




Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
 H 33° C L 25° C	 H 35° C L 26° C	 H 36° C L 26° C



Did Narayana's Interests Shape AP Govt's Move to Scrap 1st Year Inter Exams?

G Avinash | TPN
Amaravati | Jan 12

The Andhra Pradesh government's decision to abolish 1st Year Intermediate exams has ignited widespread discussions, with critics questioning the policy's intent and its potential repercussions on the education sector. The proposal, initially led by a senior IAS officer, has drawn mixed reactions, particularly over alleged influences from private education giants.

Genesis of the Policy

The move stemmed from a review led by an IAS officer tasked with evaluating disparities in Intermediate education. During the review, concerns were raised about private institutions like Narayana and Chaitanya monopolizing high-achieving students from the 10th standard, while government colleges often enrolled those with lower grades. This imbalance, the officer argued, led to a stark contrast in educational outcomes between private and government institutions.

An employee of the Intermediate board shared that Education Minister Lokesh, seeking expert insights, directed the IAS officer to meet Minister Narayana, a key figure in the education sector with extensive business interests in Plus 2 institutions. Following the meeting, Minister Narayana arranged for the IAS officer to consult with deans from prominent private colleges, further shaping the proposal to scrap 1st Year Inter exams and introduce new regulations.

Benefiting Private Giants?

Critics are questioning the heavy involvement of private sector representatives in shaping a public education policy. With Minister Narayana himself linked to the education business, some argue the policy might favor established players like Narayana and Chaitanya, enabling them to strengthen their dominance in the sector.

Smaller and medium-range colleges, already struggling to compete, could face severe challenges under the new framework, potentially exacerbating the existing monopoly in Intermediate education. Does this policy prioritize the interests of private institutions over the broader goal of equitable education?

While some see the policy as a step toward reform, others believe it threatens to deepen the divide between private and government institutions. "The IAS officer's proposal had noble intentions to address systemic gaps, but the involvement of private deans and Minister Narayana has raised concerns about biases," said a source familiar with the discussions.

A Threat to Educational Equity?

Many stakeholders worry that abolishing 1st Year Inter exams could lower standards in government colleges while benefiting larger private chains already equipped with resources to adapt quickly. Some inner circles are even calling this a "death note" for smaller colleges struggling to compete in a market dominated by big players.

The Education Department must address these concerns transparently to assure the public of its commitment to equitable education. Is this decision a genuine attempt to reform the Intermediate education system, or has it been influenced by vested interests? The government's ability to manage this controversy will determine the policy's true impact on the state's education landscape.

CM Naidu Announces Release of ₹6,700 Crore Pending Dues



TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh | Jan 12

In a significant move on the occasion of Sankranti, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has announced the green signal for the release of thousands of crores, benefiting various sections of society, including students, police, government employees, and small contractors. This decision is seen as a festive gift aimed at alleviating financial burdens and promoting development across the state.

According to Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav, CM Chandrababu has approved the release of pending funds amounting to Rs. 6,700 crore. During a review meet-

ing at the Chief Minister's residence in Undavalli, CM Chandrababu discussed the status of the finance department and instructed the release of several key dues. The key announcements include Rs. 519 crore for government employees under the General Provident Fund (GPF), Rs. 214 crore for police officers' surrender leave arrears, Rs. 300 crore for the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS), and Rs. 265 crore under Tax Deducted at Source (TDS), bringing a total of Rs. 1,300 crore in payments to employees. Additionally, Rs. 788 crore is being released to six and a half lakh students under the fee reimbursement scheme.

The government will also release Rs. 586

crore to 26,000 small contractors with bills under Rs. 10 lakh, and Rs. 241 crore in rent arrears to Amaravati farmers. Further, Rs. 100 crore will benefit 6,000 small traders, while Rs. 500 crore each will be allocated to NTR medical services and the power department.

Minister Payyavula Keshav highlighted that the government is committed to clearing the dues of Rs. 10 lakh crore left behind by the previous administration under former CM Jagan Mohan Reddy, aiming to steer the state back onto a path of progress. This announcement signals a focused effort to revitalize development in Andhra Pradesh, which had stagnated during the YSRCP regime.

Dy CM Pawan Kalyan Expresses Happiness Over the Green Co Solar Park Project

TPN Correspondent
Kurnool | Jan 12

Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Pawan Kalyan, visited the Green Co Solar Park in Orvakallu, Kurnool district, where he expressed his excitement about the scale of the project. After viewing the park from a helicopter and inspecting it on the ground, Pawan Kalyan shared his joy that such a massive and integrated project is being developed in the state.

He praised the Green Co company for its strong international reputation in the solar power sector and noted that the company is investing a total of Rs. 1.5 lakh crore across India, with Rs. 35,000 crore allocated for Andhra Pradesh alone. Pawan Kalyan highlighted the vast employment opportunities the project will generate for local



people and emphasized that this kind of project will be a first of its kind in the country.

While discussing the project's development, he mentioned a minor issue between the Revenue and Forest Departments over land allocation but reassured that efforts are being made to resolve the matter with the support of the Center. He also expressed his hope that the project would eventually



become a key tourist destination and bring recognition not just to Kurnool and the state, but to the entire nation. In addition to the project's potential economic benefits, Pawan Kalyan encouraged the company to engage in various social welfare activities, including educational programs, organic farming, and the promotion of cattle farming, through its CSR initiatives.

Water Resource Panel Reviews Polavaram Project Status

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh | Jan 12

A 15-member parliamentary standing committee on water resources arrived in Andhra Pradesh on Friday to assess the progress of the Polavaram project, a major irrigation initiative on the Godavari River. The committee, led by BJP MP and former Union Minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy, is accompanied by 27 senior officials from the Union Jal Shakti Ministry, including representatives from the Central Water Commission (CWC) and the Polavaram

Project Authority (PPA).

The committee's visit comes as the state government prepares to resume work on the construction of the diaphragm wall (D-wall), a critical component of the project. The state government has revised designs and materials for the D-wall after extensive consultations with domestic and international experts. They are awaiting final clearance from the CWC to begin this work, which is considered the most challenging aspect of the Polavaram project.

A senior official from the state irrigation department stated that the committee's visit is timely, as the state is prepared to restart the D-wall construction. The committee will review the reasons for the delays in the project, particularly the extensive damages caused by the August 2020 floods to the previously constructed D-wall and cofferdams, as well as breaches to the guide bund. During their tour, the committee will address the key concerns impacting the project's progress.





Strengthening Security and Governance

The Case for a National Temple Force and Union Territory Status for Tirumala

By Dr. Buragadda Srinadh

The tragic loss of lives during pilgrimages has emerged as a national concern, highlighting the urgent need to implement robust security measures. The establishment of a national temple security force, akin to the Central Industrial Security Force, could be a vital step in safeguarding pilgrims and ensuring their safety during visits to sacred sites.



One significant issue contributing to the crisis is the ongoing space crunch at pilgrimage sites, which has been exacerbated by encroachment from state governments for electoral gains and by unauthorized individuals. The lack of effective control over these areas calls for the introduction of central laws similar to those that protect defense and forest lands. These laws could help preserve the integrity of pilgrimage spaces and prevent their misuse.

To address these challenges, it may be beneficial to involve paramilitary forces in securing pilgrimage sites, drawing from the rigorous protocols employed at airports. Such measures would not only enhance security but also protect the sanctity of religious offerings, ultimately restoring public trust in the administration's ability to ensure the safety of both the sites and their visitors. In addition to bolstering security, one potential solution to the governance challenges at pilgrimage

sites is to designate Tirumala as a Union Territory. This change could lead to a more direct and accountable administration, free from the political influence that has hindered efficient management. The move would provide a transparent and effective governance model, ensuring resources are allocated fairly and used appropriately, without local political pressures distorting priorities. Over recent decades, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has been a focal point for political debate, particularly regarding allegations of misappropriation of funds meant for the upkeep of the temple. These accusations, often tied to the political appointment of board members, have resulted in a lack of accountability, creating a cycle of disputes that diverts attention from the essential need for reform. The situation demands a comprehensive approach that addresses not only security concerns but also governance and accountability issues. Exploring alternative solutions, such as making Tirumala a Union Territory, could lead to a more responsible management framework. This change, coupled with stronger security measures, would help ensure that pilgrimage sites are effectively governed and protected, providing a safer and more transparent experience for all devotees.

Nara Lokesh Thanks CM Chandrababu for On Good News to Students

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh | Jan 12

State Education Minister Nara Lokesh expressed his gratitude to Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu for his decision to release pending dues for students, a move that has been warmly received by the education sector. CM Chandrababu announced on Saturday that a total of Rs. 6,700 crore in dues would be paid, including Rs. 788 crore specifically earmarked for student fee reimbursements. Minister Lokesh praised the CM's initiative, emphasizing that this de-



cision fulfills promises made to students who had been affected by previous administrations. He referred to the action as a "Sankranti gift" for the students of Andhra Pradesh, further noting that the government was committed to paying the arrears in stages to ensure that students could continue their education without hindrance. Lokesh also expressed his appreciation for CM Chandrababu, acknowledging that the Chief Minister's decision was a positive step towards justice, as opposed to the previous government's neglect of student welfare.

Graduation Ceremony Held at Sricity Triple IT; ISRO Chairman Dr. S. Somnath Delivers Online Address

C. Sekhar | TPN
Tirupati, Jan 12

The graduation ceremony for the year 2024 was held on Saturday at Sricity Triple IT, where a total of 298 students were awarded degrees by IIIT-Sricity Director Professor M.V. Karthikeyan. The event was presided over virtually by IIIT-Sricity Chairperson Dr. Sridhar Vembu, Founder and CEO of Zoho Corporation Private Limited, while ISRO Chairman Dr. S. Somnath participated online as the chief guest. Sricity Chairman Srini Raju, Managing Director Dr. Ravindra Sannareddy, Caterpillar Technology Vice President Bhuvan Anandakrishnan, A.W. S. India Chief Technologist Shalini Kapoor, and other senators were also present. Professor Karthikeyan presented the annual report for 2023-24, highlighting the institution's achievements in education, research, and sports. He emphasized the importance of providing students with modern skills through hackathons, workshops, and winter schools, with the goal of enhancing technological proficiency and building



a strong educational foundation for the students' futures. Dr. Sridhar Vembu congratulated the graduates and urged them to rise beyond knowledge acquisition to contribute to society and the country's development. He inspired them to pursue the goals of "Viksit Bharat 2047" while sharpening their professional skills. In his address, Dr. Somnath highlighted six essential qualities for success: interest, commitment, proficiency, determination, concentration, and the ability to learn. He stressed the importance of humility, honesty, and integrity in both professional and personal life. Dr. Somnath expressed hope for future

collaborations between IIIT-Sricity and ISRO, suggesting the establishment of a joint research department, and encouraged graduates to contribute their best to society's progress. At the ceremony, five PhDs, two M.S., two M.Tech., and 289 B.Tech degrees were awarded. Modapa Mohan Saikrishna (Computer Science) and Dacharla Sreeja (Electronics & Communication) were honored with gold medals for their exceptional performance. The ceremony allowed graduates to reconnect with teachers and friends, reflecting on their journey, leaving a lasting impression on everyone present.

Health Minister Inaugurates New Facility at Akividu CHC

TPN Correspondent
Akividu | Jan 12

Honorable Minister for Health, Shri Satya Kumar Yadav, inaugurated a newly constructed facility at the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Akividu, marking a significant milestone in improving healthcare services in the region.



The new facility includes a state-of-the-art kidney dialysis center, established at a cost of over ₹50 lakhs. In addition, ₹15 lakhs were utilized for revamping the old building and enhancing the premises with gardening works, completed with generous contributions from the public.

Minister Yadav commended the efforts of the community and expressed his gratitude to the

main donor, Dr. Datla Satyanarayana Raju, for his invaluable contribution to the dialysis center. He emphasized the importance of public participation in strengthening healthcare infrastructure and highlighted the government's commitment to providing accessible and quality healthcare to all.

The upgraded CHC is expected to serve patients from Akividu and surrounding areas, significantly easing the burden on nearby hospitals. Local residents and healthcare staff lauded the initiative, expressing optimism about the improved medical services at the center.

Minister Kandula Durgesh Participates in Sankranti Celebrations in Vijjeswaram Village

TPN Correspondent
Nidadavolu | Jan 12

Minister Kandula Durgesh and District Collector P. Prashanti participated in the Sankranti celebrations held in Vijjeswaram village of Nidadavolu mandal. The event saw the inauguration of a mini Gokulam, with both the Minister and Collector performing traditional pujas to the cow and planting saplings as part of the rural cultural traditions that mark the Sankranti festival.



In addition, Minister Durgesh engaged in the agricultural activities of the region by planting paddy in the fields, symbolizing the connection between the village and its agricultural heritage. The celebrations continued with Minister Durgesh and Collector Prashanti lighting the bonfires in the traditional manner, accompanied by

the villagers. As part of the festivities, Minister Durgesh also climbed onto a decorated bullock cart, taking part in the cultural procession by pulling the cart through the village, further engaging with the local traditions.

Sri YN College Platinum Jubilee Celebrations Conclude with Alumni Reunion

TPN Correspondent
Vizianagaram | Jan 12

The second phase of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations of Sri YN College concluded on a grand note, with Vijayanagaram MP Sri Kalisetty Appalanayudu gracing the occasion as the chief guest. The event brought together alumni from across the globe for a heartfelt reunion, marking 75 years of the institution's legacy.



Dr. Chinamilli Satyanarayana Rao, Secretary of the college, expressed pride in the institution's illustrious alumni, who have excelled in various fields worldwide. Reflecting on the college's journey, he highlighted its relentless efforts to provide quality education and facilities that foster holistic student development. He also acknowledged the contributions and generous donations from alumni toward the college's progress.

Vice President Sri Ponnappalli Sreeramarao emphasized the enduring importance of the guru-shishya relationship, attributing the institution's success to the collective efforts of

its educators and alumni.

Tech Mahindra Vice President and alumnus M. Nagarajuna credited the college for his achievements, stating, "I'm at this level today because of this college." He pledged his support for the college's future endeavors. Similarly, Palanki Subbarayan, former President of the NGO and Pensioners' Association, also vowed to support the institution's growth.

Dr. P.G. Ramanujam, Principal of Rajamahen-

dravaram GIET College and an alumnus of Sri YN College, shared his nostalgia, recalling his time as part of the first MBA batch. "This college gave me a good life," he said, expressing gratitude for its role in shaping his career.

Chief Guest MP Sri Appalanayudu Kalisetty lauded the college for its cultural and educational excellence, likening its impact to that of doctors saving lives. He urged stakeholders to continue their contributions to the college's development and assured his support through funds from the MP Local Area Development Scheme.

The event was attended by key dignitaries, including Vice Presidents Sri P. Sreerama Rao and Sri P. Sree Raghurama Rao, Principal Dr. Ch. Kanakarao, PG Director Dr. N. Chintarao, and several members of the college governing body. Notable alumni, including Sri Y. Sivaji, Sri Seethayya, Sri Nagarajuna, and Sri S. Srinivas, were also present, making the occasion a memorable celebration of Sri YN College's enduring legacy.

AP Govt Good News for Cabinet Rank Officials

TPN Correspondent
Andhra Pradesh | Jan 12

The coalition government in Andhra Pradesh has provided good news for those with cabinet rank. It has decided to increase the salaries and allowances of individuals in these positions. From next month, those with cabinet rank will receive a salary of Rs. 2 lakh from the government. In addition to the salary, a one-time grant will be released for the provision of office furniture. Furthermore, the government has approved an additional Rs. 2.50 lakh for allowances and other facilities, including the hiring of per-



sonal support staff. With these changes, those in cabinet rank will now receive a total of Rs. 4.50 lakh per month. This decision has been met with enthusiasm, and officials in cabinet rank are expressing their satisfaction with the government's support.

JC Prabhakar Reddy Issues Stern Warning Against Encroachments in Anantapur



TPN Correspondent, Anantapur | Jan 12 : Tadipatri Municipal Chairman JC Prabhakar Reddy has issued a strong warning to those responsible for encroachments in the Yadiki mandal center of Anantapur district. Speaking firmly, he declared that illegal structures built on the temple pond in Yadiki will not be tolerated and will be demolished using JCBs.

Expressing anger over the encroachments, JC Prabhakar Reddy criticized the illegal activities that have taken place over the past five years. He urged those involved to provide valid records for their claims. "If you have the necessary records, bring them forward. Without proper documentation, no one will be spared, regardless of party affiliation," he said.

His remarks created a stir among coalition leaders, as the warning highlighted the administration's determination to address encroachments without favoritism. JC Prabhakar Reddy emphasized that the preservation of public spaces and natural resources like the temple pond is a priority, and strict action will be taken against violators. This move reflects the municipal chairman's commitment to restoring order and ensuring accountability in the region.

Roja Demands Case Against Chandrababu, Criticizes Inaction Over Tirupati Stampede

TPN Correspondent, Andhra Pradesh | Jan 12 : YCP leader and former minister Roja has once again strongly reacted to the Tirupati stampede incident, accusing Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu of attempting to evade responsibility. She demanded that a case be registered against Chandrababu, the district SP, and the TTD Governing Council members, holding them accountable for the tragic incident. Roja called on the courts to take suo motu cognizance of the matter and initiate legal action.



Roja questioned why, despite several days having passed since the incident, no cases have been registered against those responsible. She criticized the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister for allegedly protecting those accountable for the tragedy, accusing them of disregarding the lives of devotees. "Don't you know that lakhs of devotees visit for Vaikuntha Ekadashi?" she asked.

The YCP leader further questioned why the token system, blamed for the chaos, has not been removed even seven months into the coalition government's tenure. She accused the government of diverting attention from the issue by merely discussing the token system without taking action.

Roja also took aim at Jana Sena Party chief Pawan Kalyan, accusing him of confusing people with his statements. Referring to his recent comments about Allu Arjun, she pointed out that Pawan did not visit the families of two people who died during the 'Game Changer' event. Additionally, Roja criticized BJP state president Daggubati Purandeswari for remaining silent on the stampede and condemned recent comments made by Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy as "despicable." She demanded immediate accountability and action to ensure such tragedies are not repeated.

Roja's sharp remarks come amidst mounting criticism of the government's handling of the incident, further intensifying the political discourse around the tragedy.

YS Sharmila Accuses BJP of Misusing Institutions, Calls for Justice and Equality

TPN Correspondent, Vijayawada | Jan 12 : In Vijayawada, YS Sharmila criticized the BJP, accusing it of politicizing religion and caste for its own gain. She alleged that the BJP has taken control of key government institutions like the CBI and ED and is misusing them for selfish interests. "They are conspiring to turn the entire country saffron, moving away from non-violence and towards a path of violence," Sharmila remarked.

She accused the BJP of distorting history by portraying Mahatma Gandhi as a villain and glorifying those who killed him. "It has become a habit for the BJP to attack churches and mosques and spread lies, even targeting Ambedkar," she added. Sharmila highlighted the significance of Ambedkar in shaping a just society, cred-

iting him for the Constitution, and expressed dismay over the ridicule he faced in Parliament. "If there is justice and equality in society today, it is because of Ambedkar," she emphasized, accusing the BJP of belittling Dalits and failing to fulfill its promise on caste enumeration.

She claimed that in Andhra Pradesh, BJP is synonymous with Chandrababu Naidu, Jagan Mohan Reddy, and Pawan Kalyan. "Despite the BJP's injustices to the state, these three remain silent," she criticized. Sharmila called for the BJP to apologize for insulting Ambedkar and vowed that the Congress would continue to fight for the implementation of the Constitution and the protection of justice and equality in society.



Margani Bharat Criticizes TTD and Chandrababu, Demands Accountability for Tirupati Tragedy



TPN Correspondent, Andhra Pradesh | Jan 12 : YSRCP official spokesperson and Former MP Margani Bharat described the loss of seven lives in the Tirupati stampede as a tragedy and a clear failure of governance. He expressed outrage over the mismanagement by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) officials, stating that devotees who came for to-

kens were locked in a park without basic facilities like drinking water. "They couldn't manage a crowd of just 4,000-5,000 people," he said.

Bharat criticized the TTD EO and Chairman for arguing in front of the Chief Minister instead of addressing the crisis. "I don't understand whether this is a temple or a political party office," he remarked. He also questioned Chandrababu Naidu's experience in handling crowds, recalling the Rajahmundry Pushkaram tragedy where 29 people died due to what he termed "Chandrababu's campaign madness." He alleged that such tragic incidents have frequently occurred in programs linked to Chandrababu.

Bharat condemned TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu for dismissing the need to apologize, quoting him as saying, "Will those

who died return if I apologize?" Bharat criticized this statement as reflective of the government's disregard for human lives. He pointed out that such incidents never occurred during Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's tenure.

Calling for accountability, Bharat demanded a Supreme Court Justice-led inquiry into the incident and urged the resignation of the entire TTD board. He alleged that obstacles were created when opposition leaders attempted to visit the victims.

Additionally, Bharat accused the government of threatening businessmen and extorting large sums of money. "Should industries be supported or driven out?" he questioned, highlighting the adverse impact on the state's business environment. Bharat's statements further intensified the call for justice and accountability in the aftermath of the Tirupati tragedy.

CPI State Secretary Ramakrishna Demands Apology from Amit Shah for Insulting Ambedkar

TPN Correspondent, Vijayawada | Jan 12 : In Vijayawada, CPI State Secretary K. Ramakrishna strongly condemned Union Home Minister Amit Shah for allegedly insulting Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Parliament. Ramakrishna demanded that Amit Shah issue a public apology for his remarks and called for continued protests until his resignation.

Criticizing the BJP, Ramakrishna accused the party of disrespecting freedom fighters and undermining the values enshrined in the Constitution. "Ambedkar's Constitution has given rights to everyone today. Yet, the BJP, which claims to respect national figures, has no real regard for freedom fighters like Mahatma Gandhi and Ambedkar," he stated.

He drew comparisons between Veer Savarkar, whom he described as a "person who surrendered to the British," and Mahatma Gandhi, who "fought relentlessly until India gained independence." Ramakrishna alleged that the BJP is misleading the public with Modi's "deceptive words and lies."

Highlighting the BJP's alleged misuse of power, he accused the party of filing cases against opposition leaders to suppress



dissent. "The BJP is killing the sovereignty of the people and fostering communalism," Ramakrishna remarked.

Ramakrishna also criticized Andhra Pradesh leaders, claiming that despite Ambedkar being the foundation for the political opportunities they have enjoyed, they have failed to defend him. "Chandrababu Naidu, Pawan Kalyan, and Jagan Mohan Reddy have not uttered a single word in protest. They bow before

Modi, even when injustice is done to Andhra Pradesh," he said.

Calling the situation in Andhra Pradesh unique and deeply troubling, Ramakrishna emphasized that major political parties in the state are unable to condemn even direct insults to Ambedkar. He reiterated his demand for an apology from Amit Shah, asserting that the CPI would continue its struggle to uphold the values of justice and equality.

Bhumana Questions Pawan Kalyan's Intentions, Criticizes Anam's Comments on Tirupati Incident

TPN Correspondent, Andhra Pradesh | Jan 12 : YCP leader Bhumana Karunakar Reddy strongly criticized Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan for his actions during Former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's visit to Tirupati. Speaking about the hospital visit to meet the injured victims of the stampede, Bhumana questioned why Pawan remained at the hospital for so long, even though he knew Jagan was scheduled to arrive. She alleged that

this was an intentional act to hinder Jagan's visit. "Wasn't this a deliberate attempt to obstruct Jagan from entering the hospital? Isn't it true that there was a conspiracy to prevent him from meeting the injured?" she asked. Bhumana also criticized the blocking of Jagan's arrival, claiming that tractors were deliberately placed to delay him. She questioned whether basic security protocols for a former Chief Minister were even consid-

ered. She condemned Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy's controversial statement that financial assistance was distributed to the victims before Jagan's arrival to insult the government. "Such allegations are despicable and evidence of dirty politics," Bhumana stated. Bhumana demanded proof of Anam's claims, challenging him to either substantiate the allegations or resign from his ministerial post.

He expressed outrage that police and officials allegedly delayed access to the hospital for Jagan until his scheduled arrival. Highlighting the seriousness of the situation, Bhumana emphasized that the focus should be on supporting the victims and ensuring justice rather than engaging in political blame games. His remarks have added to the ongoing political debate surrounding the Tirupati stampede and its aftermath.



Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan Promotes Literature at 35th Vijayawada Book Festival

TPN Correspondent , Vijayawada, Jan 12 : Honorable Deputy Chief Minister Shri K. Pawan Kalyan, known for his passion for reading, attended the 35th Vijayawada Book Festival organized by the Book Exhibition Society. The festival featured 72 diverse stalls, showcasing an extensive range of literary and educational resources.



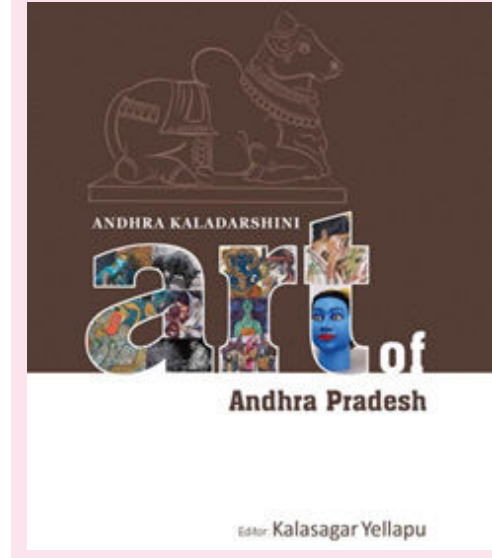
The Deputy CM's visit was marked by his acquisition of a large order of books, spending Rs. 10 lakhs of his own funds. These books are intended for the library in his Pithapuram constituency, demonstrating his commitment to fostering a reading culture. Notably, in preparation for his visit, stalls were opened two hours earlier than usual at his request, highlighting his genuine interest in supporting the festival.

Among the stalls, the "Speaking Tree" by Little Brains School stood out for its creative presentation. Shri Pawan Kalyan personally congratulated Phani Prasad, the school principal, for their innovative approach to encouraging reading among students.

Artist Kala Sagara's masterpiece, Art of AP, chronicling the history of 250 prominent artists from Andhra

Pradesh, garnered significant attention for its detailed documentation of the state's artistic heritage. Another notable work by Kala Sagara, Best 100 YouTubers, was also well-received. The Deputy CM acquired a copy of the latter as part of his collection. Those interested in Kala Sagara's works can contact him at 9885289995 for further information.

Shri Pawan Kalyan's large-scale pur-



chase of books from the Vijayawada Book Festival, intended for his Pithapuram constituency, underscores his dedication to promoting education

and literature. His participation added significance to the event, inspiring many to explore the world of books.

We Will Organize Gunadala Mary Mata Festivals in a Grand Manner - MP Kesineni Sivanath



TPN Correspondent, Vijayawada | Jan 12 : Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath (Chinni) assured that the Gunadala Mary Mata festivals, scheduled for February 9, 10, and 11, will be celebrated on a grand scale. In a meeting with Gunadala Church Council members at the Collector's office on Saturday, Sivanath emphasized that the festivals will be held with all necessary measures in place to ensure the comfort and safety of the devotees. He highlighted that the festivals are significant not only for Vijayawada but also for Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu, as these are the only two locations in the country where the celebrations are held.

The meeting, led by Collector Lakshmi Sha, also included MLA Gadde Rammohan, CP Rajasekhara Babu, and other officials, where they reviewed the arrangements for the festival. With more than ten lakh devotees expected to attend, the focus was on ensuring there were no problems during the event. Discussions included taking precautions to avoid any untoward incidents, and Church Council President N. Vijayaraju raised issues about encroachments on the road leading to the hill and the need for regular mini buses from the bus stand and railway station to Gunadala Church. He also requested the establishment of a police outpost to ensure security and prevent any illegal activities.

MP Kesineni Sivanath acknowledged that this was the first time such a detailed review meeting was held with the church council members, and assured that the government would provide all possible support to make the festival a success. Temporary measures will be put in place, and after the festival, more permanent solutions will be worked on.

Collector Lakshmi Sha confirmed she would coordinate with municipal officials to address the concerns raised. The meeting saw active participation from Gunadala Church President Nuvula Vijayababu, Vice President Cherukuri Joseph Battista, Treasurer Goli Vijayanand Joseph, and other church members, along with various local leaders and officials.

Sankranti Celebrations and Awareness Programs at Police Grounds in Vijayawada

TPN Correspondent , Vijayawada, Jan 12 : The Sankranti celebrations at the Vijayawada Police Grounds commenced with festive enthusiasm as Police Commissioner Rajasekhara Babu inaugurated the event with traditional bonfires. Women police personnel showcased their creative talents by crafting intricate pearl necklaces, adding a cultural touch to the festivities.

CP Rajasekhara Babu emphasized the importance of road safety during the celebrations, highlighting the need for helmet usage. He stated that awareness programs conducted by the police, coupled with media initiatives, have significantly improved public compliance with helmet rules.

Key Highlights from the Commissioner's Address:

- Out of 11,093 vehicles checked, 183 riders were found without helmets.
- A fatal accident reported yesterday under-



scored the urgency of helmet usage.

- From Sankranti onwards, strict enforcement will ensure complete compliance with helmet rules.
 - Triple riding violations will be closely monitored.
 - Traffic will be regulated with drone surveillance during festive rush hours.
 - Police personnel are also mandated to set an example by wearing helmets.
- The Commissioner urged media members and the general public to adhere to traffic



rules, emphasizing the importance of road safety for the well-being of families.

Additionally, CP Rajasekhara Babu warned against cockfighting and gambling, emphasizing that such activities tarnish the festive spirit. Efforts to remove cockfighting barriers have been intensified, with operations to continue for the next two days. He concluded by encouraging everyone to celebrate Sankranti joyfully and responsibly, cherishing time with loved ones.

Food Safety Standards Enforcement Intensified

TPN Correspondent, Vijayawada | Jan 12 : District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmi Sha emphasized the importance of adhering to strict food safety standards to protect public health. In a statement on Saturday, the Collector warned that strict legal action would be taken against those found violating the rules. Special teams comprising food safety officers are conducting surprise inspections across the district, with a focus on sweet shops, bakeries, and other food outlets during the festive season. Samples collected during these inspections are being sent to laboratories for analysis, and action will be taken based on the results.

The inspections are being carried out under the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, ensuring strict compliance with food safety regulations. Businesses involved in adulteration or failing to meet quality standards face serious legal consequences. On Saturday, Joint Food Controller N. Poornachandra Rao led a special drive



in Vijayawada, inspecting establishments such as Collis Enterprises in Autonagar, Sri Vijaya Traders Swagruha Foods in Punnammathota, Navrang Bakery in Governorpet, Kajoo House in Autonagar, and Sri Saibaba Ghee Swats and Home Foods in Autonagar. Improvement notices were issued to these establishments for failing to meet the required standards.

The district administration plans to intensify efforts in the coming days by coordinating with various departments to ensure the effective implementation of food safety regulations. The Collector urged food producers and sellers to maintain high-quality standards and prioritize public health, especially during the festive season, to avoid any adverse consequences.

Vadde Obanna's Struggle For An Inspiration for Future Generations

TPN Correspondent, Vijayawada | Jan 12 : The freedom fighter Vadde Obanna's enduring struggle serves as a powerful inspiration for future generations, said District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmi Sha. Commemorating Vadde Obanna's birth anniversary on Saturday, the Collector paid homage by garlanding his portrait at the Sri Pingali Venkayya Samavesha Mandir in the Collectorate.

Recalling Obanna's relentless fight against British rule and his commitment to the welfare of the people, Dr. Lakshmi Sha highlighted the importance of recognizing and honoring his sacrifices. She emphasized that the state government is officially celebrating Vadde Obanna Jayanti to ensure his legacy is preserved and passed down to future generations.

The Collector spoke about Obanna's dedication to protecting the rights of poor farmers and villagers, striving for justice and upliftment. She urged everyone to draw inspiration from his sacrifices, rise to greater heights in life, and contribute to the development of the state and nation. The program was attended by DRO M. Lakshmi Narasimham, In-charge BC Welfare Officer K. Srinivasa Rao, and several others who joined in honoring the remarkable contributions of Vadde Obanna.

Dairy Farmers Benefit from Mini Gokulam Scheme -Venigandla Ramu

TPN Correspondent, Gudivada | Jan 12 : Gudivada MLA Venigandla Ramu emphasized the coalition government's commitment to the welfare of farmers, stating that the Mini Gokulam scheme will significantly benefit dairy farmers. On Saturday, he inaugurated the Mini Gokulam sheds in Lingavaram villages of Gudivada Rural mandal and China Lingala villages of Nandivada mandal, which are part of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. Following the inauguration, MLA Ramu performed special pujas at the Gokulam sheds, alongside local farm-

ers, who gave him a warm welcome. In his address to the media, MLA Ramu highlighted that the coalition government has brought positive changes for farmers, with several development works now underway in villages under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. He expressed satisfaction over the resumption of stalled development projects across the state, thanks to the efforts of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, and the support of the Central Government.



A total of 66 Gokulam sheds have been sanctioned at an estimated cost of Rs. 1.50 crore, with 51 in Gudivada mandal and 15 in Nandivada mandal. MLA

Ramu mentioned that more than 99% of the construction of these sheds has been completed, with most nearing the final stages. He noted that farm-

ers would only need to contribute 10% of the construction costs, while the remaining 90% would be covered by the government.

The event saw participation from various political leaders, including Gudivada BJP in-charge Davuluru Surendrababu, Mandal TDP President Vasey Murali, and several other TDP leaders and local officials. A large number of farmers, villagers, and MGNREGS staff also attended the event, which underscored the significance of the Mini Gokulam scheme for local dairy farmers.

TTD Chairman Distributes Compensation to Victims of Vaikuntha Ekadashi Stampede



C. Sekhar, TPN, Tirupati, Jan 12 : TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu on Saturday handed over compensation to seven victims who were seriously injured in the stampede during the issuance of Sarvadarshan tokens on the night of January 8, in the run-up to Vaikuntha Ekadashi. The distribution took place at the SWIMS Director Chamber.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman B.R. Naidu mentioned that the compensation was provided as per the orders of Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu. In the meeting, checks were handed over in the presence of Madanapalle MLA Shahjahan, Chandragiri MLA Pulivarthi Nani, Srialahasti MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy, Nagari MLA Gali Bhanu Prakash, TTD JEO V. Veerabrahmam, Tirupati District Collector Dr. S. Venkateswar, and SWIMS Director Dr. RV Kumar.

Victims receiving compensation included Sarvasree S. Thimmakka from Narasapur-

am village, Ramasamudram mandal, Annamaya district, and P. Eeswaramma from Gopalapatnam, Visakhapatnam district, each receiving Rs. 5 lakh. Additionally, Rs. 2 lakh each was given to five other victims: Sarvasree K. Narasamma, P. Raghu, K. Ganesh, P. Venkatesh, and Chinna Appaiah from Narasapuram village, Ramasamudram mandal, Annamaya district.

Chairman Naidu also shared that two committees had been formed to pay compensation to the families of the six deceased in the incident. One committee is set to visit Visakhapatnam, and the other will visit the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border. TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu further stated that he would personally cover the transportation and other expenses of these committees.

TTD Board members, SWIMS Medical Superintendent Dr. Ram, TTD and SWIMS officials, and several public representatives were present for the event.

MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy Inaugurates Mini Gokulam Shed in Chinna Singamala Village

C. Sekhar, TPN, Tirupati, Jan 12 : MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy inaugurated a Mini Gokulam Shed in Chinna Singamala village of Thottambedu Mandal, part of the Andhra Pradesh State Government's initiative to support dairy farmers.

The inauguration ceremony was marked by a grand welcome from the villagers, local leaders, and activists. In his speech, MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy highlighted the Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Ministers, and Ministers Nara Lokesh's vision behind the Mini Gokulam Shed Scheme, designed to alleviate the challenges faced by dairy farmers. He emphasized that the scheme is highly beneficial for



the local farming community.

After the inauguration, MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy visited the homes of senior leaders and activists in the village, offering a warm welcome. He also instructed officials to inspect the Anganwadi center and improve its facilities. Responding to a request

from the village youth, the MLA directed the MPDO to immediately repair the local playground and construct a compound to meet the students' needs. The event was attended by public representatives, district party leaders, activists, officials, and villagers.

Chakravarthy Visits Kanipaka Swayambhu Varasiddhi Vinayaka Swamy Temple

C. Sekhar, TPN, Tirupati, Jan 12 : Chakravarthy, Principal Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh State Election Commission, visited the Kanipaka Swayambhu Varasiddhi Vinayaka Swamy Temple along with his family. Temple AEO Ravindra Babu extended a warm welcome to the visitors, making arrangements for their darshan. He also presented the offerings of the Lord and a portrait of the deity as a gesture of goodwill.

Superintendent Vasu Airala and Mandal MRO along with other temple officials were present during this event.



MLA Maddipati Venkatraju Inaugurates Kabaddi Competitions in Vellachinthlagudem

Sankranthi Celebrations Feature Cricket Tournaments as Well



TPN Correspondent, Vellachinthlagudem Jan 12 : The vibrant village of Vellachinthlagudem in the Gopalapuram

constituency came alive with enthusiasm as national-level Kabaddi competitions began as part of the Sankranthi festi-

ties. Organized by the R & M Foundation, these competitions aim to foster a spirit of sportsmanship and encourage youth participation in sports.

The event, which also includes cricket tournaments, was held under the leadership of Yuva MLA Shri Maddi Pati Venkatraju. Speaking at the occasion, the MLA appreciated the efforts of all participants and emphasized the importance of sports in shaping discipline, teamwork, and a healthy lifestyle among the youth.

"The enthusiasm shown by the players reflects their passion and dedication to sports. Such events are essential to create opportunities for talent to emerge from rural areas and shine on larger platforms," MLA Venkatraju said.

The competitions have drawn significant attention, with players and spectators alike commending the MLA and the R & M Foundation for their efforts to promote sports in the region. The Sankranthi celebrations in Vellachinthlagudem have become a symbol of community spirit, showcasing the unity and energy of the youth.

Silver Crown Donation to Kanipaka Swayambhu Sri Varasiddhi Vinayaka Temple



C. Sekhar TPN, Tirupati, Jan 12 : A generous donation of a silver crown weighing approximately 1.5 kg, valued at Rs. 1,00,000, was made to the Kanipaka Swayambhu Sri Varasiddhi Vinayaka Swamy Temple. The donors, Sri Yashwanth and his family from Natthapachenu, Thavanampalli Mandal, handed over the donation to the temple authorities.

Following the donation, arrangements were made for the family's darshan, and the Lord's prasadam was offered to them. Vedic blessings were also recited during the event. Temple AEO Ravindra Babu, Superintendent Vasu, and other officials were present.

Chakra Snam Held on Vaikuntha Dwadasi at Tirumala Swamy Pushkarini

C. Sekhar, TPN, Tirupati, Jan 12 : On the auspicious occasion of Vaikuntha Dwadasi, the Chakra Snam was performed at Swamy Pushkarini, considered one of the most sacred and significant events in Tirumala. The Swamy Pushkarini Theertha Mukkoti is regarded as the chief source of



the 66 crore theerthams found throughout the Seshachala Ranges, making it an especially revered site. The sacred ceremony commenced early on Saturday, with Sri Sudarshana Chakrattalwar brought to the temple tank. The Archakas performed the Chakra Snam in the holy waters of Swamy Pushkarini, with HH Tirumala Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swami gracing the occasion. After the ritual, the Chakrattalwar was returned to the temple. TTD EO Syamala Rao, Board Member Panabaka Lakshmi, DyEO Lokanatham, Peishkar Rama Krishna, and other temple officials were present for the ceremony.

Hyderabad Devotee Donates Over Rs. 10 Lakhs to Sri Venkateswara Veda Parirakshna Trust

C. Sekhar, TPN, Tirupati, Jan 12 : M. Janardhan, the Chief of Sai Raghavendra Constructions from Hyderabad, has made a generous donation of Rs. 10,00,116 to the Sri Venkateswara Veda Parirakshna Trust of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD).



The cheque for the donation was handed over to TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu at his camp office in Tirumala on Saturday. The donation reflects Janardhan's devotion and commitment to supporting the preservation of Vedic traditions, a key mission of the trust. The TTD Chairman expressed gratitude for the contribution and emphasized the importance of such support in sustaining the trust's initiatives. The Sri Venkateswara Veda Parirakshna Trust is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Vedic knowledge and rituals, playing a significant role in maintaining the spiritual and cultural heritage of the region.

Two Dead, Three Injured in Road Accident on Kathipudi National Highway

TPN Correspondent, Kakinada Dist Jan 12 : Kakinada District witnessed a tragic road accident in Shankhavaram Mandal of Prathipadu Constituency on the Kathipudi National Highway. An Ertiga car collided with a parked



lorry, resulting in the death of two people and serious injuries to three others. The incident occurred when the group was traveling from Bhimavaram to Annavaram. The exact circumstances leading to the collision are still under investigation. Local police have registered a

case and are conducting a thorough inquiry into the accident. The injured individuals were rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment. Authorities have urged motorists to exercise caution, especially on highways, to prevent such tragic incidents. Further details are awaited as the investigation continues.

Why Should It Take Three Days to Declare Delhi Assembly Election Results?

On January 7, the Election Commission of India (ECI) announced that polling for the Delhi Assembly elections will take place on February 5, with results to be declared on February 8. This three-day gap between polling and results has raised questions, especially considering the relatively small size and urban nature of Delhi, which has only 70 constituencies.

A key argument often made in favor of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) is that they allow for faster result declaration compared to traditional paper ballots, which are time-consuming to count. In multi-phase elections across larger, rural areas, the time taken to transport EVMs from distant polling stations to counting centers is often cited as the reason for delayed results.

However, Delhi's geography presents a different scenario. The state is largely urbanized, and all villages are well-connected by good roads. Even if polling extends until late evening on February 5 due to long queues, the transportation of EVMs to counting centers by the following morning, February 6, should be feasible. Count-



ing could commence early in the day, and results could easily be declared by noon.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) announced that Delhi Assembly election results will be declared on February 8, three days after voting on February 5. Given Delhi's small size and urban infrastructure, this delay seems

unnecessary. Unlike rural areas with distant polling stations, Delhi's well-connected roads should allow EVMs to reach counting centers by the morning of February 6, enabling results by noon. Even in the unlikely event of a repoll, results for the remaining constituencies could be declared on the same day, making the three-day wait questionable and inefficient.

In most cases, an extra day is reserved for unforeseen circumstances, such as a repoll in a constituency. However, the situation in Delhi doesn't justify the three-day delay for result declaration. If a repoll were needed, the results for the remaining constituencies could still be announced on the same day by withholding results from only one or two constituencies.

Two key factors point to a different reason for the delayed result announcement. Firstly, the Election Commission's track record suggests a pattern of delays in the declaration of results, even when logistical reasons do not fully justify the delay. Secondly, the potential for a repoll is extremely unlikely in Delhi, and even if it occurs, it would only affect a few constituencies, making it possible to announce the majority of results on the same day.

Given these factors, the decision to declare the results on February 8 seems unnecessary and raises questions about the efficiency of the process.

BJP's Delhi Election Strategy: From Governance to Brand Modi



The 2025 Delhi Assembly elections are poised to be a crucial battleground, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) strategically positioning itself to challenge the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and reclaim control of the national capital. The BJP's strategy is multifaceted, focusing on governance issues, avoiding divisive rhetoric, capitalizing on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity, and carefully selecting candidates to maximize their impact in key constituencies.

One of the primary elements of the BJP's approach is a two-phase campaign aimed at exposing the AAP government's governance failures. Key areas such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure, where the AAP has been criticized for its inefficiency, are set to be central points of focus. The BJP plans to install posters across Delhi comparing the governance of BJP-ruled states with the performance of the AAP government in Delhi. This comparison seeks to highlight the discrepancies between the two parties' approaches and showcase the BJP's proven track record in various sectors. By emphasizing governance and the tangible improvements seen in other BJP-led states, the party hopes to sway voters in its favor.

Another significant aspect of the BJP's strategy is its focus on avoiding divisive narratives. The party is aiming to create a broad-based appeal by steering clear of polarizing issues and focusing instead on development, stability, and good governance. This shift is in contrast to previous election cycles, where

polarizing rhetoric and identity politics played a prominent role in campaigning. The BJP appears to be prioritizing issues that affect the everyday lives of Delhiites, positioning itself as a responsible, development-oriented alternative to the AAP.

Additionally, the BJP is making strategic use of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership to further bolster its campaign. Known for his strong political brand and nationwide popularity, Modi's image is being leveraged to rally support and attract voters. His presence is expected to give the party a significant edge, as his leadership is seen as a key factor in the BJP's success in previous elections. The party will likely continue to emphasize Modi's role in steering India towards economic growth, national security, and social welfare, aligning his persona with the BJP's vision for Delhi.

Moreover, the BJP's candidate selection process is critical to its success in Delhi. By choosing candidates who are locally popular, experienced, and capable of connecting with voters, the party hopes to gain an advantage in key constituencies. The BJP's strategic candidate choices are aimed at ensuring the party's message resonates with a diverse electorate across the city.

Through a combination of governance-focused messaging, leveraging Modi's popularity, and strategic candidate selection, the BJP is laying the groundwork for a compelling challenge to the AAP in the upcoming 2025 Delhi Assembly elections.

Social Media's Dark Side: Fueling Radicalisation in Bangladesh

Bangladesh, a country experiencing rapid digitisation, is facing a growing concern: online radicalisation. While the widespread use of social media platforms marks a significant step towards progress, it has also opened the door for extremist groups to exploit these spaces, potentially turning them into breeding grounds for radical ideologies.

The country has a vast and growing digital footprint, with over 52 million users on Facebook, more than 33 million active viewers on YouTube, and at least 1.69 million users on X (formerly Twitter). These platforms, while offering opportunities for communication and information sharing, are increasingly being used by radical groups to spread their ideologies. This growing digital space has raised alarm bells as it becomes a fertile ground for extremist propaganda, particularly among vulnerable groups.

A recent survey by Bangladesh Police sheds light on the alarming extent of online radicalisation. The survey, which involved 250 jailed militants, found that 82 per cent of the individuals had been radicalised via social



plexities of their identities in an increasingly globalised and digital world. The ease of access to extremist content and the anonymity offered by social media platforms make it easier for radical groups to manipulate young minds.

The issue of online radicalisation is compounded by the limited resources available to law enforcement and digital platforms to effectively monitor and combat extremist content. While Bangladesh has taken steps to address this issue, including increasing surveillance and promoting digital literacy, the scale of the problem requires a more coordinated effort between the government, law enforcement agencies, and social media companies.

In conclusion, while Bangladesh's growing digital landscape offers numerous benefits, it also poses serious challenges in terms of online radicalisation. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach, focusing on both prevention and intervention, to ensure that social media remains a platform for positive engagement and not a tool for spreading extremism.

Banning Afghanistan cricket from Champions Trophy will be a gift to Taliban

Afghanistan's impressive performances in the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup and the 2024 Men's T20 World Cup ignited celebrations across the country, from the bustling streets of Kabul to remote villages. These celebrations went beyond just sporting achievements—they were acts of defiance against the Taliban regime's oppressive policies. Afghans from all walks of life found in their cricket team a symbol of unity and hope, challenging the Taliban's stranglehold over the nation.

However, the same Taliban, who have long viewed sports as a distraction from religious duties and an obstacle to enforcing their ideology, are likely to be disheartened by recent calls from British politicians and South Africa's sports minister. They have urged the ICC to ban Afghanistan's men's cricket team from participating in the Champions Trophy, scheduled for February 19 in Pakistan and Dubai. The demand for England and South Africa to boycott their matches against Afghanistan reflects growing international pressure over the Taliban's harsh restrictions on Afghan women, adding



to the regime's frustrations. But banning Afghanistan's cricket team is not an act of justice—it is an endorsement of oppression.

Since the Taliban regained power, Afghanistan has faced a mass exodus, with over 8 million Afghans fleeing due to poverty, economic collapse, and repression. Those who remain have little hope, living under the Taliban's stringent policies that have stifled opportunity and progress. Amid this bleak reality, cricket has become one of the few outlets for joy, inspiration, and resistance. For countless Afghan youth, players like Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi embody the possibility of a better future, offering an alter-

native to the extremism of groups like ISKP. Stripping Afghanistan of its cricketing platform would not only crush these dreams but could also push vulnerable young people toward radicalization, posing a potential global security threat.

Afghan cricketers are not just athletes; they are brave symbols of resistance. Many have used their platform to speak out for women's rights, particularly advocating for the right to education in defiance of the Taliban's oppressive policies. Their public statements, social media posts, and even silent protests demonstrate remarkable courage in a regime where dissent is punishable by death. These players risk everything to stand up for the rights of Afghan women, making them champions of more than just sport.

Banning Afghanistan's cricket team would not only be a blow to the nation's morale but also a victory for the forces of repression. Supporting Afghanistan's cricketers is supporting a brighter, more inclusive future for the country.

My risk-taking capacity hasn't been fully utilised: PM Modi in podcast

TPN Correspondent
Delhi, Jan 11

In a candid conversation with Zerodha co-founder Nikhil Kamath, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reflected on his approach to life, emphasizing that he has never lived in a comfort zone. He shared that his risk-taking capacity has not been fully utilized, and he believes that true success comes from stepping out of one's comfort zone.

During the podcast, PM Modi explained that people often struggle in life when they become accustomed to comfort. "It has been my luck that I have not spent life in a comfort zone, have never been there... Since I was out of comfort zone, I knew what I had to do. Probably I am unfit for comfort," he said.



things give me satisfaction," Modi remarked, highlighting how simple experiences bring him joy, despite the challenges he has faced.

This conversation with Nikhil Kamath, in the podcast series, provided a rare glimpse into Modi's mindset, focusing on his resilience and determination to constantly challenge himself. He suggested that being in a comfort zone can hinder progress, and that success is often the result of taking risks and pushing boundaries.

PM Modi's reflections on his life and leadership journey have resonated with many, as he continues to inspire others with his unyielding approach to challenges and his belief in the importance of personal growth and perseverance.

The Prime Minister elaborated on his philosophy of embracing discomfort, which he believes has been instrumental in shaping his journey. "The kind of life I have lived, even small

with many, as he continues to inspire others with his unyielding approach to challenges and his belief in the importance of personal growth and perseverance.

CAG Report Exposes Kejriwal: JP Nadda



TPN Correspondent
Delhi, Jan 12

BJP president J.P. Nadda on Saturday accused the Delhi government of causing a loss of Rs 2,026 crore to the exchequer due to "intentional lapses" in the implementation of its excise policy, as highlighted in a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

Nadda, addressing the media on social media platform X, slammed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government for its handling of the excise policy, saying, "Intoxicated by power, high on misgovernance. 'AAP'DA model of loot in full display and that too on something like liquor." He further added that it was only a matter of time before the AAP government would be voted out and held accountable for what he termed "misdeeds."

The CAG report, which has not yet been officially released, reportedly sheds light on significant financial mismanagement under the Delhi government's excise policy, claiming that lapses in policy implementation resulted in the loss of over Rs 2,000 crore. This comes amidst the ongoing investigation into the alleged corruption related to the policy. The Enforcement Directorate had previously arrested Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia in connection with the excise scam. Both were later released on bail after spending months in custody.

In response to these allegations, AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh questioned the validity of the CAG report, stating, "Where is the report? The BJP keeps claiming that no CAG report has been tabled." Singh's remarks suggest a level of skepticism surrounding the BJP's claims.

The controversy surrounding the excise policy has sparked intense political debate, with the BJP calling for accountability, while the AAP denies the allegations. As the issue continues to unfold, the political temperature in Delhi is set to rise in the lead-up to the upcoming elections.

Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena Will Contest Local Body Polls Alone: Sanjay Raut

TPN Correspondent
Nagpur, Jan 12

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut confirmed on Saturday that his party will contest upcoming local body elections on its own, signaling a shift away from alliances like the INDIA bloc and Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), which were formed for Lok Sabha and state assembly elections. Raut, a Rajya Sabha MP, explained that alliances often limit opportunities for individual party workers, hindering organizational growth. Therefore, Shiv Sena (UBT) intends to contest municipal corporation elections in cities like Mumbai, Thane, and Nagpur, as well as zilla parishads and panchayats, based on its own strength.

Raut added that party chief Uddhav Thackeray had hinted that the party should go solo in these elections, and emphasized the importance of the party's own organizational growth.

Addressing the ongoing discord within the Maha Vikas Aghadi, Raut criticized Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar for blaming the alliance's failure in the state assembly elections. He stated that those unwilling to embrace consensus and compromise should not be part of an alliance, suggesting a lack of unity in MVA. Raut also point-

ed out that since the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the INDIA bloc has failed to hold a single meeting, leaving unresolved issues within the alliance.

On the topic of Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's recent remark denying any men-



tion of farm loan waivers, Raut responded by reminding him that both the farm loan waiver and the Rs 2,100 support for Laadki Bahin beneficiaries were featured in the BJP's election manifesto, and as the finance minister in the BJP government, Pawar would be expected to fulfill these promises.

Raut also commented on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent admission that he is human and capable of making mistakes. Responding to this, Raut humorously stated, "He (Modi) is god. I don't consider him a human. He is the 13th avatar of Vishnu." He further questioned Modi's statement, suggesting there might be something wrong if someone regarded as a deity claims to be human.

Governor Ravi Unable To Digest Tamil Nadu Growing, His Actions Are Childish: CM Stalin

TPN Correspondent
Chennai, Jan 12

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin on Saturday criticized Governor R N Ravi for his refusal to address the state Legislative Assembly, calling his decision "childish." Stalin's remarks came in the wake of ongoing tensions between the Governor and the state government, which have escalated since Ravi assumed office.



Stalin accused the Governor of being unable to accept the state's progress, stating that Ravi's actions reflected a reluctance to acknowledge Tamil Nadu's development. The Chief Minister further pointed out that the atmosphere in the Legislative Assembly had become increasingly contentious since Ravi's tenure began, leading to unusual scenes and disruptions.

In recent years, the relationship between the Tamil Nadu government and Governor Ravi has been marked by friction, with multiple disagreements over issues such as state autonomy and the role of the Governor. Ravi's refusal to deliver the customary address to the Assembly has only added to the ongoing tensions, with many in the state questioning his approach.

Stalin emphasized that the Governor's refusal to engage with

the Assembly, a key institution of the state, was an unnecessary provocation. "It is childish," Stalin remarked, highlighting how this refusal was damaging to the spirit of cooperative governance. The Chief Minister also noted that these developments were a matter of concern for the functioning of the state's legislative processes, as the Governor's actions were seen as undermining the smooth operation of the Assembly.

As the political drama continues to unfold, tensions between the state government and the Governor are expected to remain high, with the opposition and the ruling party accusing each other of playing political games. The ongoing conflict has raised questions about the broader implications for governance and the relationship between the state and the central government.

Don't want To Force Anyone: DK Shivakumar Mmids Rumblings Over Karnataka Top Post

TPN Correspondent
Bengaluru, Jan 12

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar addressed growing speculation about a potential change of leadership in the state, asserting that he was not seeking anyone's support and would continue to follow the directives of the Congress party. His remarks come in the wake of recent developments surrounding Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, including a dinner with select Dalit and ST Cabinet colleagues, which sparked discussions about the future of the top post.

Speaking to reporters at the Sringeri helipad, Shivakumar quoted the Sanskrit saying "Karmanye Vaadhikaraste..." to emphasize his belief in putting in the effort while leaving the results to God. "I don't want anyone's support, and I will do what the party wants me to do," he said, reaffirming his loyalty to the Congress leadership. He added that he did not want to pressure anyone into supporting him for the Chief Minister's position and emphasized that any decisions would be made by the party.

As the president of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC), Shivakumar responded to the demand from party workers who have urged him to take on the Chief Minister's role. He clarified, "I don't want to force anyone, nor do I need anyone's support. I don't want any MLA to shout out his support for me. It is between the Congress



party and me. I will do whatever the party wants me to do."

When asked about his frequent temple visits, Shivakumar explained that he was a devout believer in Dharma and offered daily prayers for the welfare of the state and its people. "If praying is dubbed as a temple run, all the temples must be closed," he remarked.

Shivakumar also downplayed any significance of his recent visit to Sringeri, stating that he was there to commemorate 50 years of Sri Bharathi Theertha Swamy taking over responsibility at the mutt. He added, "We will govern the state for five years. The Chief Minister and I will work as per the party's instructions. What others say does not matter."

Shivakumar's statement comes amidst ongoing speculation, with Minister KN Rajanna recently suggesting that Shivakumar should aim to lead the party to victory in future elections rather than seeking the top post in the current government.

Rijiju embarks On 5-Day Visit To Saudi Arabia, To Sign Agreement For Hajj pilgrimage



TPN Correspondent
New Delhi, Jan 12

India's Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju commenced a five-day visit to Saudi Arabia aimed at signing a bilateral agreement for the Hajj pilgrimage of 2025. A key objective of the visit is for India to secure an additional quota of 10,000 pilgrims for the upcoming pilgrimage year.

Rijiju is scheduled to meet with Saudi Arabia's Minister Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al Rabiah on Monday, where the two ministers are expected to formalize the agree-

ment. Rijiju expressed his anticipation for the visit, emphasizing its significance in strengthening the people-to-people ties between the two nations.

Apart from signing the agreement, Rijiju is set to meet with Saudi Minister of Transport and Logistic Services, Saleh Al Jasser. The discussions will focus on the logistics of the Hajj pilgrimage, particularly flight operations and transportation services for pilgrims, such as bus and train services, ensuring smooth travel and efficient management of the

pilgrimage.

In addition to the meetings, Rijiju plans to visit the Jeddah Hajj Terminal, which handles Indian pilgrims. The government has dedicated office space at the terminal to help facilitate the pilgrims' smooth passage. Some Indian pilgrims also use the Jeddah Airport Terminal One, which features a high-speed rail service designed to streamline travel for those on the pilgrimage.

For the Hajj pilgrimage of 2025, Saudi Arabia has allocated a fixed

quota of 1,75,025 pilgrims for India. Rijiju's visit is partly focused on securing an additional 10,000 pilgrims for the pilgrimage. Rijiju will also travel to Madina, where he will visit the famous mosques at Quba and Qublatain, further strengthening the cultural and religious ties between the two countries.

This visit highlights India's commitment to ensuring that more pilgrims can perform Hajj, a significant religious obligation for Muslims, while enhancing bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia.

Afghan Taliban Refuses To Attend Muslim Girls Education Summit In Pakistan

The Afghan Taliban government has decided not to attend a global summit focused on girls' education in the Muslim world, which was hosted by neighboring Pakistan. Islamabad extended an invitation to Afghanistan, but no representatives from the Afghan government were present at the conference, according to Pakistani Education Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui.



The summit, aimed at addressing issues related to the education of girls in Muslim-majority countries, was expected to bring together education ministers, experts, and policymakers from across the region. However, despite the invitation, the Taliban's absence from the event raised eyebrows and fueled concerns about the state of education in Afghanistan, particularly for girls.

The Taliban's refusal to allow girls to attend secondary school and university has drawn widespread condemnation from international communities and human rights organizations. Since the Taliban's return to power in August 2021, many of their policies have faced criticism for their strict interpretation of Islamic law, particularly those that limit the rights and freedoms of women and girls.

Pakistani officials expressed disappointment over the Afghan government's absence at the summit, highlighting the importance of international cooperation in addressing education

challenges across the Muslim world. Minister Siddiqui emphasized that the summit was a vital platform for discussing solutions to improve access to education for girls and women in the region.

While the Afghan Taliban's absence was noted, other countries participated in the summit, which focused on creating initiatives and partnerships to ensure better educational opportunities for young girls in the Muslim world. Pakistan continues to advocate for a collaborative approach to tackle education-related challenges and promote gender equality in education across the region.

The absence of Afghanistan's government at the conference further underscores the complex and sensitive situation surrounding the education of girls in the country, with the international community continuing to monitor the Taliban's policies closely.

Neuralink Brain Chip Implanted In 3rd Patient, Musk Says Working Well

Los Angeles County Sheriff Robert Luna has compared the devastation caused by the ongoing wildfires to the aftermath of an atomic bomb, saying, "It looks as though an atomic bomb dropped in these areas." The fires have wreaked havoc on Southern California, with multiple blazes tearing through the region, displacing tens of thousands of residents and leaving a trail of destruction in their wake.



Fresh Blaze in West Hills: On Thursday evening, a new fire broke out in the West Hills neighborhood, rapidly consuming over 900 acres. The fires have now claimed at least 10 lives, with the death toll expected to rise as the crisis continues.

Massive Fires in Pacific Palisades and Altadena: The Pacific Palisades fire has burned over 19,000 acres, while the Altadena fire has scorched 13,000 acres. Thousands of homes, including multi-million-dollar properties, have been destroyed.

Tens of Thousands Evacuated: Nearly 180,000 residents remain under evacuation orders, and many areas have been left in ruin. The fires have also forced the relocation of celebrities, including Paris Hilton, Anthony Hopkins, and Billy Crystal.

State and Federal Support: Governor Gavin Newsom has deployed the California National Guard to help manage the crisis, while President Joe Biden has pledged federal resources to assist in the state's response, calling the disaster the "most devastating wildfire" in California's history.

Political Clash Over the Fires: President-elect Donald Trump has criticized Governor Newsom's handling of the wildfires, accusing him of mismanagement, while Biden urged Amer-

icans to avoid politicizing the disaster.

International Help: Amid the crisis, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau offered assistance, with Canadian firefighters joining the efforts to combat the blazes.

Shelters Overwhelmed: Local shelters have been flooded with donations from generous residents, although officials have started redirecting supplies to other areas.

Social Media Conspiracy Theories: Some conspiracy theorists have spread false claims about firefighting equipment being sent to Ukraine or staffing issues due to diversity, further fueling misinformation.

Severe Drought and Weather Conditions: Experts point to two decades of drought followed by exceptionally wet years as factors that created the dry vegetation fueling the fires. Meteorologists warn that critical conditions, including strong winds and dry weather, are likely to persist.

Historic Wildfire Crisis: Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass described the fires as "unprecedented," as the state continues to battle one of the worst fire seasons on record.



Imran Khan Urges Transparency: Addresses Lawyers And Media From Jail

In a conversation with his lawyers and media inside Adiala Jail, incarcerated former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan reiterated his call for a transparent investigation into the violence surrounding the November 26 Islamabad massacre and the May 9 incidents. Khan demanded the formation of a judicial commission to probe these cases, stressing the importance of impartiality in delivering justice.

of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party members while in military custody. He mentioned that despite their repeated attempts to seek justice through the local judicial system, they were left with no choice but to raise these human rights violations on international platforms. He urged his lawyers to take these issues to global forums, asserting that Pakistan is bound by international human rights laws and treaties.

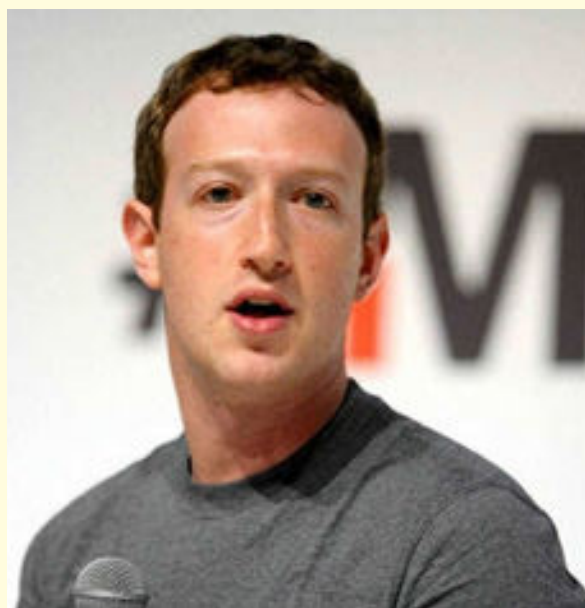
Khan criticized the ongoing negotiations in Pakistan, claiming that the lack of seriousness from the government is evident. He pointed out that he was not invited to a meeting with the negotiating committee, leading him to believe the purpose of the talks is merely to delay the response to the November 26 killings. He expressed his frustration over the government's inability to form a judicial commission, which he believes is essential to investigating the tragic events and bringing justice to those who were killed or disappeared during the violence.

In his statement, Khan called for a transparent investigation into both the November 26 and May 9 incidents, highlighting the brutal treatment

Khan also touched on Pakistan's deteriorating economic situation, quoting a World Bank report that revealed another 13 million people had fallen below the poverty line. He expressed concern over the country's political and economic instability, which he blamed on institutions, including the judiciary and law enforcement agencies, being politicized and weaponized against PTI. Khan warned that as long as political instability persists, Pakistan's growth rate would remain stagnant, making it impossible to address the nation's economic challenges. He concluded by criticizing the government's actions, which he believes are part of a broader plan to establish a ten-year dictatorship.

This Hit Extreme: Mark Says Biden Govt Pressured Facebook To Censor Covid vaccine Info

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg revealed on Friday that the Biden administration exerted pressure on Facebook to censor content related to Covid-19 vaccines, particularly information discussing vaccine side effects. Zuckerberg made these comments during an appearance on the Joe Rogan Podcast, where he discussed several issues, including government censorship.



According to Zuckerberg, the pressure from the Biden administration reached its peak during the rollout of the Covid-19 vaccination campaign. He explained, "This hit the most extreme. I'd say it was during the Biden Administration when they were trying to roll out the vaccine programme. Now I'm generally pretty pro rolling out vaccines, I think on balance the vaccines are more positive than negative, but I think that while they're trying to push that program, they also tried to censor anyone who was arguing against it."

Zuckerberg clarified that while he supported the vaccine effort, he found it trou-

bling that the government pushed Facebook to remove content that questioned the safety or potential side effects of the vaccine. He described the government's approach as a push to take down "things that were honestly true," adding that the administration pressured Facebook to remove posts discussing vaccine side

effects. "They pushed us super hard to take down things that were honestly true. I mean, they basically pushed us and said, 'You know anything that says that vaccines might have side effects, you need to take down,'" Zuckerberg recalled.

While Zuckerberg stressed his general support for the vaccine program, he was firm in his stance against censoring factual information. He said, "I was just like, well, we're not going to do that," emphasizing that Facebook would not comply with requests to remove truthful content about vaccine side effects.

The comments sparked debate around the balance between public health measures and freedom of speech, raising questions about the role of social media platforms in moderating content under government pressure. The revelations come at a time when both tech companies and government agencies are under increased scrutiny regarding content moderation practices.

President Biden To Deliver His Farewell Address On January 15 From Oval Office

U.S. President Joe Biden will deliver his farewell address to the nation in prime time on January 15, just days before the inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump as the 47th president. The White House confirmed the timing of Biden's speech on Friday, with the address scheduled to take place at 8 p.m. ET from the Oval Office.

Biden's farewell speech will mark the end of his first term as president and his exit from the White House. The speech is expected to reflect on his accomplishments during his presidency, the challenges faced by the country, and his hopes for the future as he prepares to hand over the reins of power to the incoming administration. The address will offer Biden a final opportunity to address the American people before the historic transition of power to his successor.



itics, as Biden bids farewell to the presidency and looks back on his legacy, while preparing for the transition to the next administration.

While Biden's farewell address will focus on his presidency and the journey ahead, it will also set the stage for the political landscape that will unfold in the coming years. The speech is expected to highlight key moments from his administration, as well as the challenges that lie ahead for both the nation and the new president.

As the country prepares for a new chapter in its political history, President Biden's farewell address will be an important occasion for reflection and a moment of closure for the outgoing administration. The timing of the speech is significant, coming just five days before the swearing-in of Donald Trump on January 20. It is likely to be a poignant moment in U.S. pol-

India at an Economic Crossroads

Balancing Growth and Emerging Challenges

As of January 2025, India stands at a pivotal moment in its economic journey. While the economy remains resilient, new challenges loom, potentially redefining its growth trajectory. This article examines the current landscape, opportunities, and hurdles that lie ahead for the nation.

Current Economic Landscape

India's GDP growth rate, projected at 6.4% for the fiscal year ending March 2025, marks its slowest pace in four years. Analysts attribute the deceleration to global headwinds, weakened manufacturing output, and reduced investments. Despite this, India remains one of the fastest-growing major economies globally.

The services sector continues to be a key driver of growth, with sub-sectors like information technology, hospitality, and transportation attracting robust domestic and international investments. Meanwhile, rural consumption is undergoing a transformation, with increasing demand for processed foods, discretionary products, and non-food items, closing

the gap with urban markets.

Agriculture, the backbone of rural India, has seen mixed fortunes. While advancements in technology and subsidies have boosted productivity, challenges like erratic monsoons and water scarcity persist. On the industrial front, the "Make in India" initiative has had moderate success but still faces hurdles such as inefficiencies, skill shortages, and infrastructure gaps.

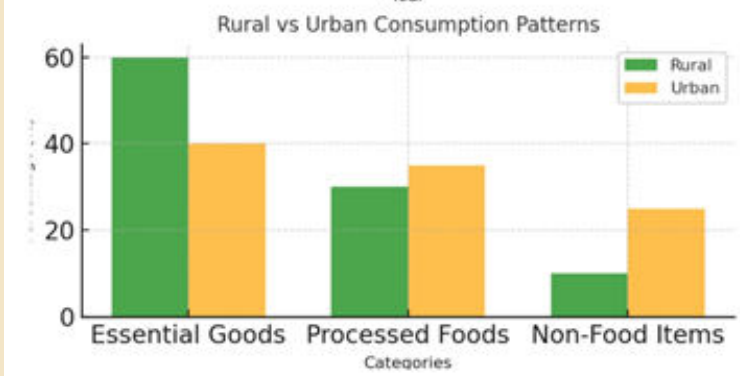
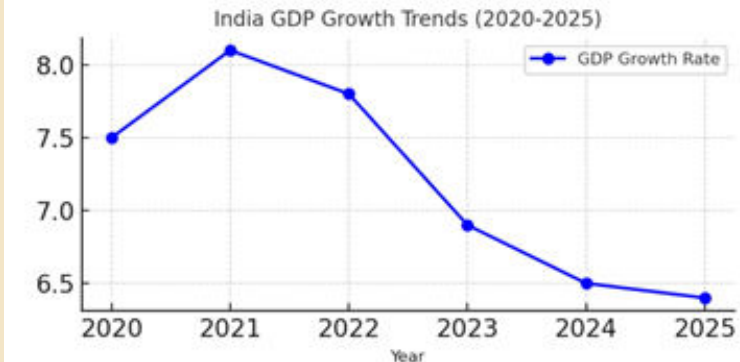
Government's Strategic Response

In response to these challenges, the government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is focusing on targeted interventions, including:

- **Monetary policy shifts:** Encouraging the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to adopt an accommodative stance to improve liquidity.
- **Fiscal stimulus:** Channeling resources into high-priority sectors like infrastructure and renewable



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energy.

- **Tax reforms:** Reducing income tax rates and import tariffs to stimulate spending and investment.

The appointment of Sanjay Malhotra as RBI Governor has sparked optimism about growth-focused policies. Known for his expertise in fis-

cal management, Malhotra is expected to complement the government's economic agenda.

Global Influences and Investor Sentiment

India's economy is significantly influenced by global trends. The strengthening U.S. dollar and rising bond yields have

pressured the Indian rupee, making Indian assets less attractive to foreign investors.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have pulled out nearly \$2 billion in January 2025, reflecting concerns over India's slowing growth and global market volatility. However, long-term foreign direct investment (FDI) in technology, e-commerce, and renewable energy remains strong, supported by strategic partnerships with countries like the U.S., Japan, and the UAE.

Opportunities Amid Challenges

Despite the headwinds, India presents significant opportunities:

- **Rural markets:** The shift in rural consumption patterns offers growth potential for FMCG and e-commerce sectors.
- **Sustainability:** India's focus on renewable energy and its commitment to net-zero carbon emissions by 2070 are attracting global investments in solar, wind, and electric vehicles.
- **Digital transformation:**

The expanding internet user base is driving growth in fintech, e-learning, and other digital innovations.

The Road Ahead

India's path forward hinges on its ability to balance domestic and global factors. Policymakers must stimulate growth while maintaining fiscal discipline. Critical reforms in labor laws, land acquisition, and ease of doing business are essential for unlocking the economy's potential.

For businesses, the evolving landscape demands agility. Tapping into rural markets, adopting green technologies, and embracing digital transformation are vital strategies for staying competitive.

Conclusion

India's economic journey in 2025 is a story of resilience and transformation. While growth faces temporary challenges, the nation's strategic interventions, emerging opportunities, and global partnerships provide a foundation for optimism. Decisions made today will shape India's economic destiny for years to come.

Retirement Planning with Mutual Fund SIPs

A Journey to Financial Independence

Retirement is a rphase of life that everyone dreams of enjoying without financial worries. Achieving this goal requires meticulous planning, especially in an era where inflation can quickly erode the value of your savings. Mutual Fund Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) provide an excellent way to accumulate wealth steadily over time. Here's a detailed guide to retirement planning with SIPs for different age groups, considering inflation and varying investment returns.



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The Importance of Retirement Planning

Retirement planning isn't just about saving money; it's about ensuring that you can sustain your desired lifestyle even after your working years are over. With rising costs and increasing life expectancy, it is crucial to plan for a retirement corpus that can fund your expenses for at least 25 years post-retirement.

Inflation is a critical factor to consider. For example, what costs ₹50,000 per month today could inflate to a much higher amount by the time you retire. Planning with this in mind ensures that your savings retain their purchasing power.

Understanding the Age Factor in Retirement Planning

The earlier you start saving, the more time your money has to grow. Here's how retirement planning differs based on when you begin:

Starting at Age 30

If you start investing in SIPs at 30, you have 30 years until retirement. This extended timeline allows your investments to benefit from the power of compounding. By investing consistently, you can accumulate a significant corpus with smaller monthly contributions.

Starting at Age 40

At 40, you have 20 years to retirement. While this is still a decent time frame, the amount you need to invest each month increases compared to starting at 30. With fewer years for compounding to work its magic, disciplined and higher contributions become essential.

Starting at Age 50

Beginning at 50 leaves you with only 10 years to save. In this case, the monthly SIP contributions required to

meet your retirement goals will be significantly higher. It's a challenging but achievable goal if you remain committed.

Inflation and Investment Returns

Inflation erodes the purchasing power of money, making it crucial to consider while planning for retirement. For example, an expense of ₹50,000 per month today could increase several times by the time you retire, depending on the inflation rate.

Similarly, investment returns play a critical role in determining how much you need to invest. SIPs in mutual funds offer the potential for varying returns, depending on the type of funds chosen. For retirement planning, we'll consider average annual returns of 8%, 10%, and 12%.

How Much Do You Need to Save?

The amount you need to save each month through SIPs depends on your age, the years left until retirement, and your target corpus. Let's break it down:

- **If You're 30:** Starting early allows you to save a smaller amount each month while still achieving a significant corpus. At an average return of 12%, you might need to invest around ₹26,000 per month to build a corpus of ₹6.45 crore.
- **If You're 40:** With a shorter investment horizon, the monthly SIP required increases. At a 12% return, you would need to save approximately ₹52,000 per month to accumulate ₹3.28 crore.
- **If You're 50:** Starting at 50 means only 10 years of investment before retirement. To achieve a corpus of ₹1.66 crore at a 12% return, your SIP contribution would need to be around ₹90,000 per month.

Benefits of Starting Early

The numbers clearly show the advantage of starting early. A 30-year-old investor has more time to grow their money, leading to lower monthly contributions compared to someone starting at 40 or 50. The power of compounding works best over longer durations, allowing early investors to achieve their goals with less financial strain.

Tips for Successful Retirement Planning with SIPs

1. **Start Early:** The earlier you begin, the smaller your contributions need to be, thanks to compounding.
2. **Stay Consistent:** Invest regularly, even during market downturns, to average out costs over time.
3. **Choose the Right Funds:** Opt for mutual funds that align with your risk profile and offer growth potential.
4. **Increase SIP Amounts:** As your income grows, increase your SIP contributions to boost your savings.
5. **Review and Adjust:** Periodically review your portfolio to ensure it remains aligned with your retirement goals.

Conclusion

Retirement planning with SIPs is a disciplined and efficient way to secure your financial future. Whether you're 30, 40, or 50 years old, starting today can make a significant difference. The key is to stay consistent, keep inflation in mind, and choose investment options that offer the right balance of risk and return. With proper planning, your retirement years can be as fulfilling and worry-free as you dream them to be.

India's Capital Market Fundraising Expected to Rise 21% in FY25, Says SEBI Chief

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch projected a 21% increase in total capital market fundraising for the financial year 2025, estimating it to reach ₹14.7 lakh crore, up from ₹11.8 lakh crore in FY24. Speaking on Friday, Buch highlighted that although fundraising through Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs), Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), and municipal bonds is currently low, the potential for raising funds through these instruments is significant in the coming years.



activity.

As of December 2024, the domestic capital market had mobilized ₹10.7 lakh crore, with ₹7.3 lakh crore raised through the primary debt market and ₹3.3 lakh crore through equity markets in the first nine months of the fiscal year. This indicates a strong momentum in resource mobilization, contributing to the overall growth in capital market

The increased expectations for FY25 reflect growing investor confidence and an expanding range of investment avenues in India's capital markets. SEBI's efforts to streamline regulations and improve market access are expected to play a key role in driving this growth. Additionally, the rise in demand for infrastructure and real estate investments is likely to contribute to the increased use of InvITs and REITs as fundraising tools.

These trends are seen as a positive indicator for India's financial market development, signaling the potential for diversified sources of capital to support infrastructure, urban development, and other key sectors. The outlook for FY25 underscores a continued strengthening of India's capital markets and a growing shift towards more innovative forms of financing.

Adani Group Raises Rs 4,850 Crore by Selling 13.5% Stake in Adani Wilmar

The Adani Group has successfully raised approximately Rs 4,850 crore by selling 13.5% of its stake in Adani Wilmar, marking a significant move as part of its exit from the company. In December, the group had announced its decision to sell the majority of its stake in Adani Wilmar to a joint venture partner.



fiscal year alone.

According to a stock exchange filing, the sale involved 17.54 crore shares (13.5% equity) being sold to non-retail investors on January 12, with the offer to retail investors opening on January 13 at a floor price of Rs 275 per share. The Adani Group, through its subsidiary Adani Commodities LLP, completed the Offer for Sale (OFS), which also included an option to sell up to 8.44 crore additional shares, representing 6.5% equity.

The divestment is also in line with Adani Wilmar's compliance with minimum public shareholding (MPS) regulations, with the promoters now holding 74.37% of the company and the remaining 25.63% held by public shareholders.

The total number of shares up for sale in the transaction could rise to 19.51 crore, representing 15.01% of Adani Wilmar's total issued capital, including an oversubscription option of 1.51%. This transaction reflects the Adani Group's ability to raise capital successfully, regardless of broader market conditions. The group has now raised a total of \$3.15 billion in equity capital this

Earlier, on December 30, the Adani Group revealed its plans to fully exit Adani Wilmar by selling its entire 44% stake, which is expected to raise more than \$2 billion. As part of the deal, Wilmar International Ltd. has agreed to acquire the 31% stake held by Adani flagship companies in the edible oil producer. As of December 27, Adani Wilmar's market capitalization stood at Rs 42,785 crore (\$5 billion).

The proceeds from this sale will be directed towards strengthening Adani Enterprises Ltd's core investments in infrastructure sectors, including energy, utilities, transport, logistics, and other primary industries.

iPhone 17 Pro & Pro Max To Feature Upgraded Cameras

According to a tipster on Weibo, Apple's upcoming iPhone 17 Pro and iPhone 17 Pro Max are expected to come with two significant camera upgrades. While the devices are not set to launch until later this year, the leaks and details surrounding their specifications have already started to emerge.

One of the most anticipated changes is the redesigned rear camera island, which will feature a horizontal layout. This design change will distinguish the new iPhones from their predecessors, adding a more modern aesthetic to the rear of the phones.

A significant camera upgrade is expected for both the iPhone 17 Pro and iPhone 17 Pro Max. The handsets are said to be equipped with a 48-megapixel telephoto camera, offering 5x optical zoom. This marks a major improvement over the 12-megapixel telephoto camera found in the iPhone 16 Pro models, which currently offers a maximum of 3x optical zoom. This upgraded telephoto lens will provide users with the ability to zoom in on distant objects without losing image quality, a key feature for photography enthusiasts and professionals.

These camera enhancements could bring the iPhone 17 Pro models closer in line with other high-end flagship smartphones in the market, which have increasingly advanced telephoto capabilities. With the 48-megapixel sensor, users can expect better low-light performance and sharper



images, even when zoomed in.

While other details regarding the specifications of the iPhone 17 Pro and iPhone 17 Pro Max remain under wraps, the camera upgrades are expected to be among the standout features of the devices. Apple's focus on improving the iPhone's photography capabilities continues to be a central theme in its yearly upgrades, ensuring that the devices remain competitive in the highly saturated smartphone market.

As the official release date approaches, more leaks and details are likely to surface, further revealing what Apple has in store for its loyal customer base.

16th-Century Royal Burial Regalia Discovered in Vilnius Cathedral

A remarkable discovery has been made in the Vilnius Cathedral in Lithuania, where royal burial regalia from the 16th century were recovered after being concealed for nearly a century. These invaluable artefacts, including crowns, rings, chains, a sceptre, and coffin plaques, were hidden in a crypt at the onset of World War II. The items, once belonging to influential figures from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland, offer significant insight into the region's historical and cultural heritage.



The discovery took place on December 16, 2024, when a team of experts, using an endoscopic camera, explored the cathedral's underground chambers. The artefacts were first uncovered in 1931 during restoration work following a flood that exposed royal sarcophagi. However, in 1939, as World War II loomed, the regalia were hidden for safekeeping to protect them from potential looting or destruction. Among the treasures are burial ornaments associated with Alexander Jagiellon, the Grand Duke of Lithuania and King of Poland, as well as two queens: Elisabeth of Austria and Barbara Radziwiłł.

These artefacts hold immense historical value, particularly since authentic items from this era are scarce in Lithuania. The families

of these royals played a vital role during the Polish Renaissance, contributing to the cultural and political landscape of the time. Mykolas Sotincenka, communications coordinator for the Vilnius Archdiocese, emphasized the rarity and significance of these relics, which offer a glimpse into the past.

Archbishop Gintaras Grušas referred to the regalia as "priceless historical treasures" and praised them for their exceptional craftsmanship in goldsmithing and jewellery. During the recovery, a newspaper from September 1939 was found wrapped around the items, confirming their deliberate concealment during the war. Rita Pauliukevičiūtė, director of the Vilnius Church Heritage Museum, noted that these artefacts symbolize Lithuania's historical strength.

Efforts to document and restore the regalia are underway, with plans to publicly display them later this year, allowing visitors to appreciate these extraordinary pieces of history.

ChatGPT Allowed Custom Nicknames and Professions Before Feature Was Pulled

OpenAI recently introduced several new customization options to its Custom Instructions feature for ChatGPT, offering users more control over how the AI generates responses. However, these options were removed shortly after being spotted by users, sparking speculation that the feature was released prematurely.

The new customization fields allowed users to input details such as their nickname, profession, and personality traits. This expansion of the Custom Instructions feature was briefly available on Thursday, with several users sharing screenshots on X (formerly Twitter) that showcased the new options. These enhancements

aimed to allow for more personalized and tailored responses, further enhancing the user experience.

Custom Instructions have been a key feature for ChatGPT, allowing users to provide specific preferences for how the AI should respond. For example, a user could specify that they prefer concise, formal, and analytical responses, ensuring that the chatbot's answers align with those preferences every time. The addition of the new fields promised even more granular control, making ChatGPT more adaptable to individual needs.

However, shortly after the feature's appearance, OpenAI removed these



new options, which led to speculation that the feature might not have been fully prepared for rollout. This move has left users wondering whether the company plans to revisit these cus-

tomization features in the future.

This development comes amid ongoing improvements to ChatGPT, as OpenAI continues to refine and ex-

plain the AI's capabilities. The company's CEO recently indicated that OpenAI is focusing on enhancing the personalization aspects of the chatbot, a direction that aligns with the recent trial of these new Custom Instruction fields.

While the full extent of the feature's future availability remains unclear, the brief introduction of customizable fields such as profession and nickname highlights OpenAI's commitment to making ChatGPT more responsive to user preferences. It's likely that more refined and fully implemented customization options will be rolled out in the future.

Entrepreneur Suggests Blinkit Introduce ATM-Like Service for Quick Cash Delivery

Harsh Punjabi, founder of Dot Company, recently sparked a conversation on social media by suggesting that Blinkit, a popular quick-commerce platform, introduce an innovative "ATM-like" service that would deliver cash directly to customers' homes within 10 minutes. Punjabi, who is also a content creator, took to X (formerly Twitter) to share the idea, tagging Blinkit's CEO, Albinder Dhindsa.

Punjabi explained that the inspiration behind his idea came from a personal situation. As he was preparing to leave for a trip, he realized he only had Rs 100 in cash and no way to access more quickly. In a world where convenience is key, he saw an opportunity for Blinkit to step in with a service similar to an ATM, delivering cash to customers' doorsteps in exchange for a UPI payment.

Quick-commerce platforms have already revolutionized the way consumers buy daily essentials by enabling fast delivery of groceries and other products within minutes. Blinkit, in particular, has expanded beyond groceries to offer items like electronics, phones, and laptops on demand. This growth has driven many users to think about how services can evolve to meet a broader range of needs, and Punjabi's suggestion fits into this innovative mindset.



The idea of delivering cash within minutes was met with mixed reactions. While some social media users found humor in the suggestion, noting that it's essentially "cash on delivery" for digital payments, others considered its practicality in real-world scenarios. Quick-commerce platforms have already transformed consumer behavior, and the potential for cash delivery could further enhance the sector's convenience and appeal.

Though Blinkit has yet to comment on the proposal, it highlights the ongoing creativity within the industry as platforms strive to stay competitive and cater to customer demands. As the quick-commerce sector continues to grow, more such unconventional ideas may emerge, pushing companies to rethink how they serve their customers in innovative ways.

Paris, We Are Coming: Pakistan International Airlines Ad Misfires, Memes Fly On X

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) found itself at the center of an unexpected social media storm after posting a promotional message about resuming flights between Islamabad and Paris. What was intended to be a celebratory announcement quickly turned into the subject of memes and criticism when the airline shared an image showing a plane seemingly heading toward Paris, with the Eiffel Tower in the background, accompanied by the caption, "Paris, we are coming today."

The post was meant to mark the relaunch of flights between the two cities on January 10, 2025, following the European Union's decision to lift restrictions on PIA. However, the choice of words and imagery unintentionally evoked memories of one of the most tragic events in modern history: the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Social media users quickly drew comparisons between the promotional message and the infamous phrase "We are coming today" used in the context of the tragic events that unfolded in 2001.

As a result, the post attracted a flurry of memes, jokes, and sharp criticism, with many questioning the tone and timing of the announcement. While PIA likely intended to celebrate its return to European skies after a long hiatus, the execution of the message backfired, prompting online users to make light of the



situation and share their own interpretations.

The airline's social media blunder highlights the risks of using powerful imagery and phrases without considering how they might be perceived by a wider audience. The ad's unintended connection to 9/11 led to a wave of reactions, both humorous and critical, on social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter).

This incident serves as a reminder of how sensitive topics and imagery can evoke unintended associations, especially in the age of social media where even a seemingly harmless post can quickly go viral and spark controversy. Despite the backlash, the attention PIA received also underscores the power of social media in shaping public discourse, for better or worse.

India Eyes Series Victory in Second Women's ODI Against Ireland

Following a dominant performance in the opening match, India will look to seal the three-match series with another clinical display against Ireland in the second women's ODI on Sunday. Despite fielding a relatively inexperienced side, India emerged victorious by six wickets in the first ODI, taking a 1-0 series lead.



Captain Smriti Mandhana continued her fine form, contributing a strong 41 runs to lay the foundation for India's chase. The partnership between Pratika Rawal and Tejal Hasabnis was crucial as they put together a century stand to guide India to victory. Their performances were especially valuable in the absence of regular captain Harmanpreet Kaur, who was rested for the series.

India also missed the services of pace spearhead Renuka Singh, the highest wicket-taker in the previous series against the West Indies. In her absence, young Titas Sadhu impressed by striking early, while Sayali Satghare claimed a wicket. Saima Thakor bowled a disciplined 10-over spell, and spinner Priya Mishra took two quick wickets. Vice-captain Deepti Sharma also made key contributions with the ball.

Mandhana, who had captained India against New Zealand, led the relatively inexperienced squad with poise, and the team management will be pleased with the bench strength, especially with the ODI World Cup looming later this year.

However, India's fielding in the first ODI left room for improvement. They dropped Leah Paul twice, allowing Ireland to recover from a difficult position and post over 200 runs. India's bowlers will aim to execute their plans better in the second ODI, looking to restrict Ireland to under 200 runs and finish the match more comfortably.

For Ireland, captain Gaby Lewis played a fine knock of 92, but lacked support

from the middle order. Leah Paul, benefiting from dropped chances, also scored a half-century. Ireland will need more from their batters to challenge India.

Ireland's bowling attack, apart from Aimee Maguire's three wickets, was ineffective, which allowed India to chase down the target with ease. Ireland, sitting at the bottom of the Women's Championship table, will need a significant performance improvement to secure their first-ever women's ODI win against India.

Squads: India: Smriti Mandhana (C), Deepti Sharma (VC), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Rodrigues, Uma Chetry (wk), Richa Ghosh (wk), Tejal Hasabnis, Raghvi Bist, Minnu Mani, Priya Mishra, Tanuja Kanwer, Titas Sadhu, Saima Thakor, Sayali Satghare.

Ireland: Gaby Lewis (C), Ava Canning, Christina Coulter Reilly, Alana Dalzell, Laura Delany, Georgina Dempsey, Sarah Forbes, Arlene Kelly, Joanna Loughran, Aimee Maguire, Leah Paul, Orla Prendergast, Una Raymond-Hoey, Freya Sargent, Rebecca Stokell.



Former Bangladesh cricket captain Tamim Iqbal has announced his retirement from international cricket, bringing an end to an illustrious career that spanned over 15 years. The 35-year-old made the announcement on Friday through a heartfelt post on Facebook, stating that his chapter in international cricket has come to a close.

In his post, Tamim expressed, "I have been away from international cricket for quite some time, and the distance will not be reduced. My chapter in international cricket is closed." His statement confirmed that he will no longer represent Bangladesh in international matches, marking a significant moment in the country's cricketing history.

Tamim Iqbal, who made his debut for Bangladesh in 2007, has been one of the most prominent figures in the nation's cricketing landscape. Over the years, he established himself as a key player in the team, especially as an opening batsman. Known for his solid technique and ability to anchor innings, Tamim played in numerous memorable matches for Bangladesh and

became the team's all-time leading run-scorer in both Tests and One-Day Internationals (ODIs).

Throughout his career, Tamim achieved significant milestones, including becoming the first Bangladeshi cricketer to score a double century in a Test match. His consistent performances helped elevate Bangladesh's standing in international cricket, and he was widely regarded as a role model for young cricketers in the country.

While his decision to retire came as a surprise to many, it was clear from his post that Tamim felt his time in international cricket had come to an end. Although he has stepped away from international competition, Tamim's contributions to Bangladesh cricket will always be remembered, and he leaves behind a legacy that has inspired many future generations.

As the cricketing world bids farewell to one of Bangladesh's greatest players, fans and colleagues alike will undoubtedly continue to celebrate his remarkable career and the impact he made on the sport in his home country.

Janardhan Reddy Becomes National Carrom Champion

Ends 64-Year Drought for AP with Victory at 29th All India Federation Championship

TPN Correspondent

Visakhapatnam, Jan 12: Ch. Janardhan Reddy, a 35-year-old carrom player from Visakhapatnam, has made history by winning the 29th All India Federation Carrom Championship held in Nellore from January 5 to 8. His remarkable victory ended a 64-year drought for Andhra Pradesh in this prestigious tournament.

Janardhan addressed the media on Saturday as he returned to Visakhapatnam, sharing his journey from humble beginnings. Born to daily laborers Ch. Sairam Reddy and Ch. Mani, Janardhan was inspired by his father's passion for carrom at a local club. Despite facing challenges, including setbacks in transitioning to senior-level competitions, Janardhan's perseverance led him to triumph.

Janardhan's early career saw him secure a sub-junior title in 2005, followed by victories in Junior and Youth State Championships. However, it was through the guidance



and support of mentors like Dr. Neeraj Kumar Sampathy, who also extended financial assistance, that Janardhan found the strength to continue.

In this year's championship, Janardhan showcased exceptional skill, defeating former world champions Abdul Rahman and Prashant More, as well as World No. 3 S. Aditya. He clinched the title with a dominant final performance, outclassing Sandeep Dive with scores of 25-06

and 25-08. Janardhan, who balances his passion for carrom with his work in photostat repairs and teaching at Shiva Shivani School, expressed his ambition: "Winning the national championship is a proud moment, but my dream is to win the World Cup and bring global recognition to Andhra Pradesh."

Abdul Jaleel, Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh Carrom Association, hailed Janardhan's victory as a proud achievement for the state. He emphasized the importance of government support to help Janardhan realize his World Cup aspirations.

Satwiksairaj and Chirag Shetty's Malaysia Super 1000 Journey Ends in Semifinals

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty's impressive run at the Malaysia Super 1000 badminton tournament came to a disappointing end in the semifinals after they were defeated by Korea's Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae. The Indian duo, who were seeded seventh, lost 10-21, 15-21 in a 40-minute match on Saturday in Kuala Lumpur. Last season, Satwik and Chirag had made it to the finals of the same tournament, but this time, they couldn't get past the semifinal hurdle.



ing 6-11 at the break in the opening game, and despite efforts to mount a comeback, the Koreans wrapped up the first game in just 19 minutes. In the second game, Satwik and Chirag showed more intent and controlled the play initially, going into the interval with an 11-8 lead. However, they couldn't sustain the momentum, and Kim and Seo took charge to seal the win.

Kim and Seo, who reunited for the 2025 season, are known for their mixed doubles success. Seo had previously partnered with Kang Min Hyuk to win a world title in 2023, while Kim earned a mixed doubles silver at the Paris Olympics. Satwik acknowledged the duo's exceptional skills, particularly in not giving away easy points.

"They played really well, and we could have followed our game plan a bit better. Instead, we played some random strokes, but kudos to them for playing a solid game," Satwik said after the match. Reflecting on the game, Satwik mentioned that the pace of play was slower than in previous rounds, which posed a challenge. Despite the loss, he saw it as a valuable learning experience, emphasizing that the journey was long and they still had a lot to work on.

The Asian Games champions found themselves trail-

Looking ahead, Satwik and Chirag are set to lead India's challenge at the India Open Super 750, starting January 14. They will face Malaysia's Wei Chong Man and Kai Wun Tee in the opening round. Satwik expressed excitement for the tournament, saying, "It's our home tournament, and we really want to play well and perform at our best."

Sri Lanka Deny New Zealand Clean Sweep with 140-Run Victory in 3rd ODI

In a remarkable display of bowling, Sri Lanka defeated New Zealand by 140 runs in the third and final ODI of their series at Eden Park on Saturday. This victory prevented the hosts from securing a clean sweep, although New Zealand still clinched the series 2-1.

Sri Lanka, led by Charith Asalanka, posted a total of 290/8 in their 50 overs after winning the toss and opting to bat. Pathum Nissanka top-scored for the visitors with 66 runs off 42 balls, including six fours and five sixes. Kusal Mendis contributed 54 runs from 48 balls, while Janith Liyange made 53 runs off 52 balls. Kamindu Mendis also played a solid knock, scoring 46 runs from 71 balls.

For New Zealand, Matt Henry was the standout bowler, taking four wickets for 55 runs in his 10 overs. Mitchell Santner supported with two wickets, and Nathan Smith and Michael Bracewell each claimed one wicket.

Chasing a target of 291 runs, New



Zealand's batting line-up crumbled under pressure. The Blackcaps were bowled out for just 150 runs in 29.4 overs. Mark Chapman was the only significant contributor with the bat, scoring 81 runs off 81 balls, including 10 fours and a six. The rest of the New Zealand batsmen struggled, with Nathan Smith contributing 17 runs and Michael Bracewell adding 13 runs. Matt Henry, usually reliable with the bat, scored 12 runs from just

six balls, but it was not enough to turn the tide. Sri Lanka's bowlers were exceptional in restricting New Zealand. Asitha Fernando, Maheesh Theekshana, and Eshan Malinga each took three wickets. Fernando's figures of 3/26 in 7 overs earned him the Player of the Match award. Theekshana (3/35 in 7.4 overs) and Malinga (3/35 in 7 overs) also delivered crucial spells. Janith Liyange chipped in with one wicket for 16 runs in three overs.

Despite the loss, New Zealand won the series 2-1, with Matt Henry named Player of the Series for his outstanding bowling throughout the three matches.

Brief Score: Sri Lanka 290/8 in 50 overs (Pathum Nissanka 66, Kusal Mendis 54, Matt Henry 4/55) New Zealand 150 all out in 29.4 overs (Mark Chapman 81, Nathan Smith 17, Asitha Fernando 3/26).



Game Changer Shatters Records with Rs. 186 Crore First Day Collections

Ram Charan's much-anticipated film, *Game Changer*, directed by Shankar, has made an explosive debut at the box office, raking in a phenomenal Rs. 186 crore worldwide on its first day. Released as a Sankranti gift, the movie, produced by Dil Raju under the banner of Sri Venkateswara Creations, has taken the box office by storm, earning a spot among the top-grossing Indian films.

The film features Ram Charan in a dual role, set against a gripping political backdrop, which has resonated strongly with audiences. The movie's impressive opening collections have firmly placed it in the ranks of the highest-grossing films on day one, marking it as a true "game changer" in the industry.

Game Changer now joins the prestigious list of films that have achieved remarkable first-day collections, although it still trails behind the top contenders. Allu Arjun's *Pushpa 2: The Rule* holds the top spot with a staggering Rs. 294 crore on its opening day. Rajamouli's magnum opus *RRR* follows closely with Rs. 223 crore, while *Baahubali 2* also made an impressive Rs. 214 crore on its first day.

Despite these giant numbers, the success of *Game Changer* on day one has already turned heads, and it looks set to continue performing well at the box office. The political drama, featuring Ram Charan in a powerful new avatar, has intrigued moviegoers, and the film's strong opening indicates it could maintain its momen-



tum in the days to come.

With its record-breaking start, *Game Changer* is already being hailed as one of the most successful films in recent times, and it will be interesting to see how it continues to perform in the coming weeks, especially during the festive season. The film's success reaffirms the massive star power of Ram Charan and the directorial prowess of Shankar.

Daaku Maharaaj: Gains Strength In Advance Bookings!

With just one day to go until its grand release, *Daaku Maharaaj* is creating a buzz across the industry. Featuring Nandamuri Balakrishna in the lead role, the film's promotional campaign concluded with a successful pre-release event yesterday. Since then, advance bookings have seen a strong uptick, particularly in the B and C centers, where the film is already gaining significant traction.

Balakrishna, known as the "Man of the Masses," is once again set to deliver a high-energy performance, with the action-packed film expected to resonate deeply with his loyal fanbase. Directed by Bobby, a filmmaker renowned for his success with action dramas, *Daaku Maharaaj* taps into the pulse of mass audiences. Both the hero-director duo have proven time and again that their films perform exceedingly well in rural and semi-urban regions, and this movie seems poised to follow suit.

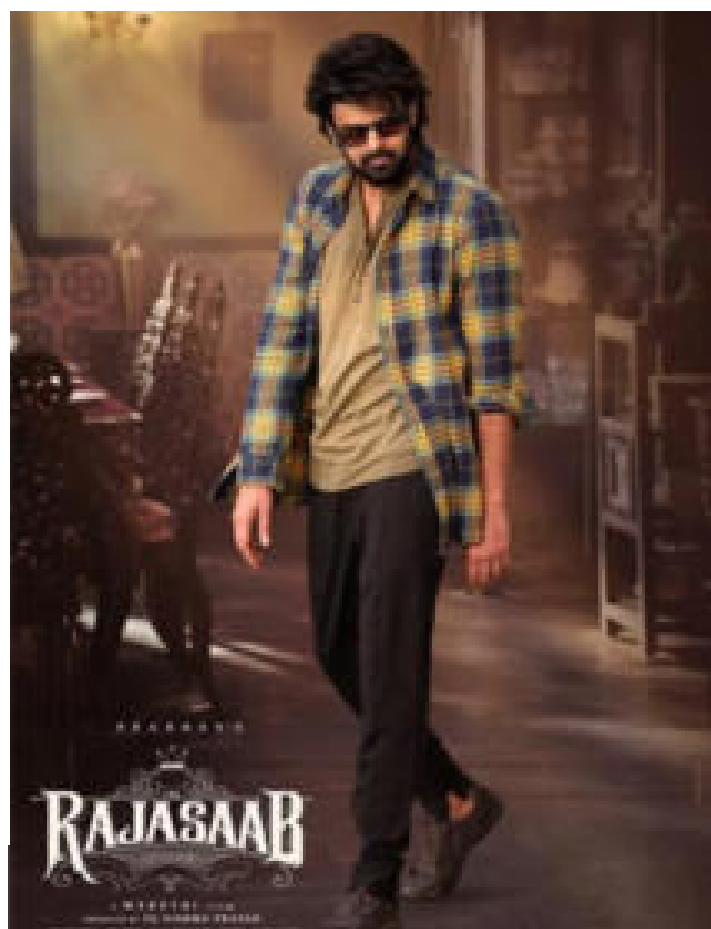
Expectations are high for the film's performance, particularly in the Ceded and Andhra regions, where rural audiences dominate the box office. Balakrishna's previous hits, such as *Akhanda*, *Veera Simha Reddy*, and *Bhagavanth Kesari*, performed remarkably well in these areas, and *Daaku Maharaaj* is anticipated to continue that success. The recently released trailer, packed with intense action sequences, has only added fuel to the excitement, with fans eager to witness the high-



tane drama on the big screen.

Unlike the urban-centric *Game Changer*, which caters to a more metropolitan audience, *Daaku Maharaaj* promises to deliver what the rural masses crave – a thrilling, action-packed spectacle. This strategic positioning is expected to help *Daaku Maharaaj* capture the attention of a wider audience.

As the clock ticks down to its premiere, there's no doubt that *Daaku Maharaaj* is set to make a strong impact at the box office, and early trends indicate the film could emerge victorious in the coming days. Fans are eager, and the excitement is palpable!



Prabhas' The Raja Saab Release Postponed

Prabhas, the biggest pan-India star, was all set to mesmerize his fans with his upcoming film *The Raja Saab*, a horror comedy romantic entertainer directed by Maruthi. Initially slated for release on April 10, 2025, the film is now expected to miss its original release date. While the exact reason for the delay remains unconfirmed, reports suggest that the film is still in its final stages of production and may require a bit more time before it graces the big screen.

According to the latest report from *Pink Villa*, although the film's release has been postponed, fans can expect a special poster to be unveiled during the Sankranti festival, keeping the excitement alive. The buzz around the film intensified recently, especially after the makers of Ajith's *Good Bad Ugly* announced its release on April 10, 2025, prompting speculation that *The Raja Saab* would likely shift its release date. This news has fu-

eled the rumors of the delay, but official confirmation from the film's team is still awaited to clarify the situation.

Starring Prabhas in the lead, *The Raja Saab* also features Malavika Mohanan and Nidhi Agerwal as the female leads. The film is being produced by People Media Factory, with Thaman composing the music, adding to the anticipation for its release. As one of the most highly awaited projects of the year, fans are eager to see Prabhas in a different avatar, and this horror comedy entertainer promises to bring a fresh and exciting blend of genres to the screen.

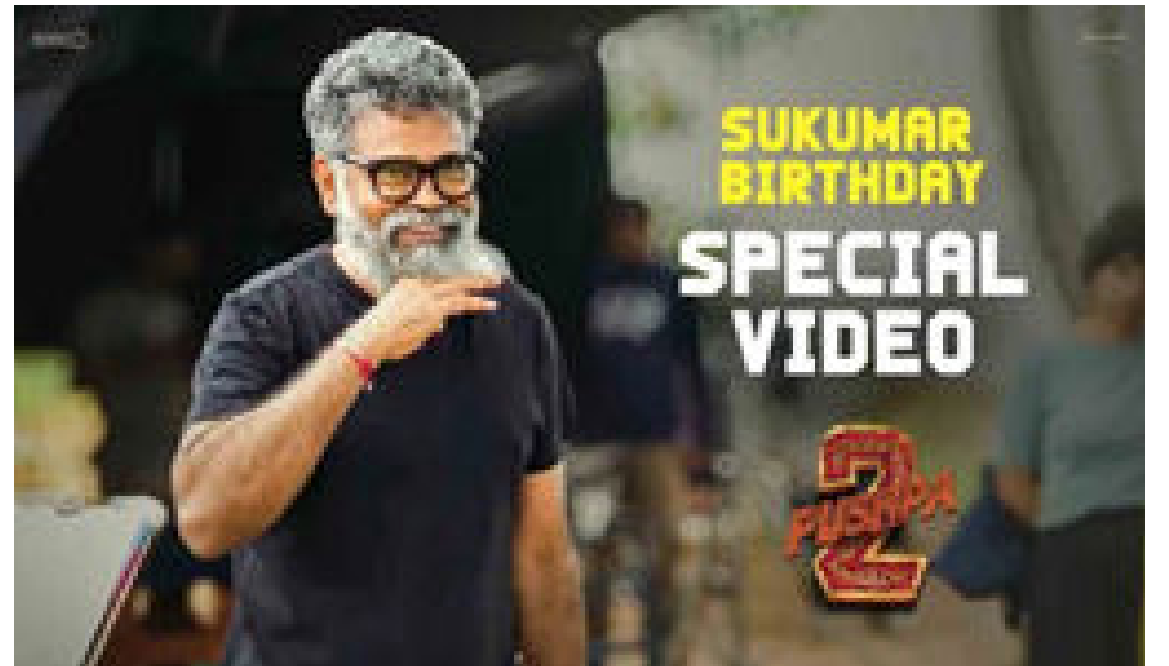
While the release delay might be a disappointment for fans eagerly awaiting the film, the final product promises to be a big-ticket entertainer that will be worth the wait. Official updates are expected soon, and fans can stay hopeful for the eventual release of *The Raja Saab* in theaters.

Sukumar's Birthday Special: A Heartfelt Video Tribute from 'Pushpa 2: The Rule' Team

Today marks the birthday of the talented Tollywood director Sukumar, who is celebrated for his immense contribution to Indian cinema. Sukumar is widely recognized for his innovative storytelling and unique directorial style, and his latest film, *Pushpa 2: The Rule*, is a testament to his cinematic brilliance.

Pushpa 2: The Rule, a sequel to the hugely successful *Pushpa: The Rise*, has taken the box office by storm. Directed by Sukumar, the film features the charismatic Allu Arjun in the lead role, with the beautiful Rashmika Mandanna playing the heroine. The movie, which released on December 5, has not only achieved massive commercial success but has also raked in over ₹1850 crores globally. With such an overwhelming response, the makers are now planning to take the film to international markets, with a release in China on the horizon.

In honor of Sukumar's birthday, the team behind *Pushpa 2* shared a special video tribute, which has quickly gone viral on social media. The video highlights the dedication and hard work Sukumar put into crafting *Pushpa 2*, showcasing his exceptional vision and leadership. The video also features heartfelt messages from the cast, including Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna, Srileela,



and renowned choreographer Ganesh Acharya, who express their gratitude for working with Sukumar and share memorable experiences from the film's journey.

The video is a testament to the mutual respect and admiration between Sukumar and his team, as they reflect on the success of *Pushpa 2* and the director's role in bringing out the best in each actor. As the film con-

tinues to break records, the heartfelt birthday wishes from the cast and crew serve as a reminder of Sukumar's influence and his significant role in the success of the *Pushpa* franchise.

The special video has been warmly received by fans and industry professionals alike, further cementing Sukumar's legacy as one of Tollywood's most respected directors.

NTR-Prashanth Neel Project: Shooting to Begin on January 17

Tollywood's Young Tiger NTR is currently riding high on success, following the blockbuster hit *Devara*, directed by Koratala Siva. The film, which amassed over Rs. 500 crore worldwide, cemented NTR's status as one of the top stars in the industry. Following this success, NTR is set to collaborate with renowned Kannada director Prashanth Neel, famous for his work on the *KGF* franchise and the upcoming film *Salar*. This much-anticipated project, tentatively titled #NTRNeel, is generating a lot of buzz, with fans eagerly awaiting the start of its production.

A recent update has confirmed that the shooting of this high-profile film will begin on January 17, following the Sankranti festival. The first schedule of the shoot is reportedly set to take place in Mangalore, Karnataka, where key scenes featuring NTR will



be filmed. This marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for the actor and the director, who are both known for their larger-than-life cinematic vision.

The makers of the film have ambitious plans for its production timeline. It is reported that they aim to complete the filming within 7 months, with the goal of releasing the mov-

ie before Sankranti next year. This ambitious schedule reflects the eagerness of both the team and the fans to witness NTR's collaboration with Prashanth Neel, a director known for his cinematic flair and intense storytelling, as seen in the *KGF* films.

While the official title of the film is yet to be confirmed, many are speculating that it could be named *Dragon*, based on the ongoing discussions among fans and industry insiders. The upcoming film is expected to be a major spectacle, with NTR in an intense and powerful role, further raising expectations for this project.

As the excitement builds, fans can look forward to more updates and details about this action-packed collaboration between NTR and Prashanth Neel.