

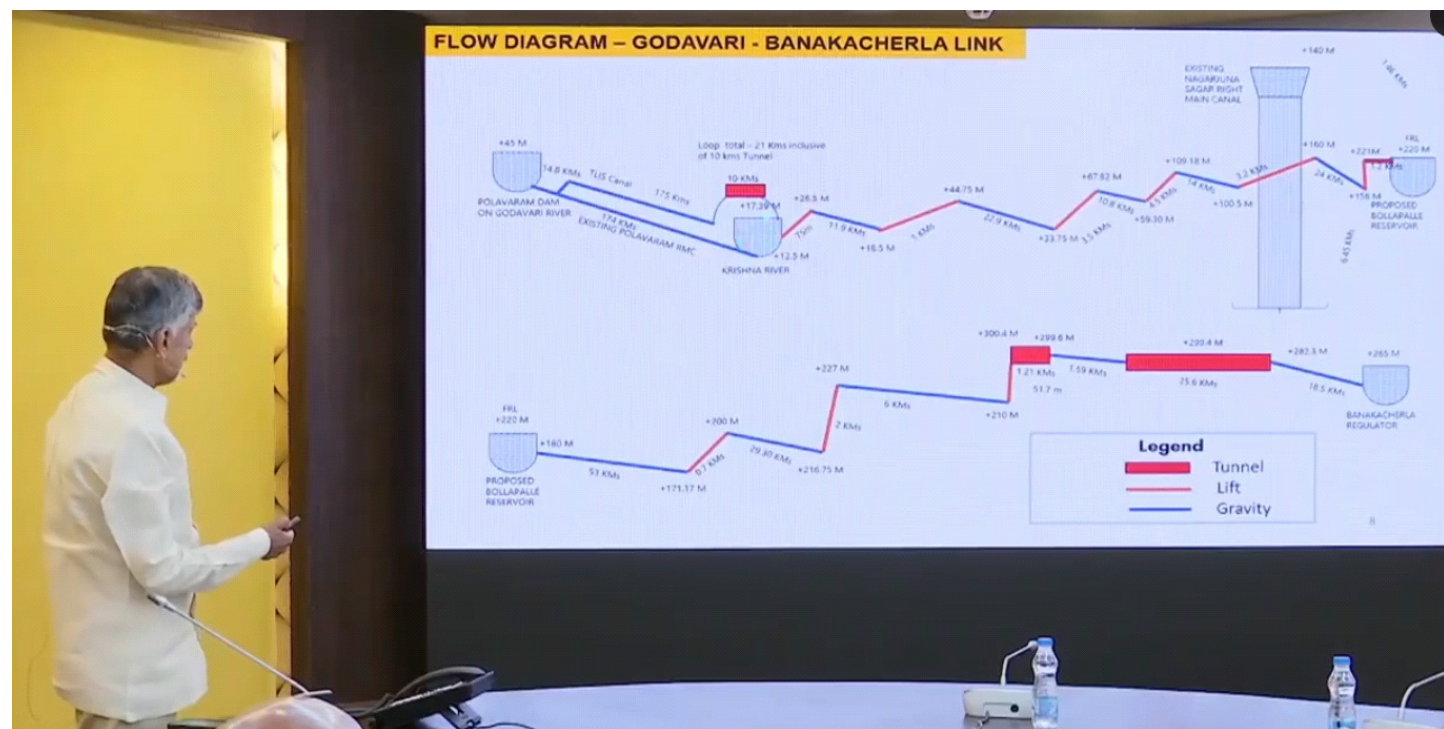


**Weather Forecast**

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

# CM Unveils 'Telugutalliki Jalaharathi' Project

CM Referred it as A Game-Changer for Andhra's Future



- AP govt to launch the Godavari-Banakacharla project on a large scale
- CM says the project will revolutionize water distribution in AP
- River linking will ensure water reaches every acre in the state

TPN Correspondent  
Amaravati, Dec 31

In a significant development for the state's agricultural future, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu held a media conference today to announce the Godavari-Banakacharla project, a major initiative by the state government. The Chief Minister revealed that the project has been named 'Telugutalliki Jalaharathi', marking a new chapter in the state's water management efforts. Addressing the media, CM Naidu emphasized that if water could be made available to the Rayalaseema region, it could transform into "Ratanala Seema," a land of prosperity. He pointed out that regions like Rayalaseema, Prakasam, and Nellore are frequently affected by droughts due to inadequate water supply. He explained that water availability in the Krishna River is limited due to usage by neighboring states. However, he highlighted that the Godavari River holds significant potential to meet the water needs of the state. Chandrababu Naidu also stated that diverting water from the Godavari River could provide water to every acre in the state, offering relief to agriculture. He stressed that the success of river-linking initiatives would eliminate water shortages, particularly in the agriculture sector. The key goal of this project is to bring at least 300 TMC of water from the Godavari River to the Krishna River. Once the water reaches the western and eastern deltas of Krishna, it will then be transported to Banakacherla in three phases. This project will also cover the Velugonda ayacut. As part of the project, the Bollapalli initiative will be developed along the right canal of Nagarjunasagar, followed by the Velugonda project. The water will then be directed to the Banakacherla project. This ambitious plan will involve the diversion of some areas of the Nallamala forests and the construction of a tunnel to bring water to Banakacherla. Once completed, the river-linking process will be finalized, and additional projects will further enhance the linkage of the rivers. Upon completion, the project will benefit a wide range of districts, including Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, Ubhaya Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Prakasam, parts of Kurnool, Nellore, Kadapa, and Anantapur. This will increase the area under irrigation and provide substantial benefits to the state's agricultural productivity.

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**Vijayanand Appointed as Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh**  
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## "Allu Arjun Unfairly Cornered; Collective Accountability is Needed"

- AP Dy CM addressed Allu Arjun's arrest and stampede issue.
- Says He is Unaware of the complete details in Allu Arjun's case.
- Defends police, stating they cannot be blamed for the incident.
- Either the team or the hero should have visited the victim's family the next day.
- Urged better precautions from theater management and actor's teams.
- Recalled Chiranjeevi's discreet approach to attending movie screenings.
- Praised Telangana CM Revanth Reddy's ticket pricing policies.

TPN Correspondent  
Mangalagiri, Dec 31

Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has addressed the controversy surrounding the arrest of actor Allu Arjun and the stampede at Sandhya Theater during the 'Pushpa 2' premiere on December 4. Speaking to media in Mangalagiri, Pawan Kalyan shared his perspective on the incident, emphasizing the importance of fairness and accountability. Speaking to the media in Mangalagiri, he admitted to not knowing the complete details of the incident,

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## Judgment on Allu Arjun's Bail Petition to be Delivered on January 3

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# TULASI TO BE QUESTIONED ON JAN 3<sup>rd</sup>

SP Issues Notices in Raghurama Custodial Assault Case

**WHO IS TULASI?**

G. AVINASH | TPN  
GUDIVADA, DECEMBER-4

Tulasi... Kamepalli Tulasi Babu... now this name is making rounds in political circles. Specifically, Mr. Raghurama Krishna Raju, Deputy Speaker of AP, has named him and accused him of being the person who sat on his chest and beat him while in the custody of the CID. The Deputy Speaker has alleged that Tulasi is the benami of CID Ex-Chief Mr. Sunil Kumar. That is why he was at the CID office during Mr. Raju's interrogation by CID officials, he added. Surprisingly, Mr. Tulasi is now acting like the shadow MLA of Gudivada. He has become the dearest and nearest person to Mr. Venigandla Ramu, MLA of Gudivada. Actually, Mr. Tulasi is from Addanki in Prakasam District. Earlier, he was associated with YCP circles. However, just 80 months before the elections, he came to Gudivada and became a close associate of Mr. Venigandla Ramu. Mr. Tulasi is credited with rallying TDP followers against Kodali Nani. Even now, he is the person directing TDP followers on how to embarrass and control Kodali Nani, preventing him from interfering in constituency affairs at any cost. Allegedly, Mr. Tulasi is handling all illegal collections in the constituency. Be it liquor, sand, or gravel, he decides who to pay and how much. Anyone in Gudivada who wants to meet the MLA on any issue must first meet Mr. Tulasi. Without Tulasi's recommendation or suggestion, Mr. Venigandla Ramu reportedly does not take any decisions. Allegedly, these circles, he was introduced to Sunil Kumar and allegedly became his benami. Mr. Venigandla Ramu was introduced to Tulasi during a deal in Guntur, and since then, they have been close. After securing the Gudivada ticket, Mr. Ramu invited Tulasi to Gudivada, and the two have worked together ever since. This highlights how politics and political affiliations seem applicable only to the common man, while politicians can ally with anyone from any party to further their business interests and sustain their positions. Similarly, Mr. Tulasi, who earlier worked with YCP circles, is now associated with TDP circles. As per available information, Mr. Kamepalli Tulasi Babu has studied LLB. He is a director at People's Pulse Pvt. Ltd., a psephology company. He is also a director at Inventus Financial Services Pvt. Ltd., NTV Agro Marine Foods Pvt. Ltd., Amrutha Solar Systems (India) Pvt. Ltd., and Velocity Cabs Pvt. Ltd. In several companies, Ramulamma Fraveen is listed as a co-director with Tulasi, while in one company, Kothapalli Brahman is a co-director. The details of these companies raise eyebrows and allegedly appear to be benami entities for a few influential individuals. This aligns with Mr. Raghurama Krishna Raju's statement that Tulasi Babu is the benami of Sunil Kumar.

Earlier, on December 4, POINT news had reported Tulasi Babu's alleged involvement in the RRR case. The recent police action has further substantiated those claims. The inquiry on January 3 is expected to shed more light on the allegations.

G Avinash | TPN  
Gudivada, Dec 31

The Prakasam district police have issued notices to Kamepalli Tulasi Babu, summoning him for questioning on January 3 in connection with allegations of custodial assault on Raghurama Krishna Raju (RRR), the Deputy Speaker of Andhra Pradesh. The case revolves around allegations made by RRR, who has accused Tulasi Babu of assaulting him during his detention by the CID. The Deputy Speaker claims that Tulasi Babu sat on his chest and physically assaulted him while he was in custody. RRR further alleged that Tulasi Babu is a benami of former CID Chief Sunil Kumar and was present at the CID office during his interrogation. This connection has raised questions about Tulasi Babu's involvement in the case. Currently working with Venigandla Ramu, MLA of Gudivada, Tulasi Babu has come under scrutiny following the issuance of the police notice. This development adds another layer to the ongoing controversy surrounding the Deputy Speaker's custodial experience, which has already drawn significant public and political attention.

**సంచివెలుగు కో-ఆపరేటివ్ క్రెడిట్ సొసైటీ లిమిటెడ్**  
(Regd.No. AMC/ GNT/ DCO/ 2020/ 4079)

- \* మెయిన్ రోడ్, రాజాగారి తోట, నాజ్ సెంటర్ దగ్గర, గుంటూరు - 1
- \* కుందుల రోడ్, రత్నశ్రీ సూపర్ మార్కెట్ ప్రక్కన, బృందావన్ గార్డెన్స్, గుంటూరు - 2
- \* మెయిన్ రోడ్, ఉషోదయ సూపర్ మార్కెట్ ఎదురు, మంగళగిరి
- \* ఫన్ ఫంక్షన్ రోడ్, గురునానక్ కాలనీ ఎదురు, విజయవాడ
- \* మెయిన్ రోడ్, చెరువు సెంటర్, సంచివెలుగు

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**ఫిక్స్డ్ డిపాజిట్ల పై వడ్డీ 12%**

ప్రతి లక్షపై ప్రతి నెల ₹1000

- మాల్టిగ్రాజ్ లోన్స్
- గోల్డ్ లోన్స్
- బిజినెస్ లోన్స్
- ఫిక్స్డ్ డిపాజిట్స్
- లకలంగ్ డిపాజిట్స్
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# Chandrababu's Promise Fulfilled: Poor Family Moves from Hut to Pucca House

TPN Correspondent  
Guntur, Dec 31

In a heartwarming initiative, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has delivered on his promise to uplift a poor family from living in a thatched hut to owning a permanent pucca house within six months.

The story began on July 1, during the pension distribution program in Penumaka, Tadepalli mandal, Guntur district. CM Chandrababu, upon visiting the humble home of Banavat Ramulu Nayak and his wife Seethamma, was deeply moved by their plight. The couple, living in a small hut, shared their struggles with the Chief Minister, who promptly assured them that their living conditions would be transformed.

True to his word, Chandrababu ensured the swift construction of a terraced house for the family, even accelerating the process to deliver the home before the promised timeline. With the construction now complete, the Ramulu Nayak family is preparing for a housewarming ceremony in January.

Expressing their gratitude, the family thanked CM Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Nara Lokesh for their support. "We are forever indebted to their kindness and initiative," said the family, overwhelmed by the gesture.



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This compassionate act underscores Chandrababu Naidu's commitment to improving the lives of the underprivileged, making a meaningful impact on the ground.



## Dy CM Pawan Kalyan Clarifies Nagababu's Path to Ministerial Role

TPN Correspondent  
Amaravati, Dec 31

Jana Sena Party chief Pawan Kalyan has addressed recent reports regarding his brother, Konidela Nagababu, joining the Andhra Pradesh state cabinet. Responding to rumors that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu plans to induct Nagababu into the cabinet, Pawan Kalyan clarified that his brother must first be appointed as a Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) before considering a ministerial role.

Pawan Kalyan explained that while there are exceptional circumstances under which someone can be given a ministerial position before becoming an MLC, no such circumstances apply in this case. He further emphasized that the party's immediate focus is on securing Nagababu's appointment as an MLC. Addressing concerns about nepotism, Pawan Kalyan made it clear that leadership selection is based on capability and hard work, not on caste or family connections. He also pointed out that he is unaware of the caste of Kandula Durgesh, a current minister in their cabinet. Defending his brother, Pawan Kalyan described Nagababu as a self-made and hard-working individual, asserting that his potential role in the government is based on merit.



## AP Govt Announces Key Decision on Land Registration Charges

TPN Correspondent  
Andhra Pradesh, Dec 31

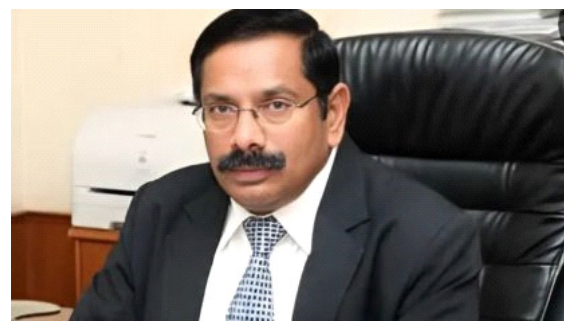
Andhra Pradesh Revenue Minister Anagani Satyaprasad made a significant announcement regarding land registration charges, revealing that, for the first time in the state's history, registration values would be reduced in some areas. The decision is aimed at addressing discrepancies and the arbitrary increases in registration charges made by the previous YSRC government, which were not based on a scientific method.

Minister Satyaprasad clarified that in some areas, there would be neither an increase nor decrease in registration charges, while in other areas, charges would be reduced. The new registration values will be implemented from February 1, 2024, with increases based on growth centers. The overall registration charges across the state will rise by an average of 15 to 20 percent, though in certain regions, charges will remain unchanged. This decision is part of an effort to correct the mistakes of the previous government and bring in a more equitable system.

Minister Satyaprasad also highlighted that Andhra Pradesh has seen significant investment, with Rs. 1.82 lakh crore invested, and the revenue conferences have received a positive response. The state's revenue collection this month has increased compared to the previous month, and it is expected that the revenue for this fiscal year will surpass the target of Rs. 9,500 crores.

The Minister stressed the importance of addressing revenue grievances and noted that 50 to 60 objections had already been received from 10 districts. He emphasized that lands will be identified through Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to ensure transparency in the registration process. Additionally, 200 digital assistants will be used to streamline the registration procedure, and the government is committed to making the registration process more user-friendly.

Satyaprasad also took aim at the previous government's decisions, criticizing the YSRC government for increasing electricity charges by Rs. 1,300 crores and causing a loss of 22.4 million units. He stated that action would be taken against any officers involved in land-related irregularities, warning that any officer found guilty would be suspended. The Revenue Department has already collected Rs. 6,200 crores in registration revenue, and it is expected to exceed Rs. 10,000 crores by March.



## Vijayanand Appointed as Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh

TPN Correspondent  
Amaravati, Dec 31

The Andhra Pradesh government has appointed Vijayanand as the new Chief Secretary (CS) of the state, following the retirement of incumbent Neerabh Kumar Prasad on December 31. An official order confirmed the appointment, with Vijayanand set to formally assume his role on Wednesday afternoon.

Vijayanand, a 1992-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, is currently the Special Chief Secretary in the Energy Department. His illustrious career includes pivotal roles such as Chairman of Andhra Pradesh GENCO in 2022 and Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Andhra Pradesh TRANSCO since April 2023.

With his retirement scheduled for November next year, Vijayanand brings extensive administrative experience to his new position. His appointment is seen as a strategic move to ensure seamless governance and continuity in the state administration.

## CM Unveils...

Continued from page 1

Concluding his speech, CM Chandrababu Naidu referred to the project as a "game-changer" for Andhra Pradesh's future. "That's why we have named it Jalaharathi for Telugu Thalli. It signifies our dedication to the land and our efforts to repay the debt to our motherland. We are submitting the project report to Prime Minister Modi," he said.

## Notices Reissued to Perni Nani's Wife Jayasudha Over Missing Ration Rice

TPN Correspondent  
Amaravati, Dec 31

Former minister Perni Nani's wife, Jayasudha, has once again been issued notices in connection with the missing ration rice from a godown registered in her name. Initially, a fine of Rs. 1.68 crore was imposed for the disappearance of 185 metric tons of rice. However, further investigations revealed an additional shortage, bringing the total amount of rice missing to 378 metric tons.

In light of the increased shortage, Krishna District Joint Collector Geetanjali Sharma has issued new notices to Jayasudha, demanding an additional fine of Rs. 1.67 crore to cover the further loss. The notices were sent to ensure that the missing rice is accounted for and the corresponding fines are paid promptly.



## Judgment on Allu Arjun's Bail Petition to be Delivered on January 3

TPN Correspondent  
Hyderabad, Dec 31

Actor Allu Arjun's regular bail petition in connection with the Sandhya Theatre stampede case will be decided by the Nampally court on January 3. The court had earlier heard the case today but postponed its verdict after the government and police lawyers requested additional time to file their counter arguments.

During the hearing on Monday, Allu Arjun's legal team argued that the actor should not be held responsible for the stampede that led to Revathi's tragic death. They contended that the case filed under BNS Section 105 was not applicable to Allu Arjun, as he did not contribute to the incident. They urged the court to grant him bail.

In response, the Chikkadpally police filed a counter petition opposing bail, requesting that Allu Arjun be instructed to cooperate with the ongoing investigation if granted bail. Despite this, there has been speculation that the police department is not pursuing the case with full intensity.

## "Allu Arjun..."

Continued from page 1

saying, "I don't know what happened in front of or behind the scenes in the Bunny case." Defending the police, Pawan stated that the law applies equally to everyone and emphasized their role in ensuring security during such events. He also acknowledged the emotional connection actors have with their fans, remarking, "Every hero has the right to greet their fans and feel their reaction."

Pawan Kalyan stated that either the team or the hero should have visited the victim's family the day after the incident, emphasizing the importance of showing immediate support in such situations. He further stressed that the theater management and the actor's team should have taken adequate precautions to avoid the tragic incident. The Deputy CM called for collective accountability, urging all parties involved to ensure such mishaps are prevented in the future.

Pawan Kalyan also drew a comparison to his brother Chiranjeevi, who used to attend movie screenings incognito to avoid disruptions. "Chiranjeevi garu would watch films in theaters wearing a mask to maintain a low profile," he said. Addressing ticket pricing policies, Pawan contrasted the approach taken by Telangana CM Revanth Reddy, praising him for providing opportunities to increase ticket prices for benefit shows in Telangana, unlike YCP policies in Andhra Pradesh.

Concluding his remarks, the Deputy CM expressed disappointment over how Allu Arjun was "unfairly cornered" in the issue, reiterating that such incidents call for collective accountability rather than isolating any individual.



## Repair Work on Marteru-Prakkilanka Road Begins on the Initiative of Minister Kandula Durgesh

TPN Correspondent  
Rajamahendravaram, Dec 31

Repair work on the Marteru-Prakkilanka road in East Godavari district, passing through the Nidadavol constituency, has officially commenced and is progressing swiftly, thanks to the efforts of State Tourism, Culture, and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh. The work, which includes the filling of potholes on a 12.7 km stretch, began from Tiparru Bridge to Kapavaram and Munipalli.

Minister Durgesh took proactive steps after

learning that contractors had not shown interest in participating in the tender despite the sanctioning of Rs. 1.17 crore for the project. In collaboration with the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, and officials from the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department, Minister Durgesh successfully facilitated the release of funds and negotiated with contractors to get the work underway.

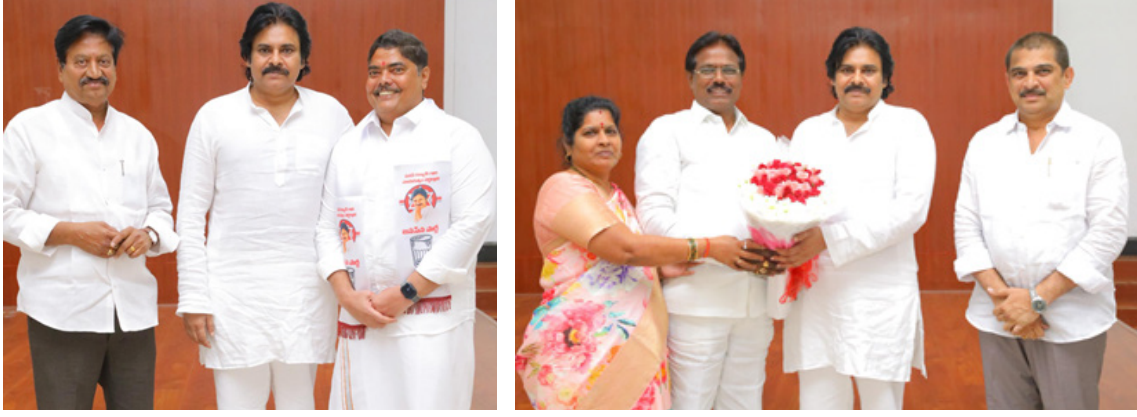
The repair of the road, which had been a significant issue for locals due to frequent accidents and traffic disruptions, has been welcomed by the community.



## YSRCP Leaders Jayamangala Venkata Ramana and Ganji Chiranjeevi Joins Jana Sena

**TPN Correspondent Mangalagiri, Dec 31**  
In a significant political development, YSRCP leaders MLC Jayamangala Venkata Ramana and former APCO Chairman Ganji Chiranjeevi joined the Jana Sena Party. The induction ceremony was held at the party's central office in Mangalagiri on Monday evening.

Jana Sena Party president Pawan Kalyan welcomed the new members by adorning them with the party's traditional kandu. Jayamangala Venkata Ramana, hailing from Kaikaluru constituency, and Ganji Chiranjeevi, representing Mangalagiri constituency, expressed their commitment to the party's vision. Smt. Radha also joined the Jana Sena during the event. Prominent party leaders, including MLC Pidugu Hariprasad, MP Tangella Uday Srinivas, MSIDC Chairman



Chillapalli Srinivasa Rao, Program Management Committee Chairman Kalyanam Siva Srinivas, and NTR District President Samineni Udayabhanu, attended the program, underscoring the party's growing strength. This development is seen as a boost for Jana Sena, signaling increasing support for the party ahead of upcoming political challenges. Party leaders emphasized their collective goal of working for the welfare of the people and strengthening the Jana Sena's presence across constituencies.

## Minister Subhash Vs MP Pilli Bose, Open Debate Challenge Heats Up in Konaseema

**TPN Correspondent Konaseema, Dec 31**

A fiery political confrontation is brewing in Ramachandrapuram as YSRCP MP Pilli Bose accepted a challenge for an open debate posed by TDP Minister Vasamsetti Subhash. The minister invited Bose to discuss the progress achieved during his six-month tenure and alleged corruption under YSRCP's five-year rule. In response, MP Bose declared, "Where is the open debate? Arrange it, and I will attend with my son." He asserted that YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the only Chief Minister in India to have gone to elections with 100% implementation of promises. Bose also expressed readiness to attend the debate even at the TDP office. The YSRCP MP refuted accusations of harassment, emphasizing his commitment to questioning corruption as part of the opposition's responsibility. "I am a politician, not a social reformer. If corruption exists in my party, I will report it to the high command. If you have proof of our leader's wrongdoing, file a case and take action," he retorted.



Minister Subhash, however, doubled down on allegations of widespread corruption in Ramachandrapuram during YSRCP's rule. He accused YSRCP leaders of misappropriating funds, including crop insurance meant for tenant farmers, and alleged financial irregularities in area hospitals and the Draksharama temple. "Are Bose and former minister Venugopalan Krishna willing to discuss their involvement?" Subhash questioned. The heated exchange has become a topic of intense political discussion, with both leaders steadfast in their positions. As the challenge gains momentum, political observers await the scheduling of the open debate, which promises to bring accountability and development issues to the forefront in Konaseema.

## YCP Welcomes Vigilance Inquiry into Alleged Corruption in Jaganna Colonies - Rachamallu



**TPN Correspondent Prodduthur, Dec 31**

YCP State Spokesperson Rachamallu Sivaprasad Reddy has welcomed Prodduthur MLA Varadarajula Reddy's call for a vigilance inquiry into alleged corruption in Jaganna Colonies. Addressing the media, Rachamallu stated that the YCP government remains committed to transparency and accountability in its welfare programs. During the YCP regime, house plots were distributed to 24,000 beneficiaries in Prodduthur, fulfilling the dream of homeownership for the poor. However, MLA Varadarajula Reddy has alleged irregularities in the purchase of 470 acres of land, claiming it was bought at prices set by the Collector but misused during allocation. Rachamallu reiterated that the YCP is open to scrutiny and emphasized the importance of a fair investigation. "We strongly demand that the authorities hold a press conference after the vigilance inquiry to confirm that no corruption has taken place," he said. He clarified that the demand for transparency is not just for the MLA but for the benefit of the people. "Our intention is for the public to know the truth," Rachamallu affirmed, underlining the government's dedication to dispelling any doubts regarding its welfare initiatives. The call for vigilance inquiry has sparked significant interest among the public and political circles, with many awaiting the findings to shed light on the allegations.

## VMRDA Issues 7-Day Notice to KIMS Hospital Following MLA Vishnu Kumar Raju's Complaint



**TPN Correspondent Visakhapatnam, Dec 31**

The Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Authority (VMRDA) has issued a notice to KIMS Icon Hospital, demanding an explanation within seven days. This action follows a complaint by North Constituency MLA Vishnu Kumar Raju regarding the hospital's obligations to provide free treatment to a portion of its patients. The issue pertains to the NRI Hospital, located in the Seetammadhara NE Layout, which was acquired by KIMS Icon Hospital three months ago. MLA Vishnu Kumar Raju highlighted that when the land for the former NRI Hospital was allocated, it was provided at a highly subsidized rate of ₹270 per sq. yd., compared to the current market value of ₹1.5 to ₹2 lakh per sq. yd. The agreement at the time mandated free treatment for 10 to 20 percent of patients.

In his letter to the District Collector and the VMRDA Commissioner, the MLA urged steps to ensure that KIMS Icon Hospital adheres to this commitment. He also requested the allocation of 60 beds specifically for free treatment in the 300-bed hospital. Responding to the complaint, the VMRDA Commissioner has directed the hospital management to submit a detailed explanation within a week. The notice seeks clarity on the hospital's compliance with the original land allocation agreement and its current efforts to provide free healthcare services. The case has sparked public interest, with many awaiting KIMS Icon Hospital's response. This development underscores the importance of ensuring that healthcare facilities fulfill their obligations to the community, particularly when benefiting from government concessions.

## Our Government Commits to Public Health - MLA Venigandla Ramu

**Assures Support for the Poor**



**TPN Correspondent Gudur, Dec 31**

Gudur MLA Venigandla Ramu reaffirmed the coalition government's commitment to prioritizing public health, announcing measures to ensure medical services reach the poor. At a public forum held at the TDP office on Eluru Road, Gudur, MLA Ramu distributed cheques worth ₹56.95 lakh from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) to 25 beneficiaries from Gudur, Gudlavalleru, and Nandivada mandals. Speaking to the media, MLA Ramu emphasized that the coalition government, led by the NDA, stands firmly with the people during medical emergencies. "Through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, we are ensuring that no one suffers due to financial constraints when facing illness," he said. He added that the public fo-

rum's doors would always remain open to citizens seeking resolution to their issues, reiterating the government's dedication to public welfare. The program witnessed participation from several coalition leaders and prominent figures, including NTR Stadium Committee Vice Chairman Yelavarthi Srinivasa Rao, Jana Sena Party Gudur in-charge Booragadda Srikanth, TDP senior leaders Pinnamneni Babji, and TDP town president Dintyala Rambabu. Other notable attendees included BJP convener Davuluri Surendrababu and TDP leaders Kakollu Bhaskara Rao, Pandrāju Sambaiah, and Chatragadda Ravi. This initiative reflects the coalition government's proactive approach to addressing public health challenges and supporting citizens during difficult times.

## MLA Kandula Narayana Reddy Criticizes Previous Government

**TPN Correspondent Markapuram, Dec 31**

TDP MLA Kandula Narayana Reddy launched a scathing attack on the previous government, accusing it of widespread corruption and looting the state. Speaking at a public gathering, he criticized the YSRCP government for its contradictory actions and political strategies. MLA Narayana Reddy pointed out the irony of the YSRCP leaders protesting against rising electricity charges when they were responsible for the hikes during their tenure. "It is strange that the YSRCP, which increased electricity tariffs, is now agitating over the same issue," he remarked. He further alleged that the YSRCP leaders are engaging in baseless accusations against the coalition government to serve their political interests. "Their thirst for power is driving them to slander the coalition government, despite our efforts to address the issues left unresolved during their rule," he said. Narayana Reddy also emphasized the



TDP's commitment to rebuilding the state and ensuring good governance. He assured that the coalition government, led by the NDA, will work tirelessly to improve the lives of the people and rectify the damage caused by the previous administration. The remarks have sparked discussions among political circles in the Markapuram constituency, with Narayana Reddy's comments highlighting the political tensions between the TDP-led coalition and the YSRCP opposition.

## Jupudi Prabhakar Rao Criticizes Govt Over English Medium Education Policies

**TPN Correspondent Hyderabad, Dec 31**

YSRCP official spokesperson Jupudi Prabhakar Rao defended the government's decision to introduce English medium in government schools during a media conference, countering criticism from opposition leaders and intellectuals. Highlighting the strong public support for the initiative, he stated, "97% of parents wanted English medium for their children's education. Yet, some individuals who claim to be intellectuals opposed the move and filed cases against it." He accused Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leaders of hypocrisy, alleging that while they oppose English medium education for the children of the poor, their own families opt for it. "They argue that poor and common people's children should not study in English medium, even while demanding 5% reservation for those educated in Telugu medium. If they truly love Telugu, let them introduce primary education in Telugu medium in all schools," he challenged. Jupudi dismissed concerns that the introduction of English medium

would harm the Telugu language, calling such arguments "baseless" and "stupid." He argued that access to English medium education provides common people with opportunities in jobs, business, and global platforms, breaking the monopoly of the wealthy. He criticized the coalition government, particularly Education Minister Nara Lokesh, for dismantling reforms introduced during YSRCP's tenure. "They destroyed initiatives like bilingual books, Byju's content, CBSE, and IB curriculums. Those children will curse you for denying them English medium education," he warned. Concluding his address, Jupudi questioned the medium of education chosen for the families of opposition leaders, suggesting a contradiction in their stance. "In which medium did Education Minister Nara Lokesh's children study?" he asked pointedly. The debate over English medium education remains a contentious issue, with both sides presenting contrasting visions for the future of education in Andhra Pradesh.

## MP Kesineni Shivanath Discusses Police Infrastructure Development with Home Minister Anita

TPN Correspondent  
Amaravati, Dec 31

In a significant meeting held on Monday, MP Kesineni Shivanath met with Home Minister Anita and officials from the Police, Fire Service, Jails, Disaster Management, and District Sainik Welfare departments to discuss key matters related to the state's police infrastructure and central funding.

MP Shivanath, who is also a member of the Parliamentary Committee of the Central Home Department, emphasized the ongoing efforts to bring additional resources to the state. He stated that the discussion focused on the funds that are yet to be received from the Center and the establishment of critical institutions under the Home Department, which are crucial for enhancing the state's security framework. He noted that despite the progress made, many essential developments, including the creation of new police stations, jails, and the introduction of special forces like Greyhounds and the Andhra Pradesh Police Academy (APPA), are still pending. These institutions are vital for the state's security



and law enforcement, and their establishment has been delayed since the formation of the state.

Shivanath underlined that the state is awaiting the completion of 118 institutions from the Center, a matter that he is actively addressing. He assured that efforts are being made to bring the required funds and ensure the timely setup of these institutions.

Looking ahead, Shivanath confirmed that a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled soon to further push for the pending funds and necessary infrastructure for the state's police force. This meeting will include discussions with Home Minister Anita and senior state police officials to expedite the process.

## Youth Should Walk with Ideas Useful for the Country - Tulasi Ramachandra Prabhu

TPN Correspondent  
Tenali, Dec 31

Tulasi Ramachandra Prabhu, Chairman of Tulasi Group of Companies, emphasized the importance of youth channeling their ideas to benefit the nation. He was speaking at the 20th merit scholarship distribution program, which was jointly organized by Sri Krishna Devaraya Aid Poor and Underprivileged and the Sri Krishna Devaraya Educational Progressive Association. The event was held on Sunday at the Tenali Ramakrishna Kavi Kalakshetra, with Ramachandra Prabhu serving as the chief guest. The meeting was presided over by Fish President Bollimuntha Venkatanarayana.

In his address, Ramachandra Prabhu urged the youth to sharpen their minds and work with greater enthusiasm, stating that even a small increase in effort could help them reach their full potential, akin to great minds like Einstein. He also advised young people to stay away from excessive smartphone use, focusing instead on building skills that contribute to the country's development.

Dr. Rangasetty Jagadish Babu, founder of the Rangisetty Foundation, also spoke at the event, highlighting the importance of determination and values in achieving success. He encouraged the students to work hard and assured them that success would follow. Dr. Jagadish Babu further explained that scholarships were being awarded to 341 deserving students for the 2023-2024 academic year based on their academic performance.

The event saw 60 scholarships distributed through the Tulasi Seeds-related Sri Krishna



na Devaraya Aid Poor and Underprivileged initiative, and 60 more through the Rangisetty Foundation. In recognition of his contributions, Tulasi Ramachandra Prabhu was honored by the audience with the title of Sri Krishna Devaraya.

The scholarship distribution ceremony was attended by several prominent industrialists, including Bondada Raghavendra, Chintala Srinivasa Rao, Arava Ramakrishna, Tadikonda Chinnabai, and others.

## Thanks-A-Thon & Kidoos Giving Gala: Students Share the Joy of Gratitude

Gannavaram MLA Encourages Students to Embrace Service and Entrepreneurship

TPN Correspondent  
Gannavaram, Dec 31

Little Brains School concluded its week-long Thanks-A-Thon: The Season of Gratitude\* with a remarkable event, Kidoos Giving Gala - Love to Learn, Happy to Share, held on December 30th. The celebration aimed to instill gratitude and compassion among students, with proceeds from the event going to orphanages and old-age homes in the city.

Students expressed their gratitude to parents, teachers, and society through various activities held from December 27th to 31st. On December 30th, the school transformed into a bustling marketplace as students became young entrepreneurs, setting up vibrant stalls featuring refreshments, stationery, fun zones, nurseries, fruits, vegetables, and more.

Parents, neighbors, and relatives enthusiastically visited the stalls, contributing to the cause and making the event a memorable success. The earnings from the gala will support underprivileged communities, reflecting the students' commitment to societal welfare.

Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkat Rao, the event's guest of honor, commended the initiative for blending academics with a sense of service and entrepreneurship. Speaking at the exhibition, he remarked, "Organizing such events aligns with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's vision of fostering entrepreneur-



ship in every household. This platform not only inspires young minds but also teaches them the value of giving back to society."

The MLA toured the stalls, interacted with students, and purchased several items. He lauded their efforts and praised the school's role in nurturing a spirit of innovation and compassion among its students.

School Director Pani Prasad Muktevi and Principal Sudha Praveena

expressed pride in the students' dedication, highlighting how the event serves as a bridge between learning and societal contribution. They emphasized that initiatives like these shape future leaders who are grounded in empathy and responsibility.

The Kidoos Giving Gala truly exemplified the joy of learning, sharing, and giving, making it an inspiring milestone for all involved.



## NTR District Collector Outlines New Development Plans

TPN Correspondent  
Vijayawada, Dec 31

NTR District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmi Sha has laid out a comprehensive roadmap for the district's growth and development, emphasizing collective participation and collaboration from all stakeholders. In a media conference held at the VC Hall of the Collector Camp Office, Collector Lakshmi Sha presented the district's plans for 2024, focusing on constructive development, economic growth, and welfare initiatives.

The Collector highlighted the government's focus on the Swarnandhra @ 2047 initiative, which aims for a 15% average growth across all sectors in the district. The state government's special attention to this plan, under the guidance of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, is expected to drive substantial improvements. Additionally, efforts will be made to position NTR District as a key tourism hub, with discussions underway to create a new tourism package in collaboration with local stakeholders.

Another key focus is the development of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), which



will spur industrial growth and create employment opportunities. The Collector also mentioned plans to enhance Vijayawada, the gateway to Amaravati, making it a cleaner, greener, and more prosperous city.

In addition to economic growth, Dr. Lakshmi Sha emphasized the government's continued commitment to welfare schemes, particularly those aimed at eradicating poverty and improving living standards. She assured that all eligible beneficiaries will receive the benefits of government schemes, including the PM Suryagarh Muft Bijli Yojana, which promotes renewable energy usage.

The Collector also outlined the appointment of district officers as nodal officers for resolving public petitions and ensuring quick solutions to public grievances. She called on the media and the public to actively participate in the district's development and provide constructive feedback.

The overall goal, according to Collector Lakshmi Sha, is to guide NTR District on the path of sustainable development, ensuring welfare, industrial growth, and tourism development in the new year.

## Life Certificates Must Be Submitted by February 28

TPN Correspondent  
NTR District, Dec 31

NTR District Treasury and Accounts Officer A. Ravi has announced that state government employees and family pensioners must submit their annual Life Verification Certificate (LVC) between January 1 and February 28. This submission is mandatory for those retired from state government services to continue receiving their pensions.

Pensioners can submit their certificates through the Jeevan Praman portal, the personal CMFS login, or directly at any treasury office. To complete the process, pensioners must verify their Aadhaar number, mobile number (for OTP verification),



PPO number, and bank account details. Treasury Officer A. Ravi emphasized that failure to submit the life certificate by the deadline of February 28 will result in the suspension of pensions for the month of March, which is scheduled for disbursement on April 1. Special counters will be available at the Divisional Treasury Office

in Vijayawada East, as well as at the Nandigama, Jaggayyapet, Kanchikacharla, Mailavaram, Thiruvur, and Vissannapet treasury offices for pensioners' convenience. In case of any doubts or difficulties, pensioners are encouraged to contact the concerned treasury office officials for assistance.

## Complaints Flood Against YCP Leaders' Alleged Land Grabbing and Looting

Minister Vasamsetti Subhash And TDP Leaders Recieves Urges From People

TPN Correspondent  
Mangalagiri, Dec 31

Several complaints have been filed in the Grievance Court, alleging land grabbing and irregularities by YCP leaders and their followers, including high-profile figures such as Vijayasai Reddy and Gorantla Madhav. Victims of alleged land encroachments and looting have requested immediate action against the encroachers and justice for those affected.

One complaint, filed by Madhav Ravikumar from Visakhapatnam Bhimili, accuses YCP leaders of manipulating the Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Authority (VMRDA) master plan for personal gain during the previous YCP government. Ravikumar alleges that land was looted by altering the master plan to benefit certain individuals, including Vijayasai Reddy and his associates. He has called for an inquiry into these irregularities. Another complaint, filed by M. Gan-



gadhar from Ruttakrinda Palli village in Sri Sathya Sai district, highlights issues with double registration of his property in Anantapur town. He claims that S. Fakhruddin, with the support of Gorantla Madhav, who was a CI at the time, facilitated the illegal encroachment of his land. Despite a favorable court verdict, Gangadhar reports that local authorities have not cooperated in resolving the issue.

In Kakinada district, Yonmula Chittamma from A. Mallavaram village has appealed for her land to be removed from the prohibited list. She claims that authorities are withholding land rights despite clear evidence

in her favor. Other complaints include issues with encroachments, land misappropriation, and requests for the extension of retirement age for retired SERP employees. Several individuals from various districts, including Anantapur, East Godavari, and Vizianagaram, have also filed appeals for justice regarding land disputes, with many alleging that their lands have been encroached or transferred illegally by YCP leaders or their affiliates.

Victims are demanding a thorough investigation into these allegations and swift legal action to resolve their grievances.



## Rave Party in Rajahmundry; 20 Arrested



**TPN Correspondent, Rajahmundry :** A rave party in Rajahmundry, the headquarters of East Godavari district, has caused a stir, leading to the arrest of over 20 individuals. Police raided the venue after receiving complaints about loud DJ music and alcohol consumption at Nagasai Function Hall, located at Korukonda Junction, Burugupudi. The rave party, which is the first of its kind to be held in a function hall in the city, attracted signif-

icant attention from local residents, who immediately alerted the authorities.

The police detained 13 young men, five young women, and some outsiders present at the scene. Three cars were also seized during the operation. Investigations revealed that the party was organized by the owners of local fertilizer companies. While there were no drugs found at the party, the participants were

consuming alcohol. The Special Branch police are probing the circumstances surrounding the event, including how it was allowed to take place in a public venue and who authorized it.

This incident comes amid growing concerns over the increasing number of rave parties in the Godavari districts, prompting further scrutiny from local authorities.

## Gudivada MLA Venigandla Ramu Focuses on Solving Issues in Tidco Colony



**TPN Correspondent, Gudivada :** Gudivada MLA Venigandla Ramu emphasized his focus on addressing the long-standing issues in Tidco colony, caused by the mistakes of previous rulers. During a meeting with municipal and Tidco officials at the Gudivada Municipal Office, the MLA discussed various challenges faced by the residents and outlined steps to resolve them.

MLA Ramu pointed out that the past errors had complicated the problems in the colony, and he is now working with the Municipal Administration Department and CRDA to find solutions. He instructed officials to ensure that the Muruga water reaches the STP tanks without any drainage issues and advised a coordinated effort between municipal and TIDCO teams to tackle the colony's difficulties.

Additionally, MLA Ramu contacted TIDCO MD Sunil Kumar Reddy to discuss the key issues in the colony, urging him to take immediate action. He expressed concern about the impact of past mistakes on the residents and assured the people that their problems would be brought to the attention of Chief Minister Chandrababu.

Regarding the water issue, MLA Ramu announced that alternative solutions are being explored to provide drinking water to the residents.

The meeting was attended by NTR Stadium Committee Vice Chairman Yelavarthy Srinivasa Rao, Municipal Commissioner P. Srinivasa Rao, Assistant Commissioner B. Srinivasa Rao, and several other officials from both the Municipal and TIDCO departments.

## Lawyers Protest in Emmiganur Over Death of Senior Lawyer

**TPN Correspondent, Emmiganur :** Lawyers in Emmiganur, Kurnool district, staged a protest in front of the Tahsildar's office, demanding an inquiry into the death of a senior lawyer and action against those responsible. The protestors submitted a petition to the Tahsildar at the Anantapur 3 Town Police Station, calling for a thorough investigation into the incident.

Bar Association President Gururaja Rao, addressing the protest, condemned the alleged actions of the police, stating, "The police are showing audacity against lawyers. If this is the situation faced by senior lawyers, one can only imagine the challenges junior lawyers must be facing."



The protest has drawn attention to the ongoing tensions between legal professionals and law enforcement, with the lawyers urging immediate action and justice for their colleague.

## Pregnant Woman Dies Due to Alleged Medical Negligence in Rampachodavaram

**TPN Correspondent, Rampachodavaram :** A pregnant woman, Telam Lakshmi, from Koyalagudem, tragically passed away due to alleged medical negligence at a government hospital in Rampachodavaram. Lakshmi was admitted to the hospital for delivery, but she died during labor pains in the middle of the night.

Her family members are accusing the doctors of negligence, claiming that inadequate medical attention led to Lakshmi's death. They have demanded justice for the loss, alleging that the doctors failed to

provide proper care.

However, the hospital's medical staff have refuted these allegations, stating that Lakshmi did not die due to a lack of supervision. According to the doctors, her death was caused by an increase in heart rate. The police have registered a case and are currently investigating the incident to determine the cause of death and whether medical negligence was involved. The family is awaiting justice, and the case has raised concerns over the quality of healthcare in government hospitals.



## Transparent Police Recruitment Process Begins in Prakasam District



**TPN Correspondent, Ongole:** The physical fitness tests for the Prakasam District Police Constable Recruitment began at the District Police Ground, under the supervision of District SP Damodar.

Speaking on the occasion, SP Damodar assured that the recruitment process would be conducted in a transparent manner. He urged candidates not to fall for brokers claiming to offer police jobs, emphasizing that every test is being monitored by CCTV cameras to ensure fairness and transparency.

The recruitment process aims to provide a level playing field for all candidates and is part of the district's effort to recruit capable individuals into the police force.

## Family Exposes Fake IPS Officer Baliwada Suryaprakash's Real Affairs

**TPN Correspondent, Vissakhapatnam :** The family members of Baliwada Suryaprakash, a man who recently created a stir during Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan's visit by claiming to be an IPS officer, have revealed shocking details about his past.

Suryaprakash's younger brother's wife, Soumya, has accused him of threatening their maternal grandmother, his brother, and other family members for property and money. She claims that he extorted nearly 70 lakhs in cash and property from them, and even led to the loss of family jobs by using threats.

According to the family, Suryaprakash, who had previously served in the military, failed to perform his duties and allegedly escaped by sneaking over a wall. He is also said to have obtained fake engineering certificates and been involved in fraudulent contracts.

The most shocking revelation came when Soumya exposed how Suryaprakash posted photos on WhatsApp, claiming he was selected for IPS last year while wearing a police uniform. His attempt to pose as an IPS officer was later debunked.

A complaint has been filed with the Pendurthi Police Station regarding his impersonation, and Soumya expressed her frustration over the police's indifference to the matter.

This case highlights the disturbing trend of individuals using fraudulent credentials and threats to exploit their families and communities, raising questions about the effectiveness of investigations into such matters.



## Physical Fitness Tests Begin for Police Constable Recruitment in Machilipatnam

**TPN Correspondent, Machilipatnam :** The physical fitness tests for police constable recruitment have officially begun in Krishna district.

Candidates who qualified in the recently held primary examination are now undergoing these tests at the Police Parade Grounds in Machilipatnam.

The tests, which are scheduled to con-

tinue until January 20, are being conducted for candidates allotted to the joint Krishna district. Officials have made arrangements to accommodate up to 600 candidates per day.

Superintendent of Police (SP) Gangadhar Rao assured that extensive preparations have been made to ensure a smooth and hassle-free experience for the candidates. He emphasized that the

tests are being conducted with complete transparency and advised candidates to avoid middlemen or any form of malpractice.

Out of the total 7,908 candidates in the joint Krishna district, 6,279 are men, and 1,629 are women, all of whom will undergo the physical fitness assessments as part of the recruitment process.



# A Murky Rivalry Brewing in India's Neighbourhood

The latest airstrikes by Pakistan on Afghan villages have sparked outrage in Kabul, with 46 people, including women and children, killed in an attack on Paktika province. This violent act comes after Pakistan's long history of backing insurgent groups like the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a by-product of its own policy of harboring militants. Ironically, the TTP is not an Afghan creation but the result of Pakistan's own strategic miscalculations. Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's 2011 warning about Pakistan keeping "snakes in its backyard" seems prophetic in this context, as these groups now target their former benefactor.

The strikes on Afghan territory, targeting alleged TTP leaders, came despite Pakistan's diplomatic efforts with Afghanistan. Pakistan's envoy, Mohammad Sadiq, had received a warm reception in Kabul, where Afghan officials expressed interest in maintaining good relations and enhancing trade. However, just hours after these diplomatic overtures, Pakistani fighter jets launched strikes in Barmal, Paktika, a region closely tied to Afghanistan's foreign minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi. This has escalated tensions, with Kabul summoning the Pakistani charge d'affaires to protest the strikes and assert Afghanistan's sovereignty.

Pakistan's military operations are partly driven by rising insecurity at home. This year, Pakistan has faced over 700 attacks, including brutal assaults on



its security forces. These strikes, coupled with unrest in tribal regions and conflicts in places like Kurram, have strained Pakistan's internal stability. The government's attempts to mediate in areas like Lakki Marwat and Kurram have only led to more resistance from local populations, particularly among Pashtuns, who have long felt marginalized. The arrest of leaders from the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM) has intensified this sense of alienation, possibly pushing more people toward militant groups.

Kabul's response to Pakistan's actions could escalate into greater conflict. Afghanistan's Taliban, although divided, may retaliate against Pakistani targets, but this risks strengthening groups like the Islamic State Khorasan

(IS-K), which is already a significant threat to Kabul. The IS-K has been gaining ground, and its alliance with groups like the TTP poses a broader regional threat, including to neighboring countries like India.

India, in turn, needs to closely monitor developments in Afghanistan, especially as Pakistan continues to exert influence over Afghan factions. With the situation evolving rapidly, a larger incursion into the tribal areas and further instability along the Durand Line cannot be ruled out. This brewing rivalry between Afghanistan and Pakistan, fueled by a complex mix of territorial disputes, militant movements, and geopolitical ambitions, is likely to have far-reaching consequences in the region.



## China's Influence in Sri Lanka Faces Competition as New President Strengthens Ties with India

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's recent visit to New Delhi from December 15 to 17, 2024, marked a significant shift in Sri Lanka's foreign policy under his leadership. It was his first international trip since taking office in September, and the visit brought renewed optimism for stronger bilateral cooperation between India and Sri Lanka. The joint statement, titled "Fostering Partnerships for a Shared Future," highlighted the continuity of ties, despite initial concerns about Dissanayake's ideological stance and his party's historic opposition to Indian influence.

Dissanayake, widely known as AKD, had been portrayed as anti-India and pro-China due to his party's, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), longstanding opposition to what it perceives as "Indian expansionism" in Sri Lanka. The JVP had also criticized the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, a result of the 1987 India-Sri Lanka Accord, and had been resistant to agreements like the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which sought to further strengthen bilateral ties.

In addition to these historical concerns, AKD's campaign rhetoric included plans to halt the 484 MW wind power projects in northeastern Sri Lanka—projects being developed by India's Adani Green Energy. This \$440 million venture, which was set to span over 20 years, had already sparked tensions, as critics argued it symbolized growing Indian economic influence in Sri Lanka's strategic regions.

However, the outcome of Dissanayake's visit to India helped dispel many of the concerns surrounding his government's foreign policy. During the trip, he thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for India's swift and substantial financial assistance following Sri Lanka's 2022 sovereign default. India's support, amounting to \$4 billion, was pivotal in stabilizing Sri Lanka's economy during its financial crisis. The president's reaffirmation of Sri Lanka's commitment to deepen ties with India in multiple sectors, including security, trade, and investment, indicated a shift away from the narrative of increased Chinese influence in the region.

This visit also signaled a renewed focus on regional security and prosperity, underscoring Sri Lanka's strategic position in the Indian Ocean. While China has been a key player in Sri Lanka's infrastructure development, especially through loans and projects under its Belt and Road Initiative, Dissanayake's engagement with India suggests that Sri Lanka is balancing its relationships with both global powers, with India emerging as a key partner in Sri Lanka's economic recovery and long-term development. As Sri Lanka navigates its post-crisis recovery, it appears that India will continue to play a pivotal role, making it unlikely that China will gain greater leverage in the island nation under the new administration.

## Reevaluating India's Election Process: Beyond the EVM Debate

India, the debate surrounding the manipulation of elections, their results, and particularly Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), has been an ongoing issue for years. The introduction of over a million EVMs in all 543 constituencies of the Lok Sabha during the 2004 general elections sparked a wave of discussions, and the issue remains contentious, especially since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) first raised concerns about their integrity in 2010.

EVMs were originally presented as stand-alone machines. However, they are, in fact, part of a larger system, comprising two machines: the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and a Control Unit, alongside Symbol Loading Units (SLUs) when necessary. The Election Commission of India (ECI) later began referring to the EVMs as Balloting Units, but the underlying system — consisting of four machines in total — is what forms the

Electronic Voting System (EVS) or Polling System.

While the EVMs undoubtedly play a crucial role in the election process, it's important to acknowledge that they represent just one part of the broader framework that facilitates elections. As poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz famously said, "Aur bhi dukh hain zamaane mein mohabbat ke siva" — meaning that there are many other concerns that come into play in the election process beyond just the machines.

The focus on EVMs has dominated the political discourse, especially in light of controversies surrounding their reliability. However, as recent elections — including the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Haryana and Maharashtra assembly polls, and various by-elections — have shown, much can happen before the EVS even takes over the voting process. Manipulations, irregularities, and other factors can occur long

before ballots are cast and counted.

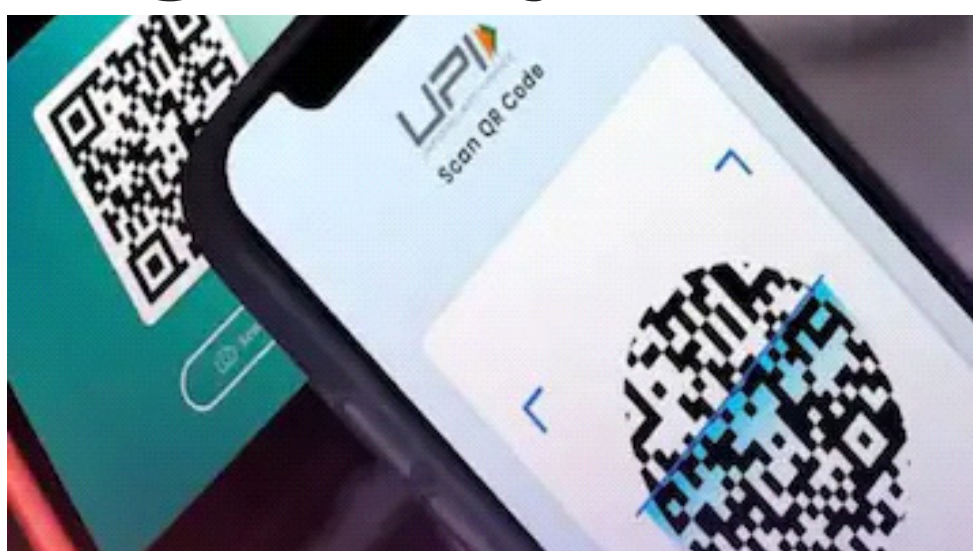
In understanding the complete electoral process, it's essential to recognize the multiple components that comprise what should be called the National Electoral System (NES). The NES can be broken down into four major components: Voter Roll, Scheduling, the Electronic Voting System (EVS), and Post-Poll Activities. Each of these elements plays a significant role in ensuring the legitimacy and transparency of elections, and they deserve more attention than the singular focus on EVMs.

The National Electoral System needs to be considered holistically, and efforts should be made to improve transparency and trust across all its components, not just the EVMs. The integrity of the entire process — from voter registration to the final result — is crucial for maintaining faith in the democratic process.

# India's Next Big Export: UPI Set To Lead Global Digital Payments Revolution

India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has become a transformative force in the world of digital transactions, revolutionising how people in the country manage and conduct payments. The initiative, spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push for a cashless economy, has reshaped India's financial landscape by combining efforts focused on digital infrastructure, financial inclusion, and internet connectivity. This has drastically changed the way Indians make transactions, contributing significantly to the country's financial growth and expanding the user base across all segments.

Launched in 2016 with the Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) app, UPI has been nothing short of revolutionary. By the end of 2024, UPI is expected to have processed a staggering 171 billion transactions, representing a 45% increase



from the previous year. The platform now handles an average of 16 billion transactions monthly, valued at approximately Rs 22 lakh crore. Remarkably, UPI now facilitates 85% of India's

digital transactions, a testament to its widespread adoption and success. UPI's key achievement lies in its ability to simplify digital payments while boosting financial inclusion, with over 300

million people now integrated into India's formal financial system.

As UPI continues to soar in India, the platform has attracted significant global attention. Countries like the UAE, France, Singapore, Bhutan, Mauritius, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka have already adopted UPI in various forms. Moreover, UPI is expanding its reach to nations such as Oman, Saudi Arabia, Australia, and the United Kingdom. India's National Payments Corporation (NPCI) has established the NIPL (NPCI International Payments Ltd) to lead UPI's international expansion, collaborating with countries like Trinidad and Tobago, Peru, Namibia, and Rwanda to help them develop their own digital payment systems inspired by the UPI framework.

The global reception to UPI is particu-

larly significant for nations in the Global South, where UPI's potential to drive financial inclusion at a mass scale is seen as revolutionary. UPI has already surpassed global digital payment giants such as PayPal, Alipay, and Brazil's PIX in terms of transaction volume. Between April and July 2024, UPI processed nearly Rs 81 lakh crore worth of transactions, cementing its position as a leader in the global digital payments space.

India's UPI is not only transforming its own financial ecosystem but also revolutionising the global payments landscape, particularly in developing countries. With increasing international partnerships and an expanding global presence, UPI is poised to become one of India's most significant exports, setting the stage for a new era of seamless, inclusive, and innovative digital transactions worldwide.

# PM Modi's Historic Third Term: A Testimony to BJP's Dominance and Good Governance

TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
DECEMBER.31

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's historic third victory in the 2024 elections not only solidifies his personal legacy but also underscores the continued dominance of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Indian politics. This win positions Modi as the symbol of stability for the country, while the BJP has firmly established itself as a party associated with effective governance.

In 2024, the global political landscape was marked by a wave of anti-incumbency, with several major democracies witnessing significant electoral defeats for their ruling parties. In the United States, the Democrats lost the presidency along with control of both houses of Congress. In the UK, the Conservative Party suffered a decisive ousting from power. Similar outcomes were seen in countries like France, South Korea, and Poland, where incumbent parties were unseated in favor of opposition forces.

Against this global trend, Prime Minister Modi's re-election stands as a remarkable exception. Not only did he retain power, but he did so with a resounding mandate, securing a historic third term in office. His previous victories in 2014 and 2019 set a strong foundation, but the 2024 win showcases the enduring trust the Indian electorate has in his leader-



ship.

This unprecedented third win for Modi highlights the strong bond he shares with the people of India. It also reflects the party's broad appeal and its focus on governance reforms, economic growth, and national security. In a time when many democracies are grappling with political instability and declining voter

confidence, India's continued faith in Modi and the BJP demonstrates the electorate's preference for stability and leadership rooted in decisive governance.

As Modi embarks on another term, his victory serves as a powerful affirmation of his vision for India's future, while further cementing the BJP's place at the helm of Indian politics.

## Not very lucky on security front, must stay vigilant: Rajnath Warns of Security Challenges

TPN CORRESPONDENT MHOW  
DECEMBER.31

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday emphasized the importance of vigilance among Indian soldiers, stating that India is "not a very lucky" nation in terms of security. While addressing army personnel at the Mhow Cantonment in Madhya Pradesh, Singh highlighted the ongoing challenges faced by the country on both its northern and western borders, as well as internal security concerns.

Singh, who is on a two-day visit to Madhya Pradesh, remarked that India's geographical location makes it vulnerable to constant security threats. "Taking the security scenario into account, Bharat is not a very lucky country because our northern and western borders continuously face challenges," he said. He urged the armed forces to remain vigilant, noting that the nation faces threats from both external and internal adversaries who are constantly active. The Mhow Cantonment, which is located 25 kilometers from Indore, is home to several prestigious military institutions, including the Army War College, Military College of Telecommunication Engineering, and Infantry School. It also houses the Infantry Museum and the Army Marksmanship Unit. Singh emphasized the importance of these institutions in preparing soldiers for the challenges they face.

"We also face challenges on the internal front. In the backdrop of this, we can't sit quiet, unconcerned. Our enemies, whether internal or external, always remain active. In these circumstances, we must keep an eye on their activities and take appropriate and timely steps against them," he added.

Singh further highlighted the crucial role of the Indian Army in securing the nation and supporting its journey towards becoming a self-reliant and developed country.

## Bihar Govt Has Become Symbol Of Atrocity On Youths: Priyanka Gandhi

TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
DECEMBER.31

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra criticized the "double-engine" BJP government in Bihar, calling it a symbol of "atrocities on youth" after police used water cannons to disperse students protesting against the cancellation of the Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC) exam. The incident occurred on Sunday when students gathered at Gandhi Maidan, demanding the cancellation of the BPSC exam held on December 13 due to allegations of corruption and paper leaks.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Priyanka Gandhi stated, "It is the government's job to stop corruption, rigging, and paper leaks in examinations. But instead of addressing these issues, students are being prevented from raising their voices." Her remarks came a day after the protest turned tense, with students attempting to march towards the residence of Bihar's Chief Minister. The police intervened, using water cannons to disperse the crowd, a move that sparked further outrage. The students were joined by Prashant Kishore, the founder of Jan Suraj, who lent his support to the protesters. Authorities confirmed that the police had to take action as the students tried to march toward the Chief Minister's residence. The protests were a reaction to what students believe is an unfair examination process, exacerbated by corruption and administrative lapses.

The situation has ignited a political controversy, with opposition leaders accusing the state government of failing to address the concerns of the youth. The incident has also drawn attention to the growing frustration among students in Bihar, who feel their voices are being silenced in the face of systemic corruption and inefficiencies.



## TVK Chief Vijay Meets Tamil Nadu Governor Over Sex Assault At Anna University

TPN CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI  
DECEMBER.31

Actor-turned-politician Vijay met Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi in Chennai amid widespread outrage over the sexual assault of a second-year student at Anna University on December 23. The incident has sparked protests across Tamil Nadu, leading to the arrest of one person and the formation of four special police teams to investigate the case.

The Students' Federation of India (SFI) and the All India Women Welfare Federation held demonstrations outside Anna University's Guindy campus, demanding justice and stronger security measures for women in educational institutions. In response to the incident, Vijay, leader of Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), expressed his shock and concern, calling it "deeply shocking and painful." He urged the Tamil Nadu government to take swift legal action against the accused and ensure justice.

Vijay also proposed the use of the Nirbhaya Fund to install smart poles equipped with emergency buttons, CCTV cameras, and telephones in vulnerable areas. He called for the creation of mobile apps and emergency hotlines for women's safety and emphasized the need for better restroom facilities in public spaces.

Meanwhile, the Madras High Court intervened by constituting an all-women Special Investigation Team (SIT), led by IPS officers Sneha Priya, Ayman Jamal, and Brinda. The SIT has been tasked with investigating not only the sexual assault but also the leak of the victim's FIR. The court has ordered the Tamil Nadu government to provide Rs 25 lakh as compensation to the victim and ensure she receives free education, along with boarding, lodging, and counseling support.

The ruling DMK government faces increasing political pressure, with BJP Tamil Nadu president K Annamalai protesting by whipping himself outside his home, accusing the DMK of failing to ensure women's safety. The National Commission for Women (NCW) has also dispatched a two-member team to investigate the case and monitor the response from authorities.

## Kejriwal Announces Monthly Allowance for Priests and Granthis Ahead of Delhi Elections



TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
DECEMBER.31

In a bid to retain power for a fourth consecutive term, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal announced a new welfare scheme for Hindu temple priests and granthis of gurdwaras on Monday. Titled the Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana, the scheme promises a monthly allowance of Rs 18,000 to these religious leaders, aimed at recognizing their contribution to society.

Speaking about the initiative, Kejriwal emphasized that priests and granthis often remain neglected despite their vital role in communities. "For the first time in the country, we are introducing a scheme to support them, under which they will receive a monthly honorarium of Rs 18,000," Kejriwal said. He further stated that the scheme would help provide financial security to these religious workers, many of whom operate on minimal income.

The announcement, which comes ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections, is part of the AAP's strategy to connect with a broader section of voters. Kejriwal made it clear that the scheme would only be implemented if the AAP is re-elected to govern the city-state. Registration for the scheme is set to begin on Tuesday, with Kejriwal planning to visit the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place to oversee the registration process for priests.

The decision to introduce such a welfare scheme highlights AAP's focus on addressing the concerns of religious communities in the capital, as it seeks to consolidate its position ahead of the elections. Kejriwal's announcement has generated significant attention, with both supporters and critics weighing in on the potential impact of the scheme. As the election date approaches, this move could play a crucial role in shaping voter sentiment in Delhi.

## Don't Fall For BJP's Money: Mamata Banerjee's Message To Sandeshkhali

TPN CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA  
DECEMBER.31

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, during her first visit to Sandeshkhali since the sex harassment controversy erupted, took a strong dig at the BJP, urging people not to be swayed by lies or money. Banerjee, who was in the riverine island to oversee a public distribution programme, accused the BJP of spreading false narratives and indulging in political manipulation.



Banerjee urged the locals to be cautious and not attend meetings or events orchestrated by the BJP. "Even if someone calls you, don't go. It's your right not to go," she said. The Chief Minister further warned of the dangers posed by the Left, accusing them of political violence in the past. "If something happens in Sandeshkhali, I will hear about it in minutes. I work as a 'paharadar' (watchman) for the people. If you are fine, I will be fine," she added.

"Here, a lot of money has been involved, and later everything turned out to be lies," said Banerjee, addressing the crowd. "Don't fall for the prey of naughty men... Don't fall for BJP's money... Bring down defamation, lies, and misinformation, and let peace prevail here." Her remarks were a direct reference to the controversy that the BJP had stoked ahead of the Lok Sabha election.

The controversy began with allegations of sex harassment and land grabbing against Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Sheikh Shahjahan. The TMC claimed the allegations were politically motivated, especially after a video surfaced in which a former BJP leader allegedly confessed that the incident had been "scripted by the BJP." While the BJP used the issue to accuse the TMC of misrule and exploitation of women, the TMC managed to retain the Basirhat seat, which includes the Sandeshkhali assembly area.

Amid the uproar, the TMC suspended Sheikh Shahjahan along with his two associates, Shibu Prasad Hazra and Utam Sardar. Shahjahan was later arrested after evading police for two months, following an incident in which his supporters attacked Enforcement Directorate officials visiting Sandeshkhali in January.



## Sri Lanka's Human Rights Commission Denied Access to Rohingya Refugees in Military Camp

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's Human Rights Commission (HRCSL) has expressed concern over being denied permission to visit Rohingya refugees who are being held at a military camp in Mullaitivu, northern Sri Lanka. The HRCSL wrote a formal letter to President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on December 26, alleging that its team, including senior officials, was blocked from assessing the conditions of the refugees detained at the Sri Lanka Air Force Camp.

The Rohingya refugees, over 100 in total, were rescued by the Sri Lanka Navy on December 20 after being found in a distressed condition off the northeastern coast of the island. The group was spotted by local fishermen near the Velamullivaikkal area in Mullaitivu. The Sri Lankan government suspects that the refugees were part of a human trafficking operation, with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Arun Hemachandra labeling them as illegal immigrants.

Despite the growing humanitarian concerns, the HRCSL's attempt to inspect the



living conditions of these refugees was thwarted. The Commission had aimed to ensure that the refugees were being treated humanely and to assess whether their detention met international human rights standards.

The situation has sparked widespread debate about Sri Lanka's treatment of refugees and its broader refugee policy.

Human rights organizations have called for transparency and accountability, urging the government to reconsider its handling of such cases and to uphold its commitments to international human rights law. The case continues to highlight the challenges faced by refugees fleeing persecution, as well as the tension between security concerns and humanitarian obligations.

## Crashed Plane was Shot At From Russia: Azerbaijan President



BAKU: Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has claimed that a passenger plane, which crashed last week and killed 38 people, was damaged by an accidental shooting from the ground in Russia. Aliyev, speaking on Sunday, suggested that some officials in Russia had misrepresented the cause of the disaster.

The crash involved Azerbaijan Airlines

Flight J2-8243, which tragically went down after encountering trouble in Russian airspace. The incident occurred as Russia's air defenses were engaged in combat with Ukrainian attack drones. Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed regret for the "tragic incident" in a statement on Saturday, but the Kremlin did not confirm any direct responsibility for downing the plane. Instead, the statement mentioned

that a criminal investigation had been initiated into the incident.

Aliyev, however, clarified that the plane had been shot at unintentionally while approaching Grozny, a city in southern Russia. The Azerbaijani president added that the aircraft was also subject to some form of electronic jamming, which may have contributed to the confusion leading to the shooting. Despite the severity of the incident, the pilots were praised for their heroic efforts in executing a controlled landing, which allowed 29 of the passengers to survive.

The tragic crash has raised serious questions about the safety of civilian air traffic in regions affected by military operations. It has also added to the tense relationship between Azerbaijan and Russia, as both countries now look to address the cause of the crash and its broader implications for aviation security.

The investigation into the crash is still ongoing, with both Russian and Azerbaijani authorities looking into the details of the shooting and its accidental nature. The incident has become a point of contention, with both governments seeking clarity and accountability in the wake of the disaster.



## Jimmy Carter, Former U.S. President and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Dies at 100

WASHINGTON: Jimmy Carter, the earnest Georgia peanut farmer who served as the 39th president of the United States, passed away on Sunday at the age of 100, according to the Carter Center. He died peacefully at his home in Plains, Georgia. Carter's legacy as a statesman and humanitarian is cemented by his achievements during and after his presidency.

"My father was a hero, not only to me but to everyone who believes in peace, human rights, and unselfish love," said his son Chip Carter. "The world is our family because of the way he brought people together, and we thank you for honoring his memory by continuing to live these shared beliefs."

Carter, a Democrat, served as president from 1977 to 1981, defeating incumbent Republican President Gerald Ford in the 1976 election. Despite facing challenges during his presidency, such as a struggling economy and the Iran hostage crisis, Carter brokered a historic peace agreement between Israel and Egypt at the 1978 Camp David Accords, an accomplishment that earned him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his humanitarian efforts.

Though Carter's presidency ended in defeat to Republican Ronald Reagan in 1980, his post-presidency years garnered widespread admiration. He lived longer after his time in office than any other U.S. president and became known as a better former president than during his time in office—a status Carter himself acknowledged.

His presidency was marked by efforts to promote human rights and bring stability to the Middle East, but it was also marred by domestic economic struggles and the international humiliation of the Iran hostage crisis, which lasted for 444 days. Despite these challenges, Carter's legacy as a peacemaker and humanitarian continues to shape his place in history.

## Syrian Elections Could Take 4 Years: Rebel Leader Ahmed Al-Sharaa



DUBAI: In a recent interview with Al Arabiya TV, Syria's new leader Ahmed al-Sharaa discussed his plans for the country's political future, the role of foreign relations, and the impact of sanctions. Following the ousting of Bashar al-Assad by his Islamist group, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), and allied rebels, Sharaa indicated that Syria's election process could take up to four years, emphasizing the need to rewrite the constitution, which could take an additional two or three years. He reaffirmed the importance of drafting a new constitution and holding UN-supervised elections, as outlined in United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254, adopted in 2015. Sharaa also expressed hope that under the administration of US President-elect Donald Trump, sanctions imposed on Syria under Assad's regime would be lifted. He argued that since Assad is no longer in power, these sanctions should be automatically removed.

On the subject of Syria's foreign relations, Sharaa underscored the importance of maintaining strong ties with Russia and Iran. Both countries have been crucial allies of Assad, aiding him in reclaiming territory throughout Syria's ongoing war. Sharaa stated that Syria cannot function without its relationship with Iran, noting that it must be based on mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference. He also acknowledged Russia's significant influence in Syria, calling it "the second most powerful country in the world," with deep strategic interests, particularly in military presence and infrastructure.

Sharaa also discussed the integration of Kurdish-led forces, which Turkey opposes, into Syria's national army. He emphasized that all arms should be controlled by the state, and that the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which played a crucial role in defeating ISIS, should be welcomed into the defense ministry.

## EAM Jaishankar To Embark On 3-Day Doha Visit Today, To Meet Qatari PM

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will begin a three-day official visit to Qatar on December 30 to review and enhance bilateral relations between the two nations. His visit will focus on key sectors including trade, investment, energy, and security, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced. The visit is set to conclude on January 1.

During his stay, Jaishankar is expected to meet with Qatari leaders, including Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani. The discussions will cover various aspects of the India-Qatar partnership, ranging from political and economic cooperation to cultural exchanges and people-to-people ties. Both sides will also address regional and global issues of mutual concern.

This visit follows a series of high-level engagements between the two nations. Earlier this month, Jaishankar visited Qatar and Bahrain from December 6 to 9, where he held talks with Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Faisal bin Thani Al Thani, and Minister of State, Ahmed Al Sayed, on the sidelines of the Doha Forum. Additionally, in late October, the two countries held the fifth round of Foreign Office



Consultations, reviewing a broad spectrum of bilateral relations including trade, investment, education, and technology.

India and Qatar share a longstanding and friendly relationship, marked by frequent exchanges at the highest levels. Both countries have committed to furthering cooperation in areas such as renewable energy, fintech, startups, and technology. As part of these efforts, they have explored opportunities to deepen ties through joint

initiatives and discussions on regional and international matters.

The large and vibrant Indian community in Qatar plays a significant role in the country's development, and continues to strengthen the deep-rooted friendship and multifaceted cooperation between the two nations. The MEA emphasized that this visit will continue to build on the excellent framework of collaboration established between India and Qatar.





# Domestic Market Dips Amid Global Uncertainty: Bears Tighten Grip

Domestic stock markets are in turmoil. The indices fell sharply on Monday as bears tightened their grip. The reasons for this are the decline in year-end volume, the withdrawal of foreign institutional investors, the appreciation of the dollar and the weakening of the rupee. The Nifty, which started with gains in the morning, crashed shortly after. It closed at 23,644 with a total loss of 168 points. The Sensex, however, recovered slightly from the loss of 850 points and closed with a loss of 459 points. The indices are likely to rise only if there are positive signals from the international markets.



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The BSE Sensex, which closed at 78,699 in the previous session, started at 78,637 today. It touched an intraday low of 78,077. It reached an intraday high of 79,092. Finally, it closed at 78,248 with a loss of 450 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,796 on Monday, touched a low of 23,599 and a high of 23,915. It closed at 23,644, down 168 points. The Bank Nifty, meanwhile, fell 358 points to settle at 50,952.

In the Nifty50, 11 companies gained while 38 lost. Adani Enterprises, Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech, IndusInd Bank, Shriram Finance were the top gainers. Hindalco, Tata Motors, Trent, BEL, Wipro lost the most. FMCG, IT, Pharma, Healthcare, and Consumer Durables indices rose today. Bank, auto, finance, media, metal, realty, oil and gas indices rose.

Market breadth on NSE today was in favour of sellers. Of the 2942 shares traded, 947 gained and 1913 lost. Shares of 69 companies hit 52-week highs while 97 hit 52-week lows. Rupee settled flat at 85.54 against the dollar. KEC International received orders worth Rs 1073 crore from various companies. Nifty Pharma index surged. Shares of Biocon, Lupin and JB Chemicals rose by 3-4%. Adani Enterprises rose by 7% as brokerages gave buy calls with a target price of Rs 3801. Rocking deals to invest Rs 100 crore for growth. India-Australia trade has become more diversified after the trade agreement was signed in 2022. Heavy trades were made in Graves Cotton, Hindalco, and CDSL. Vodafone Idea shares rose 5% after the government waived off bank guarantees from the old spectrum auction. IOL Chemicals shares rose



5% after the board approved the share split. Adani Group stocks surged today. Ola Electric shares fell 3% after the resignation of CMO and CTO.

## 1. Persistent Systems Ltd.

Persistent Systems is a global software and technology services company specializing in digital business acceleration, enterprise modernization, and product engineering. Persistent Systems has been a top performer, with its stock price appreciating significantly over the past year. It was among the top gainers in the BSE A Group, reflecting strong market confidence. The company's focus on digital transformation services positions it well to capitalize on the increasing demand for such solutions across various industries.



## 2. Voltas Ltd.

Voltas is a leading Indian multinational company specializing in air conditioning and cooling technology. It operates in various segments, including Unitary Cooling Products, Electro-Mechanical Projects, and Engineering Products and Services. Voltas holds a strong position in the Indian air conditioning market, benefiting from its extensive distribution network and brand reputation. The increas-



ing demand for cooling solutions in India, driven by rising temperatures and improving living standards, presents significant growth opportunities for Voltas.

## 3. The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL)

The company has shown a strong recovery post-pandemic, with increasing occupancy rates and average room revenues contributing to improved financial performance. IHCL's flagship brand, Taj, is renowned for its luxury offerings, and the company has been expanding its presence in both domestic and international markets. With the revival of the travel and tourism industry, IHCL is poised to benefit from increased travel demand, both leisure and business, alongside its strategic expansion plans.



## 4. Indus Towers Limited

Indus Towers is one of the world's largest telecom tower companies, providing passive infrastructure services to all telecom operators in India. The company has maintained steady revenue streams through long-term contracts with telecom operators, ensuring consistent cash flows. Indus Towers plays a critical role in India's telecom infrastructure, supporting the rapidly growing data consumption and network expansion needs. With the rollout of 5G technology and increasing smartphone penetration, Indus Towers is well-positioned to capitalize on the expanding telecom infrastructure requirements.



## 5. Marico Limited

Marico has consistently delivered strong financial results, with steady revenue growth and healthy profit margins, driven by its diversified product portfolio and strong brand equity. The company holds significant market share in the hair oil and edible oil segments, with a growing presence in the health foods and male grooming categories. Marico's focus on innovation, expanding rural reach, and increasing penetration in emerging categories positions it well for sustained growth in the FMCG sector.



# Ministry of Steel Outlines Global Strategy to Strengthen India's Steel Sector



The Ministry of Steel is crafting a comprehensive strategy aimed at transforming India into a global leader in steel production and exports. In its 2024 year-end review, the ministry emphasizes the focus areas of raw materials, investments, technology, and exports, all aligned with international best practices. To further these goals, the government is exploring international partnerships and collaborations that will strengthen India's steel sector on the global stage.

A major highlight of the ministry's strategy is the promotion of sustainability and quality in steel production. Initiatives like the Green Steel Mission, the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Specialty Steel, and efforts in standardization and quality control are central to this plan. The Green Steel Mission, with an investment of Rs 15,000 crore, aims to decarbonize the steel industry and contribute to the nation's net-zero goals. It includes incentives for renewable energy usage and requires government bodies to prioritize purchasing green steel.

Complementing the Green Steel Mission, the National Green Hydrogen Mission, with a Rs 455 crore allocation for pilot projects, supports green innovation in the sector. Key

developments include the release of a roadmap for decarbonization, a Taxonomy for Green Steel to standardize low-emission steel, and the Steel Scrap Recycling Policy aimed at resource efficiency. Additionally, pilot projects exploring hydrogen-based Direct Reduced Iron (DRI) production are demonstrating India's commitment to sustainable steel manufacturing.

To reduce imports and boost domestic manufacturing, the government has rolled out the PLI Scheme for Specialty Steel. This initiative has garnered investments of Rs 27,106 crore and is expected to create 14,760 direct jobs while producing 7.90 million tonnes of specialty steel. By October 2024, Rs 17,581 crore worth of investments had already materialized, providing employment to over 8,660 people.

In addition, the extension of duty exemptions on ferrous scrap until March 2026 and the reduction of customs duties on ferro-nickel are designed to further strengthen the domestic stainless steel industry. While India has ample iron ore and non-coking coal reserves, the country continues to rely on imports of coking coal due to limited domestic supply.

# India's Economic Growth Slows to 5.4%, Raising Concerns for 2024

India's economic growth slowed to 5.4% in the July-September quarter, marking the lowest growth rate in seven quarters. This unexpected dip raised concerns among analysts, who had anticipated a growth rate above 7%. The slowdown has prompted the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to revise its growth forecast for the financial year 2024-25, lowering it from 7.2% to 6.6%.



there is increasing pressure on policymakers to find ways to reinvigorate the economy and ensure that growth remains resilient in the face of both domestic and global challenges. The slow pace of economic recovery, coupled with the uncertainties surrounding the global market, has made it even more important for India to adopt a strategic approach to economic management.

The slowdown has sparked calls for the RBI to cut interest rates to stimulate demand and encourage economic growth. While rural demand remains robust, urban demand has shown signs of weakness, contributing to the overall economic deceleration. Experts suggest that continued reforms, particularly in the face of global economic uncertainties, could help revive growth.

The upcoming Union Budget for 2024 is seen as a crucial opportunity to provide guidance on addressing the economic challenges. Analysts believe that government spending and targeted reforms could play a vital role in boosting demand and supporting growth in the coming months.

In the wake of these developments,

While the rural economy remains a bright spot, urban consumption, which has been a key driver of India's growth in recent years, has seen a notable slowdown. This trend suggests that the economy's recovery may remain uneven across different sectors and regions. Therefore, experts are calling for a balanced policy response that fosters growth across both rural and urban areas.

## India's GDP Growth Expected to Recover in Q3 and Q4, Says RBI Report



India's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is projected to recover in the third and fourth quarters of the current financial year, driven by a rebound in domestic factors such as public consumption, investment, and strong service exports, according to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest Financial Stability Report.

Despite a recent slowdown, the RBI report highlights that structural growth drivers in the economy remain intact, suggesting that the economy is on track for recovery in the latter half of FY 2024-25. "Real GDP growth is expected to recover in Q3 and Q4 of 2024-25," the report stated, providing optimism for the second half of the fiscal year.

## BSNL Launches Affordable Plan with 425 Days Validity

In response to rising prices from private telecom operators like Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, and Vodafone Idea (Vi), Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has introduced a new prepaid plan aimed at providing cost-effective alternatives for customers. The new plan, priced at ₹2,398, offers an impressive 425 days of validity, making it an ideal choice for long-term users who prefer fewer recharges.



The plan includes unlimited voice calls to all networks and a total of 850 GB of data, offering 2 GB of daily data. After exceeding the daily limit, the internet speed will reduce to 40

Kbps. Additionally, customers can send up to 100 free SMS per day.

Currently, this promotional offer is available exclusively to customers in the Jammu and Kashmir region, with BSNL suggesting that the plan could be expanded to other states in the future, though no specific timeline has been confirmed.



## Kidnapping Gone K-pop: 3 Girls Plan to Meet BTS at All Costs: Internet Stuns

YouTube, one of the leading video streaming platforms, has always been a go-to destination for entertainment and information. However, with an overwhelming number of videos available, users often find it challenging to quickly discover something interesting to watch. To address this issue, YouTube is reportedly testing a new feature called the “Play Something” floating action button, designed to eliminate endless scrolling.

As per a recent report from 9to5Google, the “Play Something” button is displayed with a black background and white text, positioned just above the bottom bar of the screen. When users tap on this button, it initiates the playback of a random video in the Shorts player. Interestingly, the feature isn’t limited to Shorts alone—it can also play regular long-form content in portrait mode.

In portrait mode, the usual video controls, including the like, dislike, comment, and share buttons, appear on the right side of the screen. Additionally, a timeline scrubber is visible at the bottom of the player, offering users an option to skip ahead or go back in the



video.

This new feature is part of YouTube’s ongoing efforts to improve user experience by helping users discover new content effortlessly. The “Play Something” button could potentially serve as a fun and engaging way for users to explore videos without having to make the decision themselves, especially when they are unsure of what to watch next.

At the moment, YouTube is reportedly testing this feature, so it may not be available to all users yet. However, if successful, it could roll out more widely in the future, providing users with a more seamless and spontaneous way to enjoy content on the platform.

Stay tuned for more updates on this exciting feature as YouTube continues to enhance its user interface.

## iPhone SE 4 Might Be More Expensive Than Its Predecessor

Apple’s upcoming affordable iPhone model, the iPhone SE 4, is expected to launch early next year, following in the footsteps of the iPhone SE (2022). While Apple hasn’t officially confirmed the release, a new leak from a South Korean blog provides insights into the phone’s pricing and features. According to the report, the iPhone SE 4 is expected to feature a similar design to the iPhone 14, with a 6.1-inch OLED display, FaceID, and the powerful A18 chip.

The latest leak suggests that the iPhone SE 4 will be priced under \$500 (approximately Rs. 42,000), with the South Korean market potentially seeing a price above KRW 8,00,000 (around Rs. 46,000). Earlier rumors hinted at a price range between \$499 (Rs. 42,000) and \$549 (Rs. 46,000), compared to the starting price of \$429 (Rs. 35,000) for the iPhone SE (2022). This new pricing reflects the inclusion of advanced features like 5G capabilities and a more modern design.



### New Features and Design

The iPhone SE 4 is expected to feature Apple’s first in-house 5G baseband chip, which could slightly increase its price due to the shift away from Qualcomm’s modems. Additionally, the phone will sport a more modern design, resembling the iPhone 14, with a 6.1-inch OLED display and FaceID support.

Under the hood, the iPhone SE 4 will be powered by the A18 chip, the same processor found in the iPhone 16. The device could also come with a single 48-megapixel rear camera and options for either 6GB or 8GB LPDDR5 RAM. The handset will feature an aluminum frame and may also support USB Type-C charging.

With these upgrades, the iPhone SE 4 is expected to offer a more premium experience at a competitive price, positioning it as an attractive option for users looking for an affordable iPhone with modern features.

## Childhood Obesity in New Zealand: The Role of Screen Time



Childhood obesity is a rapidly increasing global concern, and in New Zealand, it has become a particularly pressing issue. With rising rates of overweight and obesity among children, addressing this challenge requires a multifaceted approach, including lifestyle changes, diet, and screen time management.

One of the key contributors to childhood obesity is excessive screen time. Studies have shown that prolonged screen use, including time spent on phones, tablets, and computers, often leads to sedentary behavior and poor dietary choices. Children are more likely to snack on unhealthy foods while engaged in screen-based activities, further exacerbating the risk of obesity.

For families, the most effective strategy is to implement and maintain clear rules regarding screen time. These rules should address the quantity, quality, and timing of screen use to ensure that children are not spending excessive hours in front of screens. Experts recommend setting strict limits on recreational screen time, encouraging physical activity, and promoting more interactive, educational content instead of passive entertainment.

It’s also crucial for parents to lead by example. Parents should prioritize physical activity and limit their own screen time to set a positive example for their children. Additionally, family routines that include outdoor play, sports, or active hobbies can help children develop healthy habits and maintain an active lifestyle.

In New Zealand, schools and communities are increasingly focusing on promoting healthy lifestyles, including providing opportunities for physical activity and educating children about healthy eating. However, it’s essential that these efforts are supported by families at home.

By implementing thoughtful and consistent rules around screen time, alongside encouraging physical activity and healthy eating, families can play a pivotal role in combating childhood obesity. In doing so, they can help ensure a healthier future for their children, both in New Zealand and around the world.

## Google Tests New Animation for AI Search Summaries

Google may be testing a fresh animation for its AI search summary feature, known as AI Overviews. The new animation, which replaces the previous blue lines shown while preparing a summary for a search query, introduces a more dynamic visual effect. Instead of the standard blue lines, users now see a roaming spotlight effect in blue and purple, which closely resembles the animation seen in Google’s Gemini AI assistant on Android and Gemini Live.

The discovery was first shared on December 28, 2024, by Reddit user Gaiden206, who posted a screenshot on the Bard subreddit, showcasing the new loading animation. The post quickly garnered attention, with several other users in the comments reporting that they, too, had noticed the updated animation. According to a report from 9to5Google, the animation is currently visible to a select group of users, but it has not been rolled out to everyone globally yet.

While the change is still being tested, the new animation adds an extra layer of interactivity and style to the AI search experience, making the wait for a query’s AI-generated summary feel less static. However, not all users are seeing the animation at this time, as it seems to be limited to a test phase. Gadgets 360 staff also noted that they could not verify the presence of the



new animation, suggesting that it is still in the early stages of testing.

The ongoing testing of new features like this highlights Google’s continued efforts to refine and enhance the AI search experience, offering users a more visually engaging and interactive way to receive information. As this animation continues to be tested, it remains to be seen whether it will be adopted widely for all users in the future.

## Why Disinfectants Can Never Promise 100% Germ Elimination

Have you ever wondered why disinfectants often claim to kill 99.9% or 99.99% of germs but never promise to eradicate all of them? In a world where science has made incredible advancements, it might seem surprising that a disinfectant can’t be 100% effective. The answer lies in a combination of microbiology and mathematics.

Disinfectants are substances used to kill or inactivate harmful microbes such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi on surfaces. While most microbes are harmless—and some even beneficial—a small number can cause illness.

Disinfection typically involves chemical agents, although physical methods like heat and UV light can also be used. However, it’s the mathematical pattern behind microbial elimination that explains why a disinfectant can never guarantee total



eradication. Microbial populations grow exponentially, meaning that a colony of 100 bacteria can double every hour, leading to a rapid increase in their numbers.

On the flip side, the process of killing or inactivating microbes follows a logarithmic decay pattern, which is the reverse of exponential growth. As disinfectants work, the number of surviving microbes

decreases, but the rate of death slows over time. For example, if a disinfectant kills 90% of bacteria every minute, after the first minute only 10% of the original population remains. After another minute, only 1% of the original population would remain, and so on.

This pattern of logarithmic decay is why it’s impossible to guarantee the death of every microbe. With each minute, fewer microbes remain, making it increasingly difficult to eliminate the last few. Therefore, disinfectants can only reduce microbial populations

by a fixed percentage, not entirely eliminate them.

In conclusion, while disinfectants are highly effective at reducing germs, the nature of microbial growth and decay means it’s not possible to ever claim 100% eradication. The 99.9% and 99.99% figures are a reflection of the science behind the process, not a failure of the products.



## Jasprit Bumrah Nominated for ICC Test Cricketer of the Year Award

India's star fast bowler, Jasprit Bumrah, has been nominated for the prestigious ICC Test Cricketer of the Year award. He is competing alongside England's Joe Root and Harry Brook, and Sri Lanka's Kamindu Mendis. Bumrah, who has been in sensational form in 2024, has taken 71 wickets from 13 matches at an average of 14.92 and a strike rate of 30.16, making him the top-performing bowler in Test cricket this year.

The ICC highlighted Bumrah's remarkable return to the Test arena after recovering from a recurring back injury in 2023. His exceptional performances in 2024 saw him finish the year with more wickets than any other bowler. Notably, his match-winning spells during India's tour of Australia, including his memorable efforts in Perth, were among his standout performances. His 30 wickets in just four matches during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy have cemented his place as the premier fast bowler of the year.

In addition to Bumrah, England's Joe Root is also nominated, having scored 1,556 runs in 17 Tests at an average



of 55.57. Root's stellar year included six centuries and five fifties, with a career-best 262 against Pakistan. His consistency with the bat made him one of the most dominant players of the year.

Harry Brook, another English cricketer, earned a spot in the shortlist with 1,100 runs from 12 Tests at an average of 55.00. Known for his aggressive batting, Brook scored four centuries, including a blistering 317, with the majority of his runs coming in overseas conditions.

Sri Lanka's Kamindu Mendis also had a standout year, scoring 1,049 runs from nine Tests at an impressive average of 74.92. Mendis became the joint-third quickest to reach 1,000 Test runs, equalling Sir Don Bradman's record with 13 innings. His twin centuries against New Zealand were among his most memorable performances.

These exceptional players will now vie for the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year honor, showcasing their outstanding contributions to the longest format of the game.

## Australia Clinch 184-Run Victory Over India in MCG Test, Lead Series 2-1

Australia stunned India by taking seven wickets in the final session of the fourth Test in Melbourne on Monday to win by 184 runs, taking a 2-1 lead in the five-match series. India, set an improbable 340 runs to win, collapsed to 155 all out with just 12.5 overs left in the match. With this loss, India now faces a must-win scenario in the final Test, starting on Friday in Sydney, if they hope to level the series and retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Australia's captain, Pat Cummins, was the standout performer, taking 3-28, including the crucial wicket of Yashasvi Jaiswal, who was India's top scorer with 84. Jaiswal's departure sparked a dramatic collapse as India's last seven wickets fell for just 34 runs in 20.3 overs. Despite India's solid middle-order partnership between Jaiswal and Rishabh Pant, who survived the second session to take the score to 112-3 at tea, the game turned when Pant was dismissed for 30. Pant was caught in the deep after an ill-advised shot off part-time spinner Travis Head.

The wickets of Ravindra Jadeja and Nitish Kumar Reddy followed shortly after, and Jaiswal was dismissed in controver-



sial fashion. The TV umpire overturned an initial not-out decision after reviewing a caught-behind appeal from an attempted hook, despite no sound being picked up by technology, as visual evidence suggested the ball had changed direction.

Scott Boland (3-39) removed Akash Deep, while Jasprit Bumrah registered his second duck of the match. Mohammed Siraj was the final wicket to fall, trapped lbw by Nathan Lyon (2-37).

Earlier, India's top order had struggled in the first session, with Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul, and Virat Kohli all falling for single-digit scores. Cummins rounded off an excellent Test match, finishing with six wickets and scoring 90 runs—his best batting performance in a Test series.

## Liverpool Thrash West Ham 5-0, Extend Premier League Lead to Eight Points



Liverpool extended their lead at the top of the Premier League with a dominant 5-0 victory over West Ham, opening up an eight-point gap in the race for the title. Goals from Luis Diaz, Cody Gakpo, Mohamed Salah, Trent Alexander-Arnold, and Diogo Jota sealed the commanding win at the London Stadium, as Liverpool ended 2024 as the favorites to secure their second league title in 35 years.

Despite the emphatic victory, Liverpool's manager, Arne Slot, reminded everyone that there's still a long way to go, with the team just one game short of the halfway point in the season. Slot, who took over from Jurgen Klopp, has now guided Liverpool to 23 wins in 27 matches across all competitions, and his managerial debut has been nothing short of impressive.

The Reds were relentless from the start, with Diaz breaking the deadlock in the 30th minute. His intended pass to Curtis Jones rebounded off a West Ham defender and fell kindly for the Colombian, who slot-

ted the ball into the corner. West Ham's Mohammed Kudus almost equalized but saw his effort strike the post.

Just before halftime, Liverpool put the game to bed with two quick-fire goals. Gakpo netted his ninth goal in 14 games, thanks to a brilliant turn and assist from Salah, before Salah himself curled a shot past Alphonse Areola to make it 3-0, reaching the 20-goal mark for the eighth consecutive season.

Alexander-Arnold added to the misery for West Ham with a thunderous strike that deflected in off Max Kilman, and Jota sealed the win with a fifth goal after a superb assist from Salah, who registered his 13th Premier League assist of the season.

Liverpool's dominance this season continues to shine, with speculation over the futures of Alexander-Arnold, Salah, and Virgil van Dijk failing to derail their title charge. Salah, focused on the team's success, emphasized that winning the league remains the top priority.

## Manchester Secures First Win in Five League Matches with 2-0 Victory Over Leicester

Manchester City secured a crucial 2-0 victory over Leicester City at King Power Stadium on Sunday, marking their first win in five Premier League matches. The victory, achieved in Pep Guardiola's 500th game in charge, was vital for the defending champions as they look to close the gap at the top of the Premier League.

The win was City's second in 14 games across all competitions, lifting them to fifth place in the standings with 31 points, 11 points behind leaders Liverpool, who have two games in hand. Leicester, on the other hand, remained in the relegation zone in 18th place, continuing their struggle in the league.

Savinho opened the scoring in the 21st



minute, giving City the lead.

Despite a relatively quiet first half from Haaland, the Norwegian striker extended City's lead in the 74th minute, scoring his second goal in eight league matches, marking a welcome return to form. Savinho, who had been involved in the first goal, provided a perfect looping cross to Haaland, who powered a header past Stolarczyk to seal the win.

The victory was much-needed for City, who had been struggling to find their rhythm in recent weeks. With this important three points, they will look to build momentum as they prepare for the challenges ahead in the Premier League and across other competitions.

## 29th All India Federation Cup Carrom Tournament 2025 Set to Kick Off in Nellore

TPN Correspondent

**Nellore, Dec 31:** The Andhra State Carrom Association (ASCA) and SPSR Nellore District Carrom Association are excited to announce the 29th All India Federation Cup Carrom Tournament 2025, scheduled to take place from January 5th to 8th, 2025, at the Nellore Club in Nellore.

Organized by the All India Carrom Federation (AICF), this prestigious tournament will feature top players from across the country, with teams representing 25 states and 10 institutions. Each team will comprise four male and four female players, alongside their respective coaches and managers.

Among the top contenders are K. Srinivas from Telangana and Rashmi Kumari from New Delhi, both of whom will represent PSPB. Srinivas, the reigning World Champion, will compete alongside M. Khazima from Tamil Nadu, who recently claimed the women's singles title at the 6th Carrom World Cup in the USA. Other members of the Indian team from the World Cup will also be participating in the tournament.

From Andhra Pradesh, notable players



such as top seeds Ch. Janardhan Reddy (Men) and MSK Harika (Women) will be representing the state with hopes of securing victory in their respective categories.

The tournament will feature four events: Men's Singles, Men's Doubles, Women's Singles, and Women's Doubles, all following a knockout format. As an AICF ranking tournament, the points earned here will be crucial for the selection of the Indian national team, alongside other ranking tournaments.

The host district and Nellore Club have made exceptional arrangements to ensure a smooth and memorable event. Participants from various states will benefit from free boarding and lodging through-

out the tournament. ASCA has a strong history of organizing national carrom tournaments, having hosted five prestigious events in recent years, and remains committed to promoting the game and supporting its players.

The tournament will be graced by the presence of Mr. Josef Meyer, President of the International Carrom Federation, who will attend to witness the exciting competition. Key matches will be streamed live by SYNCO, the official equipment manufacturer.

The 29th All India Federation Cup Carrom Tournament promises to be an unforgettable event, showcasing the best carrom talent from across India. Fans and enthusiasts are eagerly anticipating the action that will unfold this January in Nellore.

Neeraj Kumar Sampathy  
Senior Vice President,  
Andhra State Carrom Association

SK Abdul Jaleel  
President, All India Carrom Federation  
General Secretary, Andhra State Carrom Association



## Year of Controversies For Telugu Film Industry

The Telugu film industry experienced a stormy year, with scandals and tragedies dominating the headlines and leaving fans in shock. A controversy involving actor Raj Tarun and Lavanya grabbed attention when Lavanya accused actress Malvi Malhotra and popular RJ Shekhar Bhasha of cheating her. While the scandal initially caused a stir, it gradually faded from the spotlight. Minister Konda Surekha sparked controversy with comments on actress Samantha and Naga Chaitanya's divorce. Her remarks provoked sharp reactions from Samantha and the Akkineni family, leading Nagarjuna to file a defamation case against her. Adding to the tension, the demolition of Nagarjuna's N Convention Center for alleged encroachments became a hot topic.

Choreographer Johnny Master faced serious allegations of sexual harassment by his assistant. Arrested and later released on bail, he saw his national award revoked, and his membership in the Dance Masters Association was canceled, marking a significant fall from grace.

Senior actor Mohan Babu's family dispute escalated dramatically when his son, Manoj, accused him of issuing threats. When journalists arrived at Manoj's invitation, Mohan Babu allegedly attacked a reporter, resulting in injuries and an attempt-to-murder



case being registered against him. Actress Kasturi faced backlash for her remarks about the Telugu people, leading to her arrest by Chennai police. She was later released on bail. Meanwhile, actress Hema was arrested at a Bengaluru rave party, where she reportedly spent years in jail, drawing significant media attention.

A devastating stampede occurred at Sandhya Theater during a benefit show for Pushpa 2, attended by actor Allu Arjun. The incident claimed the life of a woman named Revathi and left her son, Sreetej, critically injured. Allu Ar-

jun was arrested in connection with the tragedy but has since been released on bail.

Controversial filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma found himself in hot water over provocative social media posts during elections. Although he evaded arrest for years, court intervention eventually provided him relief.

From personal disputes to professional challenges and tragic incidents, the year left an indelible mark on the Telugu film industry, exposing the highs and lows of its celebrated members.

## Pawan Kalyan to Grace 'Game Changer' Pre-Release Event as Chief Guest

On a bustling Monday morning, Tollywood producer Dil Raju met with Andhra Pradesh Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan at his Mangalagiri camp office, sparking a wave of excitement across social media. The meeting has led to confirmed reports that Pawan Kalyan will attend the highly anticipated pre-release event of Dil Raju's upcoming film \*Game Changer\*, starring Ram Charan.



While the event's exact location and date are yet to be confirmed by the producer, sources indicate that the pre-release event is likely to take place in Rajahmundry on January 4 or 5, 2025. Fans are eagerly anticipating the chance to see Pawan Kalyan and Ram Charan share the stage, fueling speculation that other prominent members of the Mega family might also make appearances. Official details about the event are expected to be announced soon.

\*Game Changer\* is a pan-Indian political drama that has garnered a lot of buzz due to its star-studded cast and gripping

storyline. Alongside Ram Charan, the film features Kiara Advani, Anjali, SJ Suryah, Naveen Chandra, and Srikanth in key roles. Directed by Shankar, the film has already generated significant anticipation and is slated for a grand release on January 10, 2025.

Fans are excited not only about the film's release but also about the upcoming pre-release event, which is expected to draw huge crowds and media attention. With Pawan Kalyan's involvement, the event is sure to become a memorable occasion for fans of both the actor and the Mega family.

## India's Biggest OTT Franchise 'The Family Man' Wraps Up Production for Season 3

The Family Man on Amazon Prime Video has become one of India's most successful OTT shows, significantly boosting Manoj Bajpayee's career. With the series garnering immense popularity, Bajpayee now has nearly ten films lined up for release in the next two years. Fans of the show have been eagerly awaiting the third season, and the latest update reveals that production has officially wrapped up in Mumbai.

Season 3 of The Family Man promises to be an exciting chapter, with new developments that are sure to intrigue the audience. One of the most anticipated aspects of this season is the introduction of Jaideep Ahlawat in a negative role. Ahlawat, who has earned praise for his performances in acclaimed shows like Paatal Lok and Bard of Blood, as well as films like Raees and Jaane Jaan, is expected to bring a fresh dynamic to the series. His involvement has sparked significant buzz, and his character's role is already one of the most talked-about elements of the upcoming season.

Additionally, Sundeep Kishan, another talented actor, will make a cameo appearance in the third season, further adding to the star-studded cast. Directed by the dynamic duo Raj and DK, The Family Man 3 is set to continue its legacy of gripping



storytelling, combining action, suspense, and emotional depth.

The show's success has made it one of the leading names in Indian OTT content, and as the production wraps up, anticipation for the new season is at an all-time high. As The Family Man 3 is poised for release in 2025, fans are eagerly awaiting the continuation of the thrilling journey of Manoj Bajpayee's character, Shrikant Tiwari, and the evolving plot that promises to captivate audiences once again.

## Preity Mukhundhan's First Look as Princess Nemali in 'Kannappa' Unveiled

The much-anticipated historical and mythological film Kannappa, produced by the Manchu family, has released its first look of actress Preity Mukhundhan, who plays the role of "Nemali", the Princess of Spoons. This film is being touted as one of the most prestigious projects in the Manchu family's filmography, with a budget of around Rs. 100 crores. Kannappa is helmed by Mukesh Kumar Singh, known for his work on the Mahabharata serial, and stars Manchu Vishnu in the lead role.



her character as "Natural in beauty, Courage in desperation, Abnormal in love, Ecstasy in devotion... Everything to Kannappa."

Kannappa features an ensemble cast that includes prominent stars from the Telugu, Bollywood, and Kollywood industries, including Prabhas, making it a multi-industry collaboration. The film's story weaves a historical and mythological narrative, adding a deep layer of intrigue to its production. As the Manchu family works tirelessly on this dream project amid personal and professional challenges, Kannappa is poised to captivate audiences with its grandeur and the depth of its characters.

With the first look of Preity Mukhundhan as Nemali receiving positive attention, fans are eagerly awaiting the release of the film, anticipating her captivating performance alongside a stellar cast in this epic tale.

In the film, Preity Mukhundhan plays the role of Ishtasakhi, a significant character known as the princess of spoons, who has a strong devotion to the legendary character Kannappa. Her character is described as a unique blend of beauty, courage, and devotion, with an intense love for Kannappa that sets her apart. Preity shared her excitement over the role, describing



The much-anticipated film \*Sankranthiki Vasthunnam\*, directed by Anil Ravipudi and starring Venkatesh, is all set to hit theaters on January 14, 2025, just in time for the Pongal celebrations. The film, which also features Meenakshi Chaudhary and Aishwarya Rajesh in pivotal roles, is generating buzz ahead of its grand release.

In a bid to further raise excitement, the makers have unveiled the third single from the movie titled \*Blockbuster Pongal\*. This lively and festive track, released today, is designed to get audiences into the celebratory mood

for the festival. The song is a special collaboration featuring Venkatesh, who not only stars in the film but also lends his voice alongside singer Rohini Soratt. The music for the track has been composed by Bheems Ceciroleo, who infuses the song with energetic beats that perfectly match the festive tone of Pongal.

The \*Blockbuster Pongal\* song beautifully encapsulates the spirit of the Sankranthi festival, with vibrant visuals and catchy rhythms. It showcases exciting dance performances by the lead actors, Venkatesh, Aishwarya



## Ram Charan to Appear on Balakrishna's 'Unstoppable' for the First Time in Season 4

Nandamuri Balakrishna's popular OTT talk show Unstoppable has quickly become a go-to platform for film promotions, with its candid conversations and engaging discussions about upcoming films drawing significant attention. The show's unique format, where Balayya shares lively talks with his celebrity guests, has made it a fan favorite. Now, Unstoppable is set to welcome a star of the highest caliber, as Ram Charan is all set to make his debut appearance on the show.

Ram Charan will shoot for a special episode of Unstoppable Season 4 tomorrow, marking his first-ever appearance on the show. The episode is expected to be one of the standout moments of the season, and fans are eagerly anticipating the Mega-Nandamuri crossover. Charan and Balayya share a strong camaraderie, which was evident during a previous telephonic conversation when Pawan Kalyan appeared on the show in Season 3. Their easy rapport promises an entertaining and candid interaction during the upcoming episode.

The episode will likely feature discussions on a variety of topics, including their respective upcoming films. Both Charan and Balakrishna are set to release highly anticipated films during the Sankranthi season. Charan's Game Changer, slated for release on January 10, will go head-to-head with Balayya's Daaku Maharaaj, which releases on January 12. This adds an interesting layer to the episode, as the duo may discuss their films and the exciting prospects for this festive season at length.

Fans are eagerly awaiting this unique Mega-Nandamuri encounter, and the upcoming episode of Unstoppable is expected to be one of the most talked-about episodes in the show's history. Stay tuned for what promises to be a fascinating and entertaining discussion between two of Tollywood's biggest stars.

## Blockbuster Pongal song from Sankranthiki Vasthunnam brings instant festive energy

Rajesh, and Meenakshi Chaudhary, adding to the song's festive charm. The mass dance moves and colorful settings bring an extra layer of energy, making it a perfect anthem for the celebrations.

Produced by Dil Raju under the Sri Venkateswara Creations banner, \*Sankranthiki Vasthunnam\* has already piqued interest with its well-executed promotional campaign. With the release date approaching, fans are eagerly awaiting the film's launch to experience this festive entertainer on the big screen.