his appeal extends far beyond the South Indian film industry. **Pushpa 2** has resonated with audiences across the country, reflecting the growing pan-Indian appeal of Southern cinema and showcasing Bunny's star power. This victo-

ry in Bollywood is more than just a commercial achievement—it's a testament to the growing influence of regional films on the national and international stage.

As **Pushpa 2** continues to dominate the box office, Bunny is now regarded as one of the biggest stars in the country, ready to take on any challenge. Bollywood presents. With the success of **Pushpa 2**, it's clear that Bunny has truly conquered Bollywood, marking a new era of cinema where Southern talent and films can hold their ground against the traditional Bollywood powerhouses.

