

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



Dy CM Pawan Kalyan Visits Palani Dandayudha Pani Swamy

- Dy CM prays at Palani Dandayudha Pani Swamy temple, seeks blessings for the nation.
Plans to discuss Palani-Tirupati daily train service with the Central Government.
Proposes restarting Palani-Tirupati bus service after discussions with APSRTC.

TPN Correspondent | Palani, Tamil Nadu

As part of his spiritual tour of South Indian temples, Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan visited the Palani Dandayudha Pani Swamy temple on Friday. Accompanied by his son Akira Nandan, he reached the hill shrine via ropeway, where temple officials extended a Poornakumbha welcome. After performing special pujas, the temple priests blessed him and presented prasadam. Speaking to the media, Pawan Kalyan emphasized the need for better connectivity between Palani and Tirupati, two major pilgrimage centers. He assured devotees that their long-pending request for a Palani-Tirupati daily train service would be taken up with the Central Government. Additionally, he announced his intention to restart the Palani-Tirupati bus service after consultations with APSRTC officials. "Pilgrims visiting Palani and Tirupati face difficulties due to the lack of direct transport. I will personally take this matter to the Center and ensure necessary steps are taken," he stated. Visit to Thiruparankundram and Madurai Meenakshi Temples Before visiting Palani, Pawan Kalyan offered prayers at Thiruparankundram Sri Murugan Swamy temple near Madurai. This temple is revered as one of the Shasta Shanmukha Kshetras and holds great significance in Tamil Nadu's spiritual tradition. Temple priests explained its historical and religious importance, and Pawan Kalyan performed special pujas seeking divine blessings. Later, he visited Madurai Meenakshi Amman Temple, one of the most iconic temples in South India. He offered silk sarees, flowers, and fruits to Goddess Meenakshi and participated in Parashakti Parayanam. Special rituals were performed in his presence, and he was briefed on the temple's architectural grandeur and spiritual legacy. Throughout his temple tour, Pawan Kalyan interacted with devotees, temple scholars, and local authorities, reaffirming his commitment to preserving and promoting cultural ties between Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. His visit has garnered significant attention, with many seeing it as a symbolic gesture of strengthening inter-state spiritual and cultural connections.



Criminals in Politics Must Be Rooted Out - CM Naidu

- CM warns against criminals hiding behind politics, calling them a threat to democracy.
Forms a three-member committee to decide support for Uttarandhra Upadhyaya MLC elections.
Stresses the need for a strong campaign to secure victory for alliance candidates in upcoming MLC elections.



TPN Correspondent Amaravati, Feb 15

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has issued a strong warning against criminals operating under the guise of political leaders, calling them a serious threat to democracy. He criticized those who have allegedly undermined democratic values in AP over the past five years, stating that they are now seeking new political fronts to continue their agenda. During a meeting with TDP leaders at NTR Bhavan in Mangalagiri, CM Chandrababu reviewed strategies for the upcoming MLC elections and the welfare of TDP workers. Key leaders, including Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu, TDP State President Palla Srinivasa Rao, MLC Ashok Babu, and MLA Chintamaneni Prabhakar, participated in the discussion. As part of the meeting, Chandrababu

formed a three-member committee to decide whom to support in the Uttarandhra Upadhyaya MLC elections. The committee comprises MP Bharat, MLC Vepada Chiranjeevi Rao, and AS Ramakrishna. He also emphasized the importance of securing victory for alliance candidates Alapati Raja and Perabathula Rajasekhar in the graduate MLC elections for the Godavari and Krishna-Guntur regions. Expressing deep concern, Chandrababu accused the previous government of turning AP into a nightmare over the past five years. He stated: "It is extremely dangerous when criminals disguise themselves as political leaders. They must be identified and removed. Over the last five years, the state has suffered under a regime of fear, violence, and lawlessness." He further accused his political op-

ponents of attempting to manipulate public perception through repeated lies and suppressing the opposition through violence and intimidation. "There were massacres, attacks, and destruction under their rule. They tried to divide communities and suppress those who stood against them. But in a democracy, governance must be conducted according to the law." Apart from election strategies, CM Chandrababu reviewed the financial support provided to TDP workers, inquiring about the funds spent so far and future assistance required. He assured party members that their welfare remained a top priority. With MLC elections approaching, the TDP-Jana Sena-BJP alliance is intensifying efforts to secure key legislative seats, ensuring strong political representation for teachers and graduates in the state.

Jana Sena Local Leaders Condemn Allegations on MLA Balaraju



TPN Correspondent | Jilugumilli

Jana Sena Party leaders from Polavaram constituency have strongly condemned the allegations published by Point News against MLA Chirri Balaraju. Addressing the media on Friday at Jilugumilli police station in Eluru district, Janasena leaders Karatam Sai and Gaddamanugu Ravi Kumar claimed the report contained baseless accusations and demanded a public clarification from the newspaper.

The leaders insisted that if Point News has evidence to support its claims, it should present them

publicly. Otherwise, they urged the editor to issue an immediate apology through the publication. A formal petition was submitted to Jilugumilli CI B. Venkateswara Rao and SI Naveen Kumar, requesting legal action.

The media conference saw participation from Jana Sena leaders across seven mandals, along with alliance leaders and supporters. Meanwhile, Point News has reiterated that it stands by its reporting and will submit all relevant evidence to the Jana Sena office, ensuring that the information is presented to party chief and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan.



Jagan Condemns Arrest of Vallabhaneni Vamsi, Accuses Govt of Abuse of Power

TPN Correspondent Andhra Pradesh, Feb 15

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSRCP chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has strongly reacted to the arrest of former Gannavaram MLA Vallabhaneni Vamsi. Taking to social media, Jagan condemned the arrest, alleging that law and justice have no place in the state under the current government. He accused the ruling coalition of gross abuse of power, implementing a "Red Book Constitution" instead of adhering to democratic principles. Jagan expressed anger that illegal arrests are being carried out to suppress political opponents. He warned the state government that it would be held responsible for any security issues faced by Vamsi while in custody.

# Handloom Sector Crucial for Economic Growth: Union Minister Giriraj Singh



- Union Minister Giriraj Singh inaugurates Andhra Pradesh pavilion at Bharat Tex 2025.
- Government committed to strengthening the handloom sector and expanding global reach.
- Andhra Pradesh's handloom heritage showcased, promoting local artisans and textiles.

TPN Correspondent  
New Delhi, Feb 15

Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh emphasized the importance of India's handloom sector in driving economic growth while inaugurating the Andhra Pradesh pavilion at Bharat Tex 2025 in New Delhi on Friday. He was accompanied by Rekha Rani, Commissioner of Handlooms and Textiles, and MP Kaliseti Appalanaidu, who joined in unveiling the state's showcase of traditional weaves. Addressing the event, Giriraj Singh reaffirmed the government's commitment to reviving and promoting the handloom

industry. He noted that Andhra Pradesh is home to some of the country's finest weaving traditions and that the pavilion reflects the exceptional craftsmanship of the state's artisans. He assured continued government support for weavers through innovation, market expansion, and sustainable development. The Andhra Pradesh pavilion features a diverse display of the state's celebrated handloom heritage, including Venkatagiri, Mangalagiri, Dharmavaram, Upada, and Kalamkari textiles. The initiative aims to boost the state's textile industry on national and international platforms. Commissioner Rekha Rani stressed the significance of Bharat Tex

in providing a global stage for Andhra Pradesh's artisans, helping them secure sustainable growth and market connections. MP Kaliseti Appalanaidu highlighted the economic role of handloom weaving, calling it a vital source of livelihood for thousands of families. He expressed confidence that the exhibition would enhance market opportunities and recognition for weavers. The Andhra Pradesh pavilion will remain open throughout Bharat Tex 2025, offering visitors live demonstrations, an immersive experience of the state's textile traditions, and the chance to purchase authentic handcrafted textiles.



## Dy CM Pawan Kalyan Appoints Coordinators for Upcoming Graduate MLC Elections

TPN Correspondent  
Andhra Pradesh, Feb 15

As Andhra Pradesh prepares for the upcoming Graduate MLC elections, Deputy Chief Minister and Jana Sena Party chief Pawan Kalyan has taken a crucial step by appointing coordinators for each parliamentary constituency. The elections will be held for two Graduate MLC seats, covering the Godavari districts and the combined Krishna-Guntur region. With the nomination withdrawal period now over, coalition parties have intensified their campaign efforts ahead of the February 27 polling. The results will be declared on March 3.

In a strategic move, Pawan Kalyan has designated key party leaders to oversee election management in each parliamentary segment. The appointed coordinators are:

**Rajahmundry** – Yarnagula Srinivasa Rao  
**Kakinada** – Tummala Ramaswamy  
**Amalapuram** – Bandaru Srinivasa Rao  
**Narasapuram** – Channamalla Chandrasekhar  
**Eluru** – Reddy Appalanaidu  
**Machilipatnam** – Bandi Ramakrishna  
**Vijayawada** – Ammisetti Vasu  
**Guntur** – Nayab Kamal  
**Narasaraopet** – Vadrana Markandeya Babu

With the elections nearing, these coordinators will play a crucial role in mobilizing graduate voters, coordinating campaign efforts, and ensuring the party's strong presence across constituencies.

## Jagan Condemns Arrest of Vallabhaneni Vamsi, Accuses Govt of Abuse of Power

Continued from page 1

"The way the Chandrababu Naidu-led coalition is handling the case of Vallabhaneni Vamsi is deeply unjust. A Dalit youth exposed the ruling party's conspiracy by revealing in court that the TDP pressured him to file a false case in the Gannavaram incident. Fearing exposure, the ruling party is now resorting to blatant misuse of power," Jagan tweeted.

Jagan further alleged that TDP leaders and police threatened the family of the Dalit youth on the very day he testified in court. He pointed out that the case is being monitored by the Supreme Court, and the lower court is investigating it under its directives.

"If the truth about the false case emerges, isn't it an insult to the investigation process, the judicial system, and the legal framework itself?" Jagan questioned.

Jagan also condemned the case filed against former Denuluru MLA Kotharu Abbayya Chowdhury. He claimed that a TDP MLA abused Abbayya Chowdhury's driver in a Kalyana Mandapam and later filed an SC/ST Atrocities case against Chowdhury.

"Crores of people have seen the video evidence of the TDP MLA's behavior. Who should really be held accountable here?" Jagan asked.

Slamming Chandrababu Naidu, Jagan accused the TDP of diverting public attention from unfulfilled promises by filing false cases against YSRCP leaders.

"Chandrababu garu, the people are watching and recording your misdeeds. You will have to pay the price for your actions," Jagan warned in his statement.

## Data-Driven Governance Key to Future Growth, Says RP Sisodia

TPN Correspondent  
Guntur, Feb 15

Special Chief Secretary to the Government (Revenue), RP Sisodiya, highlighted the transformative power of data-driven governance while inaugurating the National Seminar on Advances in Business Analytics and Intelligence at Acharya Nagarjuna University. Addressing students and professionals, he stressed that artificial intelligence and big data are reshaping sectors like revenue management and public service delivery, making informed decision-making more effective.

Sisodiya pointed out that integrating analytics into governance and business will offer a competitive edge in the evolving economic landscape. He urged institutions to focus on technological advancements while maintaining ethical considerations in data usage.

The seminar, presided over by Acharya Nagarjuna University Vice-Chancellor Prof. K. Gangadhara Rao, emphasized the need for collaboration between academic institutions and industry to equip students with critical skills in AI and data analytics. Prof. R. Siva Ram Prasad, Head of the Department of Commerce and Business Administration, underlined how data analytics is shaping business strategies and decision-making.

Keynote speaker Prof. Vijaya Bhaskar from IIM Visakhapatnam discussed AI's growing role in business intelligence, while Varsha Mamidi from IIM Raipur spoke on the intersection of data analytics and intellectual property rights. Prof. Srinivasa Murthy from IPE Hyderabad elaborated on predictive analytics and its real-world applications across industries. Industry leaders and researchers shared insights into emerging technologies, big data management challenges, and AI-driven analytics. Sessions also demonstrated tools like Power BI and Tableau, showcasing their impact on strategic business decisions.



## HC Rejects Bail Plea of Tulasibabu in Raghurama Custodial Torture Case

TPN Correspondent  
Amaravati, Feb 15

The Andhra Pradesh High Court has dismissed the bail petition of Kamepalli Tulasibabu, an accused in the Raghurama custodial torture case. The court ruled that bail could not be granted at this stage as several key accused in the case are yet to be arrested.

Tulasibabu, currently lodged in Guntur District Jail, had moved the High Court seeking bail. After hearing arguments, the court had reserved its verdict, which was delivered on Friday, rejecting his plea.

In contrast, the Guntur court had recently granted bail to retired CID Additional DSP Vijay Pal, another accused in the same case. However, Tulasibabu opted to file his bail petition in the High Court instead of the Guntur court, resulting in a legal setback.

This case, involving the alleged custodial torture of AP Assembly Deputy Speaker Raghurama Raju, has drawn significant attention, with legal proceedings closely watched.

## Outsourcing Employees Express Concerns Over APCAS Cancellation in Visakhapatnam Meeting

TPN Correspondent  
Visakhapatnam, Feb 15

A meeting of the outsourcing employees of Visakhapatnam district was held on Friday under the chairmanship of COEA-APJAC Visakhapatnam District Chairman T. Sreenubabu. Several key leaders, including COEA-APJAC State President Suman, Associate President G. Sampath Kumar, Visakhapatnam District General Secretary Dilleswar Rao, and APJAC (Amaravati) Visakhapatnam District Chairman Nageswara Reddy, attended the meeting.

The leaders expressed disappointment over the recent cabinet decision regarding the cancellation of APCAS, stating that it has caused distress among outsourcing employees. They noted that APJAC Amaravati, under the leadership of Bopparaju Garu, immediately met with government officials and submitted a memorandum highlighting the concerns of outsourcing employees, who fear potential job insecurity due to private agencies. They urged the government to introduce a more favorable policy that ensures stability and job security for outsourcing employees. The leaders emphasized the need for unity among outsourcing employees in Visakhapatnam district and across the state to collectively address any future challenges. They reaffirmed that COEA-APJAC, under the honorary presidency of Bopparaju Garu, is the only association actively working for the welfare of outsourcing employees in Andhra Pradesh. Discussions during the meeting also included strategies to strengthen the association, formation of division committees, and membership expansion.

## CRDA to Appoint Brand Ambassadors for Amaravati

TPN Correspondent  
Amaravati, Feb 17

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (AP CRDA) has decided to appoint brand ambassadors in various stages to elevate the global profile of Amaravati, announced S. Suresh Kumar, Principal Secretary of the Municipal and Urban Development Department. The initiative, formalized through G.O. 107, aims to position Amaravati as a world-class capital.

According to Suresh Kumar, the nominations for Amaravati brand ambassadors are being selected by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and the CM's Office. The ambassadors, appointed for a one-year term, will play a crucial role in promoting the economic, regional, and administrative advantages of Amaravati while engaging with stakeholders.

He emphasized that Amaravati should be developed as a Smart City, and ambassadors will be tasked with creating global awareness through conferences, seminars, and investor interactions. They will also be responsible for social media campaigns, highlighting success stories, and countering misleading narratives about the capital project. Additionally, educational institutions, cultural organizations, and local leaders will be encouraged to collaborate in Amaravati's development.

# Minister Vasamsetty Subhash Emphasized NDA's Commitment to Welfare and Development



**TPN | K. Govinda Raju Ramachandrapuram, Feb 15**  
Andhra Pradesh State Labour Minister Vasamsetty Subhash stated that the progress of Andhra Pradesh is only possible under the NDA coalition government, which is committed to welfare, development, job creation, and investment attraction. He was speaking at a wide-ranging meeting of graduate MLC voters in Pamarru, K. Gangavaram mandal, Ramachandrapuram constituency, where he participated as a chief guest alongside TDP State General Secretary and MLC election observer Ganni Krishna.

Minister Subhash highlighted the coalition's vision for economic recovery and urged voters to support NDA's candidate, Perabathula Rajasekhara, in the MLC elections on February 27. He stressed that voting for the coalition would ensure stability and continued progress. Addressing the gathering, Ganni Krishna pointed out that the previous YSRCP regime had led to economic decline across all sectors, and the NDA government is now working to restore lost opportunities and drive employment growth. He emphasized that Perabathula Rajasekhara understands the con-

cerns of graduates and is the right candidate to represent them. Ramachandrapuram Election In-charge Kakinada Rama Rao explained the MLC election process and voting procedure, assuring that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu is focused on attracting foreign investments to accelerate the state's development. The event was attended by alliance leaders, including Pappu Masenu Venkanna, along with TDP activists and supporters from the constituency.

# Minister Balaveeranjanyaswamy warns YSRCP leaders of action if they don't reform

**TPN Correspondent Prakasam, Feb 15**

Minister Balaveeranjanyaswamy has issued a strong warning to YSRCP leaders, stating that if they do not change their ways, strict action will be taken against them. The Minister made these remarks while participating in the Jayanti celebrations of former CM Damodaram Sanjeevaiah at the Ongole Collectorate. Speaking on the occasion, Balaveeranjanyaswamy asserted that the coalition government is not engaging in illegal arrests or partisan actions, and any arrests are based purely on evidence and investigation. He also recalled that, even while in the opposition, he had exposed the misdeeds of YCP leader Vallabhaneni Vamsi, accusing him and other YSRCP leaders of inciting violence and setting fire to party offices. He further alleged that the complainant in the TDP office attack case was kidnapped and forced to give false statements. The Minister reiterated that the Super Six welfare schemes promised by the



NDA government are being actively implemented across Andhra Pradesh. He criticized the YSRCP leaders for ignoring the people's mandate and continuing their previous ways despite being voted out. Balaveeranjanyaswamy also announced that CM Nara Chandrababu Naidu will be participating in the Swachh Andhra program in Kandukur today, emphasizing the government's commitment to cleanliness and development.

# MLA Tatiparthi Chandrasekhar Accuses NDA Govt of Running a 'Demonic Regime'



**TPN Correspondent Yerragondapalem, Feb 15**  
Yerragondapalem MLA Tatiparthi Chandrasekhar has launched a scathing attack on the NDA-led Andhra Pradesh government, claiming that the state is being ruled like a "demonic kingdom" rather than under constitutional principles. Speaking at a press conference on Friday, he alleged that every month, a new sensational case is fabricated to divert public attention from government failures. He further accused the ruling party of misusing the police force as a political tool, alleging that law enforcement is being turned into a "pocket organization" of the ruling coalition. He questioned whether Chandrababu Naidu's administration is deliberately creating bloodshed under the so-called "Red Book" rule. Referring to the recent TDP office attack case, Chandrasekhar alleged that key witness Satyavardhan was being intimidated and falsely implicated. He questioned why the police forcibly took him away, calling it an attempt to silence those speaking against the government. The YSRCP MLA also claimed that false cases and illegal arrests were being carried out across the state to harass opposition supporters. He accused the ruling party of spreading lies and propaganda against the YSR Congress Party, stating that Chandrababu Naidu, who once promised to create wealth, has failed miserably within six months of coming to power. Party activists and supporters attended the press conference, expressing concerns over the alleged misuse of power by the ruling coalition.

# YS Sharmila Questions BJP Over Pulwama Attack, Demands White Paper

**TPN Correspondent Andhra Pradesh, Feb 15**  
AP PCC Chief YS Sharmila has raised serious questions about the 2019 Pulwama terrorist attack, demanding that the BJP-led central government release a white paper on the incident. Speaking on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of the attack, Sharmila paid tribute to the 40 CRPF personnel who lost their lives, stating that the country will never forget their sacrifice.

Calling February 14 a black day in India's history, she questioned, "Who benefited the most from this attack? What has the investigation revealed so far? Who has taken responsibility for the security failure?" She accused the BJP of failing to provide clear answers to these questions and alleged that the central government lacks the courage to release a detailed report on the attack.

Sharmila further stated that the Congress party has repeatedly demanded transparency but claimed that the government is evading accountability. She urged people to remember the sacrifices of the soldiers while also seeking answers to the unresolved questions surrounding the attack.



# Somireddy Slams Kakani Govardhan Reddy Over Land Scam Allegations

**TPN Correspondent Nellore, Feb 15**

Nellore MLA Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy has launched a scathing attack on former minister Kakani Govardhan Reddy, accusing him of massive corruption during the previous YSRCP regime. Addressing the media after appearing for an adjournment in the Railway Court on Friday, Somireddy alleged that an illegal case was filed against him during the Jagan government as part of a political vendetta. He accused Kakani of grabbing 57.5 acres of land a day before the election code came into effect. "An acre costs ₹1 crore, but Kakani acquired it for just ₹15 lakh per acre," he alleged. He further claimed that Kakani's son-in-law was the CEO of the company that took over the

land, and the government handed it over on the same day. Somireddy also questioned the increase in Kakani Govardhan Reddy's assets, citing discrepancies in the affidavits submitted in 2014, 2019, and 2024 elections. He alleged that Kakani had accumulated assets worth ₹1,000 crores in Malaysia and challenged him to reveal proof of his holdings. "Everyone knows how much was looted from the lands acquired for house plots during Jagan's rule. Just before the election code, Kakani grabbed crores worth of land. And yet, he has the audacity to make false allegations against me?" Somireddy questioned angrily. He reminded that his family had donated valuable lands for public welfare, including schools and col-



leges. Somireddy also slammed Kakani for filing a case against him in the Anandaiah herbal medicine issue, calling it a ploy to defame him. The MLA warned that he would continue to expose the misdeeds of the previous YSRCP government, asserting that justice will prevail despite political conspiracies.

# Jakkampudi Raja Accuses NDA Govt of Betraying Election Promises



**TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 14**

Folk icon Sukri Bommagowda, also known as Sukrajji, passed away at her home in Uttara Kannada.

She was celebrated for preserving Halakki folk traditions and social activism.

Honored with the Padma Shri in 2017, she was a key figure in Karnataka's cultural and social landscape. Renowned folk singer and Padma Shri awardee Sukri Bommagowda, fondly known as Sukrajji, passed away on Thursday morning at her residence in Badageri village, Ankola taluk, Uttara Kannada district. She had been battling health issues and was undergoing treatment at a Manipal Hospital for the past few days.

Sukrajji was a revered figure in the Halakki Vokkaliga community and was widely recognized as a "walking encyclopedia" for her deep knowledge of Karnataka's rich folk traditions. She dedicated her life to preserving and promoting traditional folk music, memorizing nearly 5,000 songs that narrated stories of love, nature, and everyday life in rural Karnataka.

Her contribution to the preservation of folk music was significant. In the 1980s, All India Radio (Akashvani) recorded and archived hundreds of her songs, ensuring that her legacy would be carried forward for generations. Her distinct voice and soulful renditions captured the essence of Karnataka's cultural heritage. Beyond music, Sukrajji was also a passionate social activist. She played a key role in spreading awareness about social issues, particularly alcohol addiction, which was prevalent in many parts of Uttara Kannada. Through her songs and speeches, she campaigned against alcoholism, highlighting its devastating impact on families and society. Her activism was deeply personal. Hav-

ing lost her husband, Bommagowda, to alcohol addiction at the age of 16, she experienced firsthand the struggles faced by women and families affected by substance abuse. This personal loss ignited her determination to bring about change.

Sukrajji's invaluable contributions to folk music and social activism were recognized at the highest level. In 2017, she was honored with the Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian award, for her efforts in preserving Karnataka's folk traditions.

She was also the recipient of the Nadoja Award, which is equivalent to an honorary doctorate in Karnataka, and the Rajyotsava Award, one of the highest state honors given for exceptional contributions to society.

Despite her national recognition, Sukrajji remained deeply connected to her roots. She lived a simple, nature-friendly life in her village, surrounded by the traditions she cherished. Her home became a center for learning, where schoolchildren and researchers visited to learn about folk music, cultural heritage, and sustainable living.

She strongly believed in the power of folk music as a means of education and social change. She encouraged young artists to embrace traditional art forms and ensured that folk music continued to thrive in Karnataka.

Her passing marks the end of an era in Karnataka's folk music scene. However, her legacy lives on through her songs, recorded archives, and the many lives she touched with her activism. Her unwavering dedication to folk music and social justice has left an indelible mark on Karnataka's cultural history. As Karnataka mourns the loss of one of its most beloved folk artists, Sukri Bommagowda's songs and messages will continue to inspire future generations.

### MLA Venigandla Ramu campaigns in municipal schools for NDA MLC candidate Alapati Rajendra



TPN Correspondent Gudivada, Feb 15

The coalition government is committed to honoring and respecting teachers, said Gudivada MLA Venigandla Ramu, as he campaigned in support of alliance MLC candidate Alapati Rajendra Prasad in the joint Krishna and Guntur graduates' Legislative Council elections. MLA Ramu visited AKTP, Gandhi, and SPS Municipal High Schools in Gudivada town, distributing pamphlets and urging graduates to vote for Alapati Raja as their first preference in the MLC elections. Addressing teachers, MLA Ramu strongly criticized the previous YSRCP government, stating that it had failed to pay teachers' salaries on time and even forced them to perform non-teaching duties, such as working in liquor shops and cleaning toilets in schools. He highlighted

how teachers were harassed with unnecessary mobile applications and treated with disrespect. However, he assured that after the coalition government came to power, the situation has changed. Under CM Chandrababu Naidu and Education Minister Nara Lokesh, teachers are now treated with dignity and respect. MLA Ramu emphasized that sending a capable representative like Alapati Rajendra Prasad to the Legislative Council would benefit teachers and the public. He urged graduates to stand united and vote for the coalition candidate in the MLC elections. Among those present in the campaign were Urban TDP President Dintyala Rambabu, former IAS officer Kakollu Bhaskar Rao, STU State General Secretary D. Chandrasekhar, and teachers' union leaders PVMD Prasad, A.S.V. Prasad, and Madaka Prasad.

### "Vallabhaneni Vamsi's Sins Have Caught Up with Him" - Nettem Raghuram

TPN Correspondent Jaggayyapet, Feb 15

NTR District Telugu Desam Party (TDP) President and former Minister Nettem Raghuram has strongly criticized YSRCP leader Vallabhaneni Vamsi, stating that his history of crimes has finally caught up with him. Speaking at a press meet in the Jaggayyapet TDP office, Nettem Raghuram accused Vamsi of: Burning down the Gannavaram TDP office and orchestrating attacks on political opponents. Filing false cases and imprisoning innocent women to cover up his crimes. Kidnapping Dalit youth Satya Vardhan, an employee of the Gannavaram TDP office, and threatening to kill him



if he did not withdraw his case. "Vamsi committed another crime to cover up one crime. His actions finally led to his arrest under SC/ST Atrocities Act after Satya Vardhan's family filed a complaint," Raghuram said. Nettem Raghuram further alleged that Vamsi's political career is filled with illegal activities and corruption. "Like a bird from a different nest, this criminal joined Jagan's gang and tar-

geted many innocent people," he remarked.

He also accused Vamsi Illegally diverting soil from the Patti-seema dam project for personal profit, despite it being crucial for irrigation and drinking water needs. Being involved in various financial scams, amassing crores through illegal means. Nettem Raghuram declared that Vamsi's arrest is being welcomed by the people and democratic forces, proving that no criminal can escape the law forever. "The people of Andhra Pradesh are watching. Justice has been served, and this is just the beginning of exposing YSRCP's misdeeds," he concluded.

### No One Can Escape After Committing a Crime - CP Rajasekhhar Babu

TPN Correspondent Vijayawada, Feb 15

Vijayawada Police Commissioner Rajasekhhar Babu stated that former MLA Vallabhaneni Vamsi will be taken into police custody for further questioning. Speaking to the media on the latest developments after Vamsi's arrest, CP Rajasekhhar Babu revealed that the police are filing a petition in court seeking custody. He emphasized that strong technical evidence, including phone call records and CCTV footage, has played a crucial role in the case. "No one can escape after committing a crime with the technology available

now a days," he asserted. Investigation and Evidence Collection The Commissioner clarified that Vamsi was arrested and remanded based on solid proof and that a technical investigation is underway. He mentioned that the police will analyze vehicle movements related to the case, confirming which car traveled from where and where it went. "The custody petition will be filed either Friday or Saturday," CP Rajasekhhar Babu stated, reaffirming that the police are determined to bring out the truth.



### Manchu Manoj Condemns Bouncer Attack on Restaurant

TPN Correspondent Tirupati, Feb 15

Actor Manchu Manoj has strongly reacted to an incident in which bouncers attacked a restaurant near Mohan Babu's educational institutions in Tirupati. He called for their immediate removal, stating that they were terrorizing people. Manoj revealed that the restaurant owner fled after the attack and urged authorities to intervene. He recalled a similar issue in the past, where his complaint led to police action, but alleged that such incidents continue to occur. He claimed that he received calls about the attack and said that CCTV footage was taken away after the altercation, raising concerns about evidence tampering. Manoj criticized the growing intimidation in the area and urged the local MLA to take note. He emphasized that his father established these institutions to help society but expressed disappointment over the recent developments. Stating that the situation had changed in the last three years, he alleged that the campus had fallen into the wrong hands. He further claimed that he was being targeted for questioning the injustices happening in the area and accused certain individuals of slandering him. He said his wife and children were also being dragged into the controversy. Clarifying that this was not a property dispute but a matter of self-respect, Manoj called on Vishnu and Vinay to address the issue seriously. He appealed for an end to fear-mongering and urged everyone to resolve conflicts peacefully, reminding them that they were all part of the same family.



### Dalit Groups Demand Justice in Mylavaram Murder Case

TPN Correspondent Mylavaram, Feb 15

Tension prevailed at the Mylavaram CI office as MRPS leaders and relatives of Dalit youth Samson staged a protest demanding justice. They alleged that police brutality against Dalits continues even after 76 years of independence and drew parallels with the injustice depicted in the movie Jai Bhim. The protestors accused the police of subjecting Samson to third-degree torture in connection with the Mulakalapenta murder



case. They claimed that while Challa Subbarao, an upper-caste suspect, was treated leniently, Samson was tied to a tree, stripped, and tortured to extract a confession. Dalit groups alleged that the ruling party is trying to



cover up the case and questioned why Subbarao was not harmed, while Samson faced inhumane treatment.

The protestors put forth the following demands: 1. Immediate suspension of the police officers involved in Samson's torture. 2. A fair and unbiased investigation into the Mulakalapenta murder case. 3. Strict action against those responsible for police excesses. Dalit organizations warned that if their demands are not met, they will intensify their agitation and stage a massive dharna at the CI office to fight for justice for Samson.

### Son Inspired by Watching Youtube Video's, Plans a Murder on his Father

TPN Correspondent Mylavaram, Feb 15

The murder of Morusumally (Mulakalapenta) has been solved, with shocking revelations coming to light. Kadiyam Pullarao, the victim's son, planned and executed the murder after watching crime videos on YouTube, police revealed. Addressing the media, ACP Y Prasad detailed the case, stating that Pullarao had an argument with his fa-

ther over property issues. Already in deep financial trouble due to losses in online betting and the share market, he decided to eliminate his father to claim the assets. A Murder Inspired by YouTube Videos Police investigations found that Pullarao carefully studied ways to commit the crime without leaving evidence. He later tried to mislead authorities by blaming farm border guards for the murder.

However, during police interrogation, Pullarao broke down and confessed to the crime. The authorities arrested him, and further legal proceedings are underway. ACP Prasad Rao stated that meticulous investigation and strategic questioning led to the case being cracked swiftly. The police have warned against the dangers of online betting and financial recklessness, which often drive individuals to desperate crimes.

### MLA Yarlagadda Urges Strong Support for Alapati in MLC Elections



TPN Correspondent Gannavaram, Feb 15

Government Whip and Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkat Rao has called on voters to ensure the victory of alliance MLC candidate Alapati Rajendra Prasad with a massive majority. He emphasized that the triumph should be so remarkable that it gains national and state-wide recognition. On Friday, MLA Yarlagadda Venkat Rao, along with MLC candidate Alapati Rajendra Prasad, participated in the MLC election campaign for graduates of Krishna and Guntur districts at Sravanthi School, Gannavaram. The AP Private Schools Association (Democratic) organized a special meeting of private teachers as part of the campaign. MLA Venkat Rao recalled that even in

tough political situations, TDP-backed candidates had won previous graduate elections, expressing confidence that the voters of Gannavaram will support Alapati Rajendra Prasad. He stated that teachers play a crucial role in society, and their issues will be addressed effectively through Alapati's election to the Legislative Council. MLA Venkat Rao also highlighted various developmental initiatives in the Gannavaram constituency: • Mallavalli Industrial Corridor will be developed as a flagship industrial hub. • Large-scale employment opportunities will be created for unemployed youth. • New statues of NTR and Mahatma Gandhi will be installed in Gannavaram. • Traffic signals and beautification projects will be implemented in town.

• The region's growth, including HCL and Airport developments, will be showcased widely. MLA Venkat Rao emphasized that though YSRCP is not contesting the MLC elections, these elections should not be taken lightly. He said that within just seven months of the coalition government coming to power, this election serves as a test of governance. He urged graduates to vote for Alapati Rajendra Prasad as their first preference and ensure a historic victory that will be discussed across the state and the country. The event was attended by Constituency MLC Vote Observer Veera Babu, TDP Observer Vadranaam Haribabu, leaders from TDP, Janasena, and BJP, along with teachers and other dignitaries.

## Kuppam TDP Leader Manjunath Meets CM Chandrababu Naidu

Request for funds for the construction of the Kuppam Kapu building



**TPN | C. Sekhar Kuppam, Feb 15**  
Kuppam Telugu Desam Party Expansion Committee Member M. Manjunath met Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and submitted key requests regarding local development and public welfare. During the meeting, Manjunath urged the CM to sanction funds for the construction of the Kuppam Kapu building. He also brought to the Chief Min-

ister's attention the case of a banana trader from a poor family in Kuppam, who was recently diagnosed with cancer and had to spend ₹9 lakh on medical treatment. Manjunath requested financial assistance from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) to support the patient's medical expenses. The CM assured that both requests would be positively considered.

## Grand Closing Ceremony of RTC Road Safety Month Held in Amalapuram



**TPN | S.MURALI KRISHNA Amalapuram, Feb 15**  
The closing ceremony of the Road Safety Month, organized by the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC), was held grandly at the Amalapuram Depot Garage under the leadership of Konaseema District Public Transport Officer M. Srinivasa Rao. Speaking at the event, District Transport Officer D. Srinivasa Rao, the chief guest, emphasized the importance of road safety awareness among drivers. He urged them to follow traffic rules strictly and adopt cautious driving habits. Amalapuram Town Circle Inspector K. Veerababu advised drivers to prioritize their health and safety, avoid bad habits, and be mindful of traf-

fic regulations to prevent accidents. As part of the program, three best accident-free drivers at the district level and twelve accident-free drivers at the depot level were honored with certificates of appreciation. In addition, a blood donation camp was conducted at the Amalapuram depot in collaboration with Rotary Blood Bank and Red Cross. A total of 62 people from the Amalapuram, Ravulapalem, and Rajolu depots donated blood. The event was attended by Amalapuram Depot Manager C.S.N. Murthy, Ravulapalem Depot Manager G.G.V. Ramana, Rajolu Depot Manager Smt. P. Dhanamma, Ramachandrapuram Depot Manager Bhaskar Rao, and RTC staff.

## District Collector Vetriselvi Held a Review Meeting On 10th Class Exams Arrangements

**TPN Correspondent Eluru, Feb 15**  
Eluru District Collector K. Vetriselvi has directed officials to ensure tight security and smooth conduct of Class 10 exams across the district. A district coordination committee meeting was held at the Gautami Conference Hall in the Collectorate on Friday, where the Collector outlined key measures for the upcoming exams. She stated that 25,179 students will appear for the exams across 133 centers, including both regular and private candidates, with timings from 9:30 AM to 12:45 PM. Additionally, 17 exam centers have been designated for 793 open school students. The exams

will be conducted from March 17 to 31 for regular students and from March 17 to 28 for open school candidates. The Collector emphasized that



CCTV cameras must be installed at all centers where exam papers are stored and ordered strict measures to prevent malpractice. She directed the appoint-

## Grand Tiruchi Seva Held at Sri Padmavati Ammavari Temple



**TPN | C. Sekhar Tiruchanur, Feb 15**  
The weekly Tiruchi Seva was grandly performed at Sri Padmavati Ammavari Temple in Tiruchanur, an affiliated temple of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). Devotees gathered in large numbers to witness the sacred rituals and seek the blessings of the Goddess. As part of the Tiruchi Seva, a special

Abhishekam (ritual bathing of the deity) was conducted in the afternoon, followed by the Sandhya Vela (evening procession). The deity was carried in a grand procession across the four temple streets, as devotees enthusiastically offered camphor garlands in reverence. Temple officials and staff actively participated in the arrangements, ensuring a smooth and spiritual experience for all the devotees.

## MLA Pantham Nanaji Extends Support to MLC Candidate Perabathula Rajasekhara

**TPN | Dhanalakshmi Kakinada, Feb 15**  
Kakinada Rural MLA Shri Pantham Nanaji participated as the chief guest in a meeting held at Valaspakala village, Kakinada Rural Mandal, extending support to joint East-West Godavari graduate MLC candidate Shri Perabathula Rajasekhara. The event was also attended by State Shettibalija Corporation Chairman Shri Kudipudi Sattibabu and various

alliance leaders, activists, and local supporters. Addressing the gathering, leaders emphasized the significance of graduate representation in the legislative council and urged voters to back Perabathula Rajasekhara in the upcoming elections. The meeting saw enthusiastic participation from party ranks, activists, and a large number of women supporters, highlighting strong grassroots backing for the candidate.



## Govt School Teacher Misbehaved With a Female Cook in the School

**TPN | N. Kasirao Prakasam Dist, Feb 15**  
A shocking incident took place in VY Colony, Kurichedu Mandal, Padamara Naidupalem Panchayat, Prakasam District, where a government school teacher was physically assaulted by locals after allegedly misbehaving with a female cook working at the same school.



The accused, Vemula Venkata Ravikumar, reportedly misbehaved with the woman and even hit her with a slipper. Upon learning about the incident, village elders confronted him, but instead of showing remorse, he arrogantly countered their questions. Angered by his behavior, the locals tied him to an electric pole and assaulted him before informing the police. The police soon arrived at the scene and took Ravikumar into custody.

Upon hearing about the incident, Mandal Education Officer (MEO) Nayak visited the school and began an inquiry into the matter. The incident has sparked outrage among villagers, and further action is expected following the police investigation.

## MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy Invites Balakrishna for Srikalahasti Mahashivratri Brahmotsavam



**TPN | C. Sekhar Srikalahasti, Feb 15**  
Srikalahasti MLA Bojjala Sudheer Reddy extended a formal invitation to Hindupur MLA

and popular actor Nandamuri Balakrishna for the Mahashivratri Brahmotsavam at the Srikalahasti Swamy Temple. The two leaders met on March 14, where Balakrishna was requested to grace the celebrations. The Brahmotsavam is an important festival at the temple, drawing thousands of devotees from across the state. Temple authorities and local administration are making extensive arrangements to ensure a smooth and spiritual experience for all attendees.

## Therlam Police Solve Software Engineer's Murder Case; Two Arrested



**TPN | A. Narasimhulu Vizianagaram, Feb 15**  
Therlam police successfully cracked the murder case of software engineer Konari Prasad (28), whose body was found on the outskirts of Nermalam village, Therlam Mandal, on February 10. District SP Vakul Jindal revealed the details at a press conference held at the Vizianagaram District Police Office on February 14.

The investigation led to the arrest of two accused—Konari Achutha Rao (A-1) and Konari Sivakrishna (A-2), both from the same village. The victim's father, Konari Sanyasirao (48), had lodged a complaint, after which a team led by Bobbili DSP G. Bhavya Reddy and Bobbili Rural CI K. Narayana Rao initiated an inquiry. The victim, Konari Prasad, was in a relationship with A-1's wife, Venkatalakshmi. A-2, Konari Sivakrishna, discovered obscene WhatsApp messages between his sister-in-law and Prasad. The accused brothers plotted revenge and waited for the right time.

On February 10, after being informed of Prasad's return from Buripet village, they lured him to the fields near Thotapalli Canal. The accused attacked him with sticks, and as Prasad tried to escape, they tracked him down, fatally assaulted him, and dumped his body. To mislead authorities, they placed his body and damaged bike on the road to stage an accident. The murder weapons (sticks) used in the attack. The victim's mobile phone, which was thrown into an agricultural well. The accused's mobile phones, which had records of their coordination. SP Vakul Jindal congratulated the officers for solving the crime within days. Certificates of appreciation were awarded to DSP G. Bhavya Reddy, CI K. Narayana Rao, SI B. Sagar Babu, and constables Nagaraju and Prithviraj for their dedicated efforts in cracking the case. The accused have been arrested, and further legal action is underway.

## Blood Donation Camp Organized as Part of the 36th National Road Safety Month SP Bindu Madhav Donated Blood

**TPN | Dhanalakshmi Kakinada, Feb 15**  
A blood donation camp was organized on Friday at the Lorry Owners Association office in Sanjay Nagar, Kakinada, under the auspices of the District Transport Department as part of the 36th National Road Safety Month. Speaking at the event, Kakinada District SP G Bindu Madhav stressed the importance of wearing helmets, stating that it significantly reduces fatal injuries in road accidents. He urged all motorists to follow traffic regulations and prioritize safety.

Dr. Padmavati, who led the blood donation drive, educated drivers and their families on the benefits of helmets and road safety



measures. SP Bindu Madhav himself donated blood, setting an example and encouraging public participation in saving lives through blood

donation. The collected blood was donated to the Kakinada Government Hospital, Rotary Club, and Red Cross Blood Bank. Several officials and community members, including District Transport Officer K Sridhar, Kakinada DSP Manish Devaraj Patil, DMHO J Narasimha Nayak, Traffic CI N Ramesh, Motor Vehicle Inspector B Muralikrishna, Road Safety Member Bodapati Kantham, Lorry Owners Association President Dasari Srinivas, and Vice President Satyanarayana, attended the event.



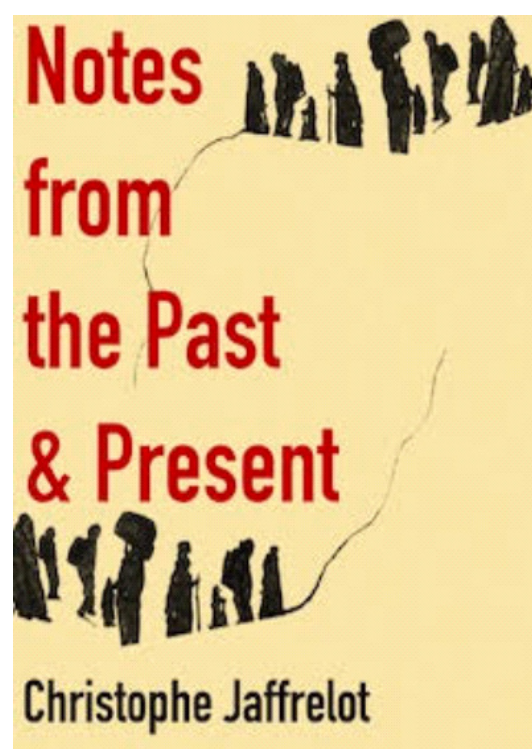
## Why are Gujarati Migrants Fleeing the Model State?

Gujarat, a state often hailed as a model of economic growth in India, presents a paradox: despite boasting one of the highest growth rates and per capita GDPs in the country, it remains plagued by high levels of poverty and a lack of job opportunities. This contradiction has prompted thousands of Gujaratis, particularly from rural areas, to risk their lives migrating illegally to the United States. In fact, Gujaratis constitute a significant portion of illegal Indian migrants to the US, with 41,330 out of 67,391 illegal Indian migrants in 2023 hailing from Gujarat. The plight of these migrants has been tragically underscored by incidents such as the deaths of Jagdish Patel and his family, who froze to death while attempting to cross the US-Canada border in 2022.

Despite its high economic growth, Gujarat continues to struggle with mass poverty. The state's GDP per capita was Rs 181,963 in 2022-23, more than double the national average of Rs 99,404. However, much of this wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few, while the majority of the population continues to live in poverty. This is largely due to a failure to create enough jobs that provide decent wages for the state's poor, particularly in rural areas.

The state's labor market is marked by a trend of informalization, with 74% of workers in Gujarat lacking formal contracts, compared to 41% in Karnataka and 53% in Tamil Nadu. This casualization results in lower wages for workers, with the average daily wage for casual labor in Gujarat in 2024 at Rs 375—well below the national average of Rs 433. Furthermore, the average monthly earnings from regular salaried jobs in Gujarat are also below the national average, standing at Rs 17,503 compared to Rs 21,103.

The rural economy of Gujarat is particularly dire. In 2023, agricultural workers earned the lowest daily wage in India, with an average of Rs 242. This is even



lower than in Bihar, one of India's poorest states. Other rural workers, such as artisans, also face low wages, with daily earnings of just Rs 273. In comparison, Bihar's rural workers earn higher wages, with construction workers in Gujarat earning Rs 323 per day, again trailing behind states like Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Moreover, the state's rural and urban populations exhibit relatively low consumption levels. The Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) in Gujarat's urban areas was Rs 6,621, and in rural areas, it was just Rs 3,798 in 2022-23. These figures place Gujarat behind other states such as Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka in terms of basic living standards.

The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which measures poverty by considering access to education, healthcare, and food, also reveals Gujarat's challenges. In 2020-21, 11.66% of the state's population was classified as poor according to the MPI, a

figure that is better than some states but still indicates significant poverty.

The root cause of this paradox lies in Gujarat's economic policies, which prioritize capital-intensive industries over labor-intensive ones. Under Narendra Modi's leadership, Gujarat's industrial strategy shifted dramatically, focusing on large-scale infrastructure projects and petrochemicals at the expense of labor-intensive industries and social spending, including education and healthcare. This change marked a departure from Gujarat's previous model, which had supported small and medium enterprises (SMEs), known for their higher employment potential.

The shift in industrial policy, particularly the introduction of the Gujarat Special Investment Region Act in 2009, led to the creation of industrial mega-projects that generated few jobs relative to the investment. For example, a Rs 10 billion project would only employ about 2,000 people, resulting in a ratio of Rs 500,000 per job. This capital-intensive model led to the decline of SMEs, with many shutting down due to delays in payments and the high cost of doing business.

The rise of crony capitalism, exemplified by industrial giants like the Adani Group, further exacerbated the problem. Despite being among the largest conglomerates in India, the Adani Group employs just 36,000 people, the fewest among the top six business groups in the country.

In conclusion, Gujarat's high GDP and economic growth are not reflected in the standard of living for most of its residents. The state's focus on large-scale, capital-intensive industries, coupled with the decline of labor-intensive sectors, has resulted in poor job creation, low wages, and continued poverty. This economic disparity has pushed many Gujaratis to seek a better life abroad, often through dangerous and illegal means.

## SC's stinging comments on freebies miss the real harm they do



Justice B.R. Gavai has recently raised concerns about the long-term effects of freebies distributed by political parties, particularly in Maharashtra, where such incentives are provided prior to elections. He criticized the practice, arguing that it undermines the national work ethic by reducing the motivation to work. Gavai pointed out a specific issue faced by farmers in Maharashtra, noting that due to the distribution of free benefits, agricultural laborers were increasingly reluctant to work. "Because of the freebies in Maharashtra, which were announced prior to the elections, the agriculturists are not getting laborers. When everybody is getting free [money] at home, why would they want to work?" Gavai remarked, highlighting the adverse consequences these measures can have on the productivity of vital sectors like agriculture.

This criticism of freebies extends beyond Maharashtra, reflecting a broader concern about government social welfare programs. Gavai's comments echo a significant fear that such practices may erode the work culture by fostering dependency on free handouts, thereby discouraging individuals from contributing to the economy through productive labor. According to Gavai, these types of freebies often become a blanket criticism of all forms of social welfare, making it harder to build a robust and sustainable social security system that can support citizens without creating dependency.

However, evidence from government schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) challenges this assumption. Data from the MGNREGA program contradicts the idea that welfare schemes discourage people from working. It shows that the demand for work under MGNREGA spikes during the lean season in agriculture, when there is less availability of work in farming, and many people turn to these government-backed employment opportunities as a means to support themselves.

Despite such data, there remains growing discontent among the middle class regarding the financing of these freebies, particularly when they are funded through taxpayer money. Many view the extensive distribution of free benefits as an unsustainable financial practice that may strain the economy in the long term. That said, well-established government welfare programs like the Public Distribution System (PDS), old-age pensions, and PM-Kisan remain valuable tools for addressing the needs of vulnerable sections of society, offering targeted assistance where necessary.

The challenge remains in balancing the need for effective welfare measures with maintaining a productive, self-sustaining workforce that doesn't rely solely on government support. While schemes like MGNREGA play a crucial role, the debate about freebies and their implications for work culture and economic sustainability is likely to continue.

## Modi-Macron Power Combo: What Makes France Such A Loyal Partner To India?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to France was a significant diplomatic moment, underscoring the strengthening of India-France relations. The visit was marked by warm exchanges between Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron, highlighting a partnership based on trust, mutual respect, and strategic autonomy. The duo co-chaired the Paris AI Action Summit, where India took center stage, advocating for a democratic and unbiased approach to AI development, aiming for inclusivity, particularly for the Global South. This summit aimed to present an alternative to the US-led OpenAI and China's DeepSeek, focusing on harnessing AI's potential without succumbing to fear and skepticism.

One of Modi's standout contributions was his call for a democratised

AI model, free from biases that often reflect political and social prejudices. His argument emphasized the importance of training AI systems on diverse, balanced datasets, a message that resonated widely on social media. India's growing AI ambitions are backed by a strong talent pool, with over 650,000 professionals in the sector, and the country's AI mission is rapidly expanding, with plans to add more GPUs to its infrastructure. Furthermore, AI model training costs in India are significantly lower than in other parts of the world, thanks to government subsidies.

Modi's visit also included a focus on economic ties, with the India-France CEO Forum co-hosted by the two leaders, reinforcing their commitment to strengthening bilateral economic relations. Modi's interactions extended



beyond AI and economics, as he visited Marseille, where he inaugurated a new Indian consulate and toured key

energy projects, including the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER).

The strategic alignment between India and France has long been based on shared values, with both nations prioritizing strategic autonomy in their foreign policies. Unlike other Western nations, France has consistently supported India in critical moments, particularly during the 1998 nuclear tests when it chose not to impose sanctions. This partnership extends across various sectors, including defense, where a \$10 billion defense deal is set to be finalized soon, and nuclear energy, where France is helping India develop the Jaitapur nuclear power plant. This deep-rooted cooperation between India and France is set to continue shaping global technology, energy, and defense landscapes, with both countries working together to drive the future of AI and beyond.

# Mission-500: India, US Aim To Double Bilateral Trade To \$500 Billion By 2030

- Modi, Trump launch Mission-500 for \$500B trade by 2030.
- New 10-year US-India defense partnership set (2025-2035).
- Modi visits US after Trump's second-term inauguration.



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

During a bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump, both leaders unveiled several key initiatives aimed at enhancing bilateral relations. One of the major highlights was the launch of Mission-500, a trade and investment initiative designed to more than double the current two-way trade to USD 500 billion by 2030. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri shared the details of these ambitious plans during a press briefing.

In addition to Mission-500, the leaders introduced the US-India Compact for the 21st Century, which aims to accelerate military partnerships, bolster commerce, and drive technological advancements. Both nations

also committed to negotiating a \*\*multi-sector trade agreement by the fall of 2025, with the goal of enhancing trade across goods and services sectors.

Mr. Misri elaborated, stating that the two leaders were determined to focus on strengthening trade relations by making greenfield investments in high-value industries in each other's countries. He also highlighted plans to negotiate and finalize a 10-year framework for the US-India Major Defence Partnership covering the period from 2025 to 2035. As part of this agreement, both countries will move forward with ongoing defence procurement negotiations, including platforms for land and air systems, as well as coproduction agreements. The leaders also agreed to initiate discus-

sions for a reciprocal defence procurement agreement, which could further enhance defence ties between the nations.

In a warm gesture, President Trump welcomed PM Modi with a hug at the White House, reaffirming the strength of their personal and diplomatic relationship. During the meeting, PM Modi expressed his delight at seeing Trump back at the White House for his second term and reiterated India's commitment to advancing the strategic partnership between the two countries.

This visit marks PM Modi's first official trip to the US since President Trump's second term began, and it underscores the growing cooperation between the world's largest democracies.

## 'Srinagar people deserved better: J&K CM as no night prayers at Jamia Masjid

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Jammu and Kashmir's former Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, condemned the security establishment's decision to seal Srinagar's historic Jama Masjid on Shab-e-Baraat, one of the holiest nights in the Islamic calendar. The decision to restrict access to the mosque during this significant religious observance sparked widespread criticism.

In a post on X, Abdullah expressed his disappointment, calling the action "very unfortunate" and claiming it demonstrated a lack of confidence in both the people and the law-and-order system. He further emphasized that the decision undermined the belief that peace and calm would not prevail without extreme measures. Abdullah added, "The people of Srinagar deserved better."

The incident occurred when the police placed Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who was scheduled to deliver a sermon at the mosque on Shab-e-Baraat, under house arrest. People present at the mosque were asked to leave, and the mosque management was informed that there would be no night prayers.



Meanwhile, elsewhere in Srinagar, thousands of faithful gathered at various mosques and shrines to observe Shab-e-Baraat, with the Hazratbal shrine hosting the largest congregation on Thursday night. The occasion is observed by Muslims across South Asia and beyond, including in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and several Central Asian countries. The night commemorates significant events in Islamic history, including the Prophet Muhammad's entry into Makkah and his prayers for the forgiveness of departed souls.

## Dalai Lama Granted Z-Category Security Cover

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

In light of potential security threats, the Indian government has provided a \*\*Z-category armed protection cover\*\* to Tibetan spiritual leader \*\*Dalai Lama\*\*. Official sources confirmed the move on Thursday, citing concerns for the safety of the 89-year-old leader.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has directed the \*\*VIP security wing of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)\*\* to handle the security arrangements for Dalai Lama. This decision comes as part of efforts to safeguard the leader, who has long been a prominent figure in the global Tibetan independence movement.



The Z-category security detail is among the highest levels of protection provided by the Indian government. It includes a large team of armed personnel and specialized security measures to ensure the safety of individuals facing specific threats.

Dalai Lama, who has been residing in India since 1959 following his exile from Tibet, continues to be a revered spiritual figure. Despite his peaceful approach to advocacy, he has faced various threats due to his stance on Tibetan autonomy and his global influence.

This enhanced security arrangement underscores the importance of safeguarding influential leaders, particularly in light of their symbolic significance on the international stage.

## CRPF Jawan Opens Fire at Manipur Camp, Kills Two Before Shooting Himself

TPN Correspondent | Imphal

A CRPF jawan opened fire on his colleagues at a camp in Lamsang, Imphal West, on Monday night, killing two personnel and injuring eight others before taking his own life. The incident occurred around 8 PM within the 120th battalion of the force. Senior police and CRPF officials rushed to the scene following the gunfire. The injured personnel were immediately shifted to the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Imphal for treatment. Authorities are investigating the motive behind the shooting, while security at the camp has been reinforced to prevent further incidents.

## Allegations of National Security Threats: Assam CM Targets Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Assam Cabinet, led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, is set to discuss the national security implications surrounding Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi, following claims of alleged Pakistani links involving his wife. Sarma announced that on February 16, the cabinet would deliberate on whether the recent revelations concerning the MP from Assam require a thorough examination of national security concerns.

In his posts on X, Sarma alluded to Gogoi's parliamentary actions after his marriage to Elizabeth Colebourn, a British citizen, who allegedly had professional ties with Pakistani individuals linked to the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Sarma's statements reference social media posts from pro-BJP handles claiming that Colebourn had worked under Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, a former advisor to Pakistan's Planning Commission, raising questions about her associations.

Additionally, Sarma accused Gogoi of seeking sensitive defense information in Parliament, particularly related to the country's coastal radar systems and defense infrastructure. The Chief Minister's posts pointed to a visit by Gogoi, along with his startup, to the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi in 2015, where they discussed India-Pakistan relations, despite India's formal protest over the Pakistani High Commission's interference in internal matters. Sarma argued that the timing of these actions, including Gogoi's growing focus on defense matters, raised national security concerns.

In response, Gaurav Gogoi dismissed the allegations as politically motivated, sarcastically suggesting that if his wife could be an ISI agent, he must be a RAW agent. He further claimed that Sarma's accusations were an attempt to deflect attention from ongoing land grabbing cases involving his family. Gogoi suggested that Sarma's actions were motivated by the potential loss of his position as the Chief Minister, with the BJP leadership allegedly planning to replace him with Dilip Saikia.

The dispute has sparked intense political exchanges, with both sides exchanging serious accusations, setting the stage for an important debate on national security and political maneuvering in Assam.

# US Approves Extradition of Mumbai Terror Attack Accused Tahawwur Rana to India

TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

In a significant development following his bilateral talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Donald Trump announced that his administration has approved the extradition of Tahawwur Rana, a key accused in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, to India. During a joint press briefing, Trump expressed his satisfaction over the decision, calling Rana one of the "evil people" involved in the horrific attacks and confirming that he would face justice in India.

"I am pleased to announce that my administration has approved the extradition of one of the plotters, Tahawwur Rana, to face justice in India," Trump said. He further added, "He is going back to India to face justice." Prime Minister Modi thanked President Trump for expediting the extradition process, stating, "A perpetrator

of the Mumbai terror attack is being extradited for his interrogation and trial in India."

This announcement follows the US Supreme Court's rejection of Rana's review petition on January 21, clearing the way for his extradition. The US State Department had previously stated that, in light of the Supreme Court's decision, it was evaluating the next steps in the case. The Department reaffirmed its support for India's efforts to ensure that those responsible for the Mumbai attacks face justice.

Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a Pakistani-origin businessman, is accused of being involved in the 2008 attacks that killed 166 people, including six Americans. He was linked to David Coleman Headley, another key



conspirator, and is suspected of having ties to group behind the Mumbai attacks.

Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Rana had traveled to India in November 2008, staying at Mumbai's Renaissance Hotel during the attack.

Indian agencies will now interrogate Rana and proceed with his trial in India. Rana had been previously convicted in the US for providing material support to terrorism and had faced prosecution for his involvement with Lashkar-e-Taiba, the terrorist

# PM Modi Meets Elon Musk, Discusses Space, AI, and Innovation

TPN Correspondent | Washington DC

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk during his two-day visit to the United States, engaging in discussions on technology, innovation, and space exploration. The meeting took place at Blair House, just hours before Modi's scheduled bilateral talks with US President Donald Trump. Modi described the meeting as "very good" in a post on X, highlighting discussions on strengthening India-US collaboration in artificial intelligence, space exploration, and sustainable development. Sources added that the talks also covered emerging technologies, entrepreneurship, and governance. Musk was accompanied by his three young children, who were seen interacting with Modi during the meeting. Neuralink director Shvonn Zilis was also present. The Prime Minister gifted the children three books—Rabindranath Tagore's *The Crescent Moon*, *The Great*



*Collection*, and *Panchatantra*. Earlier in the day, Modi met US National Security Advisor Michael Waltz, with Indian NSA Ajit Doval also in attendance. He later held talks with Tulsi Gabbard, who was recently sworn in as the US Director of National Intelligence, and India-origin entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy. PM Modi and Musk have met several times in the past, including during Modi's visit

to the Tesla facility in 2015. Musk, who now oversees the Department of Government Efficiency under the Trump administration, has expressed interest in expanding Tesla's presence in India. Modi's meeting with Trump is expected to focus on trade agreements, a new defense partnership, and military sales. The two leaders will hold a joint press conference following their discussions.



## "No Role For Deep State, Leave It To PM Modi": Trump On Bangladesh Crisis

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

US President Donald Trump distanced his administration from any involvement in the political crisis in Bangladesh, stating that the matter should be left to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. His remarks came during a joint press briefing with PM Modi in Washington DC when he was questioned about the alleged role of the US deep state in the recent regime change in Bangladesh. "There was no role for our deep state. This is something that the Prime Minister has been working on for a long time, for hundreds of years, frankly, I have been reading about it. I will leave Bangladesh to the Prime Minister," Trump said, without directly addressing whether the previous Democratic government under Joe Biden had played a part in the change.

Speculation is growing that the Trump administration may avoid direct involvement in Bangladesh, where Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus has taken charge as caretaker leader following the ousting of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who has since sought refuge in India. The new interim government has faced criticism for failing to control rising attacks on minorities by alleged radical Islamist elements. Tensions between India and Bangladesh have escalated since Hasina's departure in August amid widespread anti-government protests. India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri confirmed that PM Modi raised concerns about the situation with President Trump during their discussions.

"We hope that the situation in Bangladesh will also move forward in a direction where we can pursue relations in a constructive and stable way with them. But there are concerns about that situation. And the Prime Minister shared those views with President Trump," Misri stated.

PM Modi, who is on a two-day visit to the US, also met billionaire businessman Elon Musk during his trip.

## Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore to Return to Earth on March 12



TPN Correspondent | Newyork

who are set to arrive at the ISS.

NASA and SpaceX are expediting the upcoming crew rotation missions to the International Space Station (ISS), aiming to bring astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore back to Earth. The two astronauts have been stranded in space since June 2024 due to technical issues with Boeing's Starliner spacecraft, which had originally brought them to the ISS.

The Crew-10 mission, previously slated for a late March launch, is now targeting March 12, pending final mission readiness and the completion of NASA's flight certification process. NASA made the announcement on Tuesday, signaling that preparations are progressing ahead of schedule.

Williams and Wilmore are currently part of the Crew-9 mission, which also includes NASA astronauts Nick Hague and Roscosmos cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov. The Crew-9 team will return to Earth after a few days of handover activities with the Crew-10 astronauts,

The Crew-10 mission will carry NASA astronauts Anne McClain and Nichole Ayers, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Takuya Onishi, and Roscosmos cosmonaut Kirill Peskov to the space station. This accelerated launch was made possible after a decision to use a previously flown Dragon spacecraft, named *Endurance*, rather than a new Dragon spacecraft that was originally planned. SpaceX's teams are now conducting additional assessments of the spacecraft's hardware to ensure it meets NASA's Commercial Crew Program safety standards.

The decision to speed up the return of Williams and Wilmore comes after US President Donald Trump personally asked SpaceX CEO Elon Musk to help bring the astronauts home as soon as possible. Musk has expressed his frustration with the prolonged stay of the astronauts, calling it "terrible" that they have been stranded on the ISS for so long, despite NASA's coordination with SpaceX for their return.

## Netanyahu Warns of Renewed Military Action If Hamas Fails to Release Hostages



TPN Correspondent | Tel Aviv

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has issued a stern warning to Hamas following the group's recent announcement that it will not release Israeli hostages, citing a violation of the ceasefire-hostage agreement. Netanyahu emphasized that Israel will resume intense military action if Hamas fails to meet the Saturday deadline for releasing the hostages.

The Prime Minister's office released a statement on X (formerly Twitter) on Tuesday, indicating that Netanyahu had instructed the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) to mobilize inside and around the Gaza Strip. The military buildup is intended to prepare for a resumption of military operations, which Netanyahu said would focus on the "final defeat" of Hamas if the group fails to uphold the ceasefire.

"I have instructed the IDF to amass forces inside and surrounding the Gaza Strip. This action is underway and will soon be completed," Netanyahu's office stated. The post also clarified the government's position: "If Hamas does not return our hostages by Saturday noon, the ceasefire will end, and the IDF will resume intense fighting until the final defeat of Hamas."

The growing tensions come after Hamas broke the terms of the ceasefire agreement, which was intended to facilitate the release of hostages held by the militant group. The hostages' release had been a key element of the agreement, but Hamas now refuses to honor it, prompting Netanyahu's firm response.

Earlier, U.S. President Donald Trump also weighed in on the situation, advising Israel to take a tough stance on Hamas in order to secure the release of the hostages.

The situation in Gaza remains volatile as both sides brace for further escalation. With the deadline fast approaching, the international community is closely monitoring developments, as the outcome could have significant implications for regional security and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

## Nothing To Buy, Will Take It: Trump Doubles Down On Gaza Takeover Plan



TPN Correspondent | Washington DC

US President Donald Trump has doubled down on his controversial proposal to "own" the Gaza Strip, asserting that the United States will take control of the region and manage its redevelopment, which would involve displacing the 2.2 million Palestinians living there. The plan was discussed during a meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah II in the Oval Office on Tuesday.

"We're going to have Gaza. We don't have to buy it. There's nothing to buy. We will have Gaza... We're going to take it, we're going to hold it, we're going to cherish it," Trump said, while also denying any personal involvement in real estate development in the region. He emphasized that the redevelopment would benefit the broader Middle East, creating jobs for the region's people.

Trump suggested that Palestinians in Gaza would be willing to leave, citing the dire living conditions in the enclave following the ongoing conflict. "Look at the way they're living now. Nobody's living like that in the entire world," he stated, referring to the destruction caused by over a year of fighting following the October 7 terror attacks by Hamas.

While Trump has presented his proposal to take over Gaza as a potential solution, Jordan's King Abdullah expressed opposition, emphasizing the Arab world's position against the displacement of Palestinians. He affirmed the importance of rebuilding Gaza without forcing Palestinians to leave and prioritizing the region's humanitarian needs. Abdullah added that Egypt was working on a plan that could align with Trump's vision without displacing Gaza's residents.

Trump had previously mentioned the possibility of halting US aid to Jordan if it did not accept refugees, but during the meeting, he retreated from this stance. In response, King Abdullah offered to take in 2,000 severely ill Palestinian children as a goodwill gesture.

Meanwhile, Israel has warned that it will resume intense fighting in Gaza if hostages are not returned by this weekend, with Hamas maintaining its commitment to the ceasefire deal that has largely held since the fighting paused in recent months.

## Zelensky Willing to Swap Land with Putin, On Condition of US Mediation

TPN Correspondent | Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has expressed readiness to swap land with Russian President Vladimir Putin under one condition – if US President Donald Trump facilitates negotiations between the two nations. This development comes after Russia released at least one American prisoner, which Trump described as a gesture aimed at fostering peace in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.



Zelensky also emphasized that Ukraine's security guarantees could not be fulfilled by European partners alone, asserting that security without the involvement of the United States would not be viable. He warned that a deal lacking firm military commitments, such as NATO membership or peacekeeping forces, would allow Russia the opportunity to regroup and potentially attack Ukraine again.

Furthermore, Zelensky sought to involve US businesses in Ukraine's reconstruction, offering lucrative deals to firms that contribute to rebuilding the war-torn nation.

Zelensky has historically rejected ceding any Ukrainian territory after Russia's invasion in February 2022. However, in a recent interview with *The Guardian*, he stated that Ukraine would consider trading territories, including the Kursk region of Russia, which Ukraine had seized following a surprise offensive last year. Zelensky remained noncommittal on which areas Ukraine might request in return but emphasized the importance of all Ukrainian territories.





## India's Wholesale Inflation Eases to 2.31% in January

India's wholesale inflation moderated to 2.31% in January on an annual basis, slightly lower than the 2.37% recorded in December, according to government data released on Friday.

The data shows a notable decline in the inflation rate for primary articles, which dropped to 4.69% in January from 6.02% in December. Primary articles include food items, which are a significant component of the wholesale price index, and this decrease reflects a more stable pricing environment for agricultural and raw materials.

Additionally, fuel and power wholesale prices saw a smaller decline of 2.78% in January, compared to a sharper 3.79% drop in December. The moderation in fuel prices indicates a less volatile energy market, contributing to the overall easing of wholesale inflation.

The January figures indicate a stabiliza-

tion in the cost of goods at the wholesale level, offering some relief to both businesses and consumers. The easing of inflation in primary articles and fuel prices suggests that input costs may not rise as sharply in the near term, which could have a positive impact on the broader economy.

While the overall wholesale inflation remains subdued, analysts will be closely watching the upcoming months to see if these trends continue, particularly in sectors like food and energy, which have a significant influence on the overall inflationary landscape.

India's wholesale inflation is a key indicator for policymakers, as it influences decisions related to interest rates and economic growth strategies. The government's efforts to stabilize inflation may help support economic growth while maintaining price stability for consumers and industries.

## UM Hardeep Puri emphasises commitment to attract investors in energy sector

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, on Friday emphasized India's dedication to creating a predictable, stable, and growth-oriented business environment within the energy sector. Speaking at a discussion during the India Energy Week 2025 in New Delhi, Puri underlined the government's commitment to facilitating ease of doing business in the energy industry, referencing the recently tabled Oilfields (Regulation and Development) Amendment Bill, 2024 in Parliament.



Puri explained that the bill aims to attract international investments while solidifying India's position on the global energy map. He noted that the law's enactment would reduce unpredictability, thereby boosting confidence in the sector and encouraging greater foreign involvement. Highlighting India's rapidly growing energy needs, driven by its goal to become a developed nation by 2047, Puri pointed out that this expansion would open substantial opportunities in both traditional and green energy sectors. He emphasized that India's strategy not only focuses on securing its

energy future but also on contributing to the global energy market. Collaborative efforts in clean energy technologies are already underway with countries like Italy, the UK, Brazil, and several Middle Eastern nations.

Puri also underscored India's eagerness to share innovative solutions with the world. He mentioned that technologies developed in India, such as clean cooking and energy-efficient products, have the potential to be scaled internationally and can significantly aid global efforts to transition to cleaner energy sources.

Additionally, Puri shared insights from discussions with international partners, including the US-India Business Council (USIBC), which is exploring AI applications. He noted that the themes of "frugality, efficiency, and innovation" were central to these conversations, indicating a positive outlook for future collaborations. He also highlighted productive meetings with representatives from the Gulf and Latin America, reinforcing India's active role in the global energy landscape.

## Indian Oil and Gas Companies Secure Long-Term LNG Deals Amid Growing Demand



In a bid to secure natural gas supplies as demand rapidly increases, Indian oil and gas companies have entered into three significant long-term liquefied natural gas (LNG) import agreements with global energy giants. The deals, which were finalized during the India Energy Week, are valued in billions of dollars and include contracts with major international players such as Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) and TotalEnergies.

Among the key agreements, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the country's largest refiner and fuel retailer, has signed a substantial deal with ADNOC Gas, a subsidiary of ADNOC. The agreement is worth between \$7 billion and \$9 billion, with IOC set

to import 1.2 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of LNG over a period of 14 years, starting in 2026. This deal aims to address India's growing energy demand, particularly as the country transitions toward cleaner energy sources.

In addition to the IOC-ADNOC deal, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) also finalized a long-term contract with ADNOC, strengthening India's energy ties with the UAE. The deals highlight India's efforts to diversify and secure reliable sources of natural gas, an essential component of the country's energy mix. Furthermore, Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation (GSPC) has secured an LNG import agreement with French energy giant TotalEnergies, further diversifying India's energy partnerships.

These long-term LNG contracts are part of India's strategy to ensure energy security while meeting the growing needs of its expanding economy. As the country aims to reduce its carbon footprint and transition to more sustainable energy sources, securing reliable natural gas supplies is crucial for supporting industries and infrastructure projects across the nation.

The agreements solidify India's position in the global LNG market and highlight the country's efforts to diversify its energy sources in line with its broader energy security and sustainability goals.

## BSNL Returns to Profitability After 17 Years, Reports Rs 262 Crore Net Profit for Q3



BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) has posted a net profit of Rs 262 crore for the third quarter of FY2024-25, marking a significant milestone in the state-owned telecom company's recovery. This is the first time in 17 years that BSNL has recorded a quarterly profit, with the last such instance dating back to 2007. Union Minister for Communications, Jyotiraditya Scindia, hailed this achievement as a "significant turning point" for the company, which has focused on expanding its service offerings and growing its subscriber base.

BSNL's growth across several segments is noteworthy, with the company seeing a 14-18% increase in revenue from its mobility, Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH), and leased line services. Additionally, its subscriber base grew from 8.4 crore in June to approximately 9 crore in December, reflecting strong demand for its services.

The positive results are attributed to BSNL's emphasis on network expansion, innovation, and cost optimi-

zation. For instance, mobility services revenue rose by 15%, FTTH revenue saw an 18% increase, and leased line services experienced a 14% growth compared to the same quarter last year. These improvements contributed to BSNL's overall recovery, helping reduce losses by over Rs 1,800 crore compared to the previous year.

In an effort to enhance customer experience, BSNL introduced several new offerings, including National Wi-Fi Roaming, BiTV (Free Entertainment for All Mobile Customers), IFTV for FTTH customers, and the first private 5G connectivity for mining. The company has also been working on cutting finance costs and controlling overall expenditure to boost profitability.

Looking ahead, Scindia expressed confidence that BSNL would continue to grow, with the hope of further revenue increases by the end of the fourth quarter. He emphasized that maintaining control over costs and expenditure would be key in reducing losses further in the coming year.

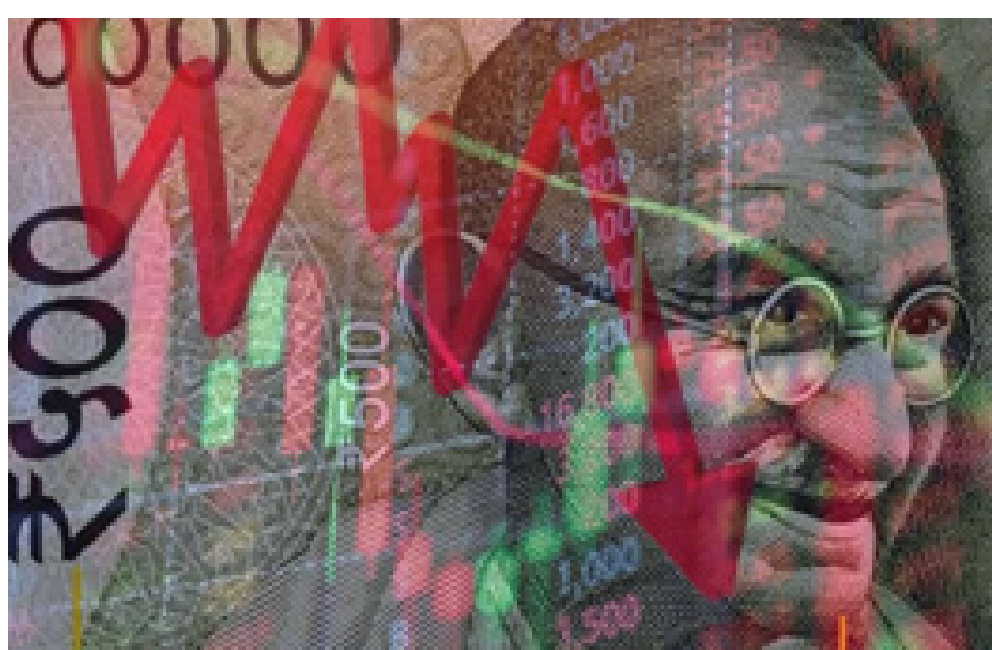
Over the past four years, BSNL has made significant strides, with its EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization) doubling from Rs 1,100 crore in FY2019-20 to nearly Rs 2,100 crore in FY2023-24.

One of BSNL's major ongoing projects is its 4G service rollout. Scindia stated that out of 100,000 planned towers, around 75,000 have already been installed, with nearly 60,000 commissioned. The company aims to have all 100,000 towers operational by June this year, which will mark a critical step in BSNL's digital transformation and expansion across India.

## India Launches EFTA Desk to Strengthen Economic Ties with Europe

India's industrial growth, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), stood at 3.2% in December 2024, according to data released by the Ministry of Statistics on Wednesday. The growth was slightly slower compared to the 5.2% recorded in November, marking a slowdown after reaching a six-month high.

The manufacturing sector, which constitutes over three-fourths of the IIP, grew by 3% in December 2024. The sector is vital for creating quality jobs, particularly for the young graduates emerging from India's engineering institutes and universities. Notably, 16 out of 23 industry groups at the NIC 2-digit level showed positive growth in December, indicating a broad-based



recovery within manufacturing.

Key contributors to this growth included "Manufacture of basic metals," which saw a 6.7% rise, "Manufacture of electrical equipment," which grew by an impressive 40.1%, and "Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products," which expanded by 3.9%. Within the basic metals sector, products like MS blooms, galvanized steel, and pipes made significant contributions to the overall performance.

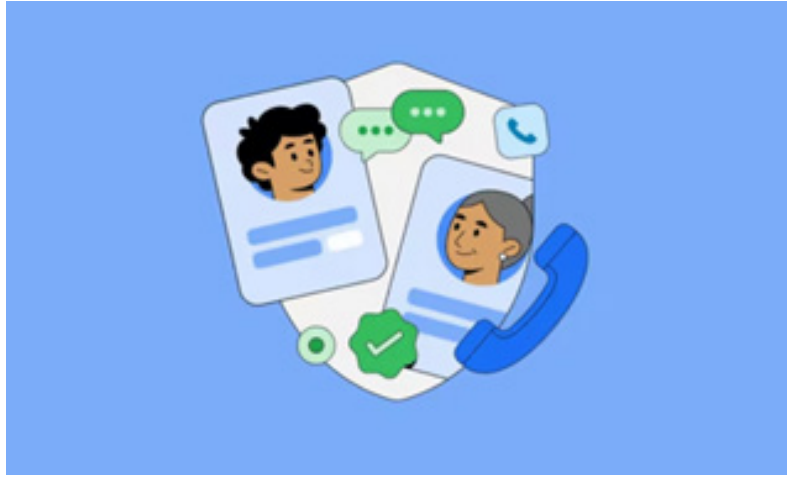
In addition to manufacturing, the electricity sector posted robust growth of 6.2%, while the mining sector grew at a slower pace of 2.6%. The data also highlighted a substantial increase in the production of capital goods, which

surged by 10.3% in December, signaling strong investment in machinery and factory equipment—key drivers for future economic growth and job creation. Additionally, the production of consumer durables, including electronic goods, refrigerators, and TVs, rose by 8.3%, reflecting increasing consumer demand amid rising incomes.

For the period of April-December 2024, industrial production increased by 4%, down from 6.3% during the same period in the previous year. Despite the slowdown, the growth trend in sectors like manufacturing and electricity continues to provide optimism for India's industrial outlook in the coming months.

## After Meta, Google will use AI to determine if a user is lying about their age

Google has announced plans to test a new machine learning-powered model designed to determine if a user is under 18. This initiative, set to launch in the United States later this year, will eventually expand to more countries. The goal is to enhance online safety and ensure that users under the age of 18 are shielded from potentially harmful content across Google products. In a blog post, Google explained that the new system would be integrated across its platform, including YouTube, Google Search, and other services. Once the system determines a user is under 18, it will automatically apply several protective measures. These measures include limiting exposure to sensitive advertising content, enabling SafeSearch filters to block explicit search results, and restricting access to age-restricted videos on YouTube. Google emphasized that this age verification model aims to create a safer online environment for younger users, especially in an era where dig-



ital content and advertising are increasingly prevalent. The company has stated that the machine learning model would not require users to manually input their birth dates, but instead, it will use advanced algorithms to detect a user's age based on certain behavioral patterns and data. The company's move follows growing concerns about online safety, privacy, and the well-being of young users. With this new system, Google seeks to build a more age-appropriate online experience that aligns with both regulatory guidelines and user ex-

pectations. It's expected that this approach will evolve over time, as the company gathers feedback and refines the technology. While the model is still in the testing phase, Google is committed to transparency and providing clear options for users to manage their privacy settings. As the testing rolls out in the United States, it will be interesting to see how the model is received and whether it successfully addresses concerns about the protection of young users on the internet.

## Outrage in Bengaluru Over 'Rent A Boyfriend' Service Posters During Valentine's Day

A new trend has sparked outrage in Bengaluru, with posters advertising the rental of boyfriends appearing across the city, particularly in areas like Jayanagar, Banashankari, and BDA complexes. The posters, promoting the "Rent A Boyfriend" service, have caught the public's attention, especially as Valentine's Week approaches. The service is being marketed with the tagline "This Valentine's Day, Rent A Boyfriend, Scan Me" and is priced at Rs 389 for a day's rental.



The service, which allows individuals to rent a "boyfriend" for various purposes such as attending public events, parties, or simply to stave off loneliness, has raised concerns among residents of Bengaluru. Many have taken to X, formerly Twitter, to express their outrage, tagging the Bengaluru Police in their posts and demanding action against the service providers. The controversy has sparked heated debates about cultural values and the potential impact of such services on society, with some individuals viewing it as

a threat to the city's traditions. This "rent-a-partner" phenomenon, although not new, has been gaining popularity globally, particularly in countries like China, Japan, and Thailand. Now, it appears to be making its way into India, with new apps and websites emerging to cater to this demand, especially during times like Valentine's Week. In these countries, renting a partner, whether for social events or to meet specific emotional needs, has become a growing trend. However, the practice is now drawing significant attention

in India, where it has sparked discussions around the implications for social behavior, emotional well-being, and public culture. With Bengaluru at the forefront of this controversy, many are calling for greater scrutiny and regulation of such services to ensure that they align with societal norms. As the city grapples with this issue, authorities are expected to examine the legalities surrounding these types of services and their potential consequences for local communities.

## AI detects 96% of policy-violating YouTube content



On Safer Internet Day 2025, Google reaffirmed its dedication to user safety by highlighting significant measures implemented to protect billions of users in India. The company reported that in 2024, it prevented fraudulent Google Pay transactions totaling ₹13,000 crore and issued 41 million warnings to safeguard Indian users. Google has intensified its security protocols across various platforms. With Google Play Protect, the service scanned over 200 billion apps daily, identifying more than 13 million new malicious apps outside of Google Play. The company also took action to enforce its policies, blocking over 2.36 million policy-violating apps from reaching Google

Play and banning more than 158,000 developer accounts globally for attempting to publish harmful apps. In its efforts to combat online scams, Google took proactive steps, particularly on YouTube, where in the third quarter of 2024, over 4.1 million channels and 85,000 videos were removed for violating spam, deceptive practices, and scams policies. The platform also strengthened its efforts to tackle clickbait, especially for videos on sensitive topics like news and current events, ensuring viewers weren't misled. Google has also explored innovative approaches to digital literacy, including a pilot study of a mobile game, "ShieldUp!," designed to help

users recognize common manipulation techniques used by scammers. Results showed that playing the game improved users' ability to spot scams, with the effect lasting for weeks. To further enhance online safety, Google engaged in cross-industry collaborations, such as the partnership with the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre. This collaboration led to the integration of Google Pay into the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal, enabling better information sharing to investigate fraudulent financial activities. These initiatives underscore Google's ongoing commitment to creating a safer and more trustworthy digital ecosystem for users worldwide.

## Zuckerberg Reveals He Faced Possible Death Sentence in Pakistan



Indians are renowned for their remarkable 'jugaad' — the ability to find innovative, out-of-the-box solutions to any problem. A recent viral video showcasing an inventive "chai jugaad" perfectly captures this ingenious spirit and has caught the attention of social media users worldwide. The video, shared on Instagram, shows a scene from an Indian train where a tea vendor encounters a problem: a passenger wants tea, but the window has tiny holes in it. Rather than give up, the vendor uses his creativity to serve tea in a way that leaves viewers amazed. The vendor stands outside the train near the window and crumples a small paper cup to fit through the tiny hole. Once the cup is inside, the

passenger carefully unfolds it, allowing the cup to regain its original shape. With precision, the tea vendor then places the spout of his kettle through the same hole and pours hot chai into the paper cup. This "jugaad" method allows the passenger to receive their tea without having to open the window or step outside. The video's caption, originally written in Gujarati, translates to: "This technique has not been tried outside India," followed by a laughing emoji. The clever tea-serving technique quickly gained popularity on social media. Users were impressed by the vendor's ingenuity and flooded the comment section with enthusiastic reactions. One user

remarked, "That's Indian jugaad! So smart," while another joked, "The good thing is that this era cannot even go outside the country." Comments like "Hacker ultra pro max" and "India is definitely not for Beginners" further showcased how the video resonated with viewers. However, not all responses were without concern. One individual raised a hygiene issue, pointing out that "regular travelers know people spit from that gap." Despite the mixed reactions, the video remains a testament to India's knack for creative problem-solving, and the vendor's resourceful technique is a shining example of 'jugaad' in action.

## Women In Assam State Consume The Most Alcohol, Shows Survey

A recent survey by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has revealed interesting insights into alcohol consumption patterns among women in India, shedding light on the states with the highest prevalence of female alcohol consumption. According to the survey, Assam stands out with the highest proportion of women consuming alcohol. While the national average for women aged 15-49 who drink alcohol is just 1.2%, Assam's figure is significantly higher, with 16.5% of women in this age group reporting alcohol consumption. This marks a sub-

stantial deviation from the national trend, placing Assam at the top in this regard. Following Assam is Meghalaya, where 8.7% of women aged 15-49 report consuming alcohol. While this figure is lower than Assam's, it is still considerably above the national average, indicating a notable prevalence of alcohol consumption among women in the state. Arunachal Pradesh holds the third spot on the list, with 3.3% of women aged 15-49 consuming alcohol. Though this marks a decline compared to previous years, the fig-

ure remains substantial. Notably, Arunachal Pradesh also has the highest proportion of male alcohol consumers in the country, with 59% of men in the same age group reporting alcohol consumption. Other states such as Sikkim and Chhattisgarh report much lower figures, with only 0.3% and 0.2% of women aged 15-49 consuming alcohol, respectively. These findings shed light on regional differences in alcohol consumption patterns among women in India, with certain northeastern states showing higher prevalence compared to the national average.

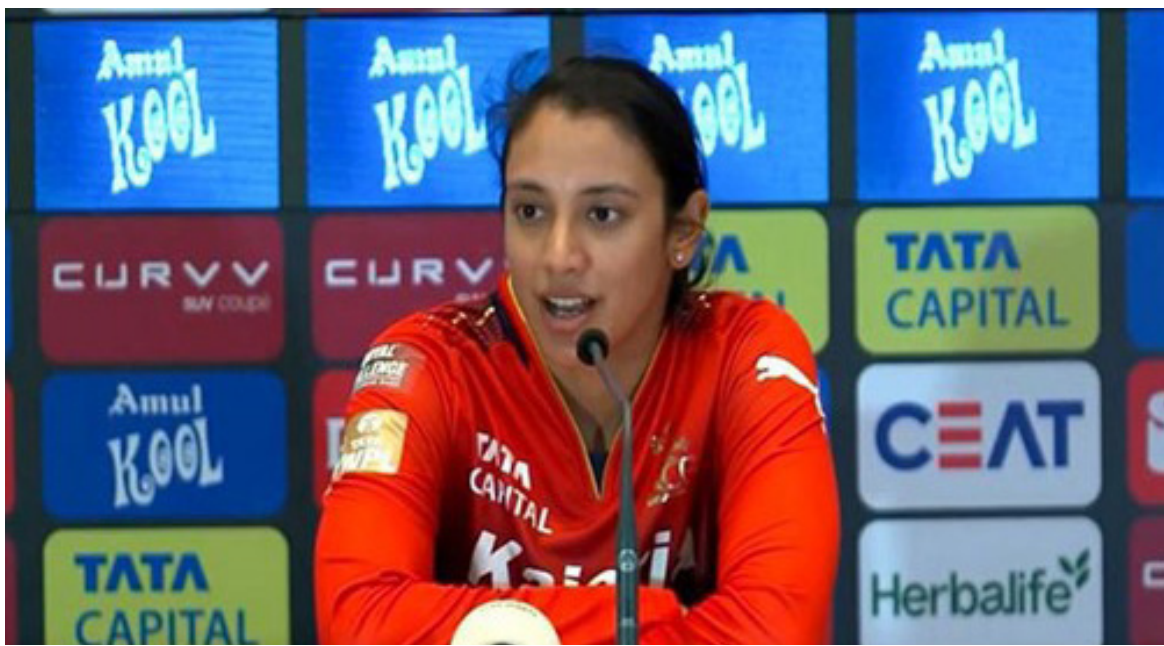


## Chennai Heat Shock Hyderabad Falcons with 85-82 Victory in InBL Pro U25



In a thrilling upset, the Chennai Heat defeated the league-leading Hyderabad Falcons 85-82 at the Thyagraj Indoor Stadium in the InBL Pro U25. Jack Stanwix (20 points) led the charge early, hitting key three-pointers, while Matt Gray (17 points) kept the Heat in control. Despite a strong comeback led by Jack Purchase (21 points) in the final minutes, the Falcons fell short. The Heat built a commanding lead in the first half, and though the Falcons pushed back, Chennai's defense held firm. A clutch three-pointer from Gray extended the Heat's lead, and despite a last-minute rally, the Heat held on for a dramatic victory. The Falcons, missing key players Kushal Singh and Harsh Dagar, fought hard but couldn't overcome the Heat's resilience.

## WPL 2025: Smriti Mandhana Confident in RCB's Strength Despite Injury Setbacks



Ahead of the Women's Premier League 3 opener, Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) captain Smriti Mandhana expressed faith in her squad, despite facing multiple injury challenges. The defending champions, who kick off their campaign against the Gujarat Giants, have been hit hard by injuries to key players. Australia's Sophie Molineux and New Zealand's Sophie Devine were ruled out, while legspinner Asha Sobhana also sustained an

injury. Despite these setbacks, Mandhana remains confident, highlighting the depth and quality of RCB's squad. "We have really good youngsters and strong replacements," she stated, emphasizing the team's determination to honor the injured players. Mandhana's optimism reflects RCB's readiness to overcome adversity and defend their WPL title with talent and resilience.

## Indian Men's Hockey Team Gears Up for FIH Pro League 2024-25



The Indian Men's Hockey Team, ranked fifth globally, is set to begin their FIH Pro League 2024-25 campaign at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium in Bhubaneswar. Under the leadership of Harmanpreet Singh, the team will face World No. 7 Spain in their opening matches on

February 15 and 16, followed by encounters with World No. 4 Germany on February 18 and 19. India's momentum is strong after a bronze medal win at the 2024 Paris Olympics and a successful defense of the Asian Champions Trophy 2024. With a mix of seasoned stars and young talent,

including Vice-Captain Hardik Singh, the team aims to improve on their seventh-place finish from last season and secure World Cup qualification. Chief Coach Craig Fulton emphasized performance over rankings, preparing for a tough series of back-to-back matches.

## Sports Ministry Dismisses Speculation About Converting Cricketers into Baseball Players



The Sports Ministry has firmly rejected speculation about turning India's aspiring cricketers into baseball players for future Asian Games or Olympics, clarifying that such an idea has never been discussed. A ministry source stated that baseball is not even a recognized na-

tional federation in India, and the suggestion that it was discussed at the Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) meeting was "completely imaginary." The Amateur Baseball Federation of India is affiliated with the global body but lacks recognition from the ministry. The focus, accord-

ing to the ministry, remains on improving sports where India is already performing well. The BCCI also dismissed the idea, highlighting that cricket offers financially rewarding career options, especially with lucrative leagues like the IPL.

## India Eliminated from Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships After Loss to Japan



India's campaign at the 2025 Badminton Asia Mixed Team Championships ended in the quarterfinals with a 3-0 defeat to Japan in Qingdao, China. In the opening match, Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto showed resilience against the world

No. 12 Japanese pair Hiroki Midorikawa and Natsu Saito, but eventually lost 21-13, 17-21, 21-13 after 61 minutes. Malvika Bansod then faced World No. 8 Tomoka Miyazaki, but her efforts fell short, losing 21-12, 21-19. India's hopes rested on Asian

Games bronze medallist HS Prannoy, who fought back from a game down against Kenta Nishimoto. However, Nishimoto dominated the decider, securing a 21-14, 15-21, 21-12 victory, sealing India's exit from the tournament.

## SESA Football Academy Clinch Goa Regional Round Title in Thrilling Penalty Shootout

SESA Football Academy secured their place in the National Finals of the Dream Sports Championship 2025 after a dramatic penalty shootout victory against Dempo SC in the Goa regional round final on Friday at the Fields of Dreams. The match ended 2-2, with SESA initially taking a 2-0 lead through goals by Aniket Terane and Pramod Gawas. However, Dempo SC mounted a fierce comeback with goals from Jonathan Silva and Jodric Abranches, leveling the score in injury time. In the ensuing shootout, SESA goalkeeper Sakib Lamture became the hero, saving two penalties as SESA triumphed 4-2. Dempo SC will also advance to the National Finals as the best losing regional finalist, completing the lineup for the finals in Goa in April 2025.





## Mahesh Babu Unveils Romantic Song 'Wherever You Go' from Robinhood



Superstar Mahesh Babu has launched the much-anticipated second song, "Wherever You Go," from the upcoming heist comedy *\*Robinhood\**, starring Nithiin and Sreeleela. The song, composed by popular Kollywood music director GV Prakash Kumar, is a delightful romantic track, perfectly timed for this year's Valentine's Day. "Wherever You Go" showcases Nithiin's affection for Sreeleela in a creative and quirky manner, with a playful blend of well-known brands and their iconic taglines. Armaan Malik's enchanting vocals bring an extra layer of charm to the song, while Krishnakanth's lyrics elevate its emotional depth. The song's upbeat tempo and infectious rhythm make it a perfect romantic anthem.

In the track, Nithiin appears in a stylish, energetic avatar, while Sreeleela dazzles with her elegance and charm. The chemistry between the two stars is palpable, with their vibrant dance moves and sizzling screen presence enhancing the song's appeal. The visually stunning music video complements the energetic vibe of the song, making it a treat for fans. Directed by Venky Kudumula and produced by the Mythri Movie Makers banner, *\*Robinhood\** promises to be a fun-filled entertainer. The film is slated for a worldwide release on March 28, 2025. With its exciting mix of romance, humor, and action, *\*Robinhood\** is shaping up to be one of the most anticipated films of the year.

## Laila : A Misfire with Missed Potential



Mass Ka Das Vishwak Sen's latest film *\*Laila\** has been released amidst much controversy, but does it live up to the hype? Unfortunately, the film falls short in several areas, leaving audiences underwhelmed.

Sonu (Vishwak Sen), a beauty parlour owner admired by many women in his neighborhood, finds himself entangled in a conflict with local rowdy Rustum (Abhimanyu Singh) and SI Shankar (Bablu Prithviraj). In an attempt to escape their threats, Sonu adopts a new identity as Laila. The transformation and its consequences form the crux of the story. Vishwak Sen's bold decision to take on a challenging role as Laila (dressed as a woman) is commendable, and he does a passable job in the role. His performance as Laila, while not extraordinary, does manage to hold the film together in parts. Abhimanyu Singh shines with his comic timing, especially in the second half. His presence provides much-needed levity in an otherwise dreary narrative. The biggest drawback of *Laila* is its outdated and weak storyline,

which lacks depth or originality. The film follows a predictable, formulaic approach with little novelty beyond what the trailers already revealed. Despite an attempt at humor, crass dialogues and ill-timed jokes only diminish the film's appeal. Vishwak Sen's character transformation feels unnecessary and lacks emotional depth. The screenplay is underdeveloped, and the direction appears unfocused. Moreover, the film suffers from some outdated notions about complexions that feel out of place and offensive. Akanksha Sharma's role is limited to an extended cameo with minimal impact, and the rest of the characters remain underdeveloped. The random references to Chiranjeevi feel forced and do nothing to enhance the experience. Director Ram Narayan's execution falters, with a poorly structured screenplay that hinders the film's potential. The music by Leon James doesn't create much of an impact, and the cinematography feels lackluster. While the runtime is short, the editing does little to maintain the film's flow.

## HHVM: Valentine's Day treat served with a special update

Powerstar Pawan Kalyan's much-awaited period action drama, *\*Hari Hara Veera Mallu\**, is all set for its grand release, and the makers have confirmed that it will hit the screens on March 28, 2025, despite earlier speculations suggesting a delay. The confirmation came with a special Valentine's Day treat for fans, as the team released a romantic poster featuring Pawan Kalyan and Nidhi Agerwal, along with an exciting update about the second single from the film. The second single, titled "Kollagottinadhiro," will be unveiled on February 24, 2025, at 3 PM. Fans can expect the song's release simultaneously in multiple languages, adding to the anticipation surrounding the film's music. This romantic track promises to capture the chemistry between the lead pair and is expected to be one of the highlights of the film. *\*Hari Hara Veera Mallu\** is current-

ly in the final stages of shooting, and the film is shaping up to be a high-budget spectacle. Set against the backdrop of the 17th-century Mughal Empire, the film promises to be a thrilling ride. Pawan Kalyan plays the titular role of Veera Mallu, a fearless warrior, while Bobby Deol portrays the villainous Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. The ensemble cast also includes Anupam Kher, Subbaraju, Sunil, and Nasser in pivotal roles, adding to the film's star power. The film is directed by Jyothi Krishna and Krish Jagarlamudi, who have combined their expertise to bring this historical drama to life. The production is handled by A. Dayakar Rao, and A.M. Ratnam is presenting the film. Music maestro MM Keeravani has composed the soundtrack, further raising expectations for the musical elements of the film.



## Interstellar Sets New Records with Re-release in Telugu States



The Telugu audience's deep love for cinema was once again proven with the overwhelming success of the re-release of *\*Interstellar\**, Christopher Nolan's iconic space exploration masterpiece. The film, which is considered one

of the greatest in its genre, marked a decade since its original release, and its re-release in India generated immense excitement, particularly in the Telugu states. Right from the start, the re-release bookings showed strong demand, especially in Hyderabad, where the response was exceptionally positive. One of the standout locations was Prasads Multiplex, a well-known hub for movie lovers. The numbers reported from this cinema were nothing short of extraordinary, setting a new benchmark for re-release films in the region. Prasads Multiplex screened *\*Interstellar\** across 50 shows, attracting an impressive 25,242 admissions and grossing a remarkable ₹74,46,390. This was

the highest-ever earnings for any re-release film at the multiplex, surpassing previous records by a wide margin. The screenings were met with an astounding 99.9% occupancy, indicating that the film was in high demand. The numbers were so strong that even the most popular Telugu cult classics, which are often the stars of the cinema scene in the region, couldn't compete with the massive turnout for *\*Interstellar\**. This trend highlights the diversity and tenacity of the Telugu audience, who not only have a deep appreciation for their local films but also show immense admiration for high-quality international cinema.

## Chhaava – Watchable historical action drama



*Chhaava* opens with the poignant death of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, a moment that deeply shakes the Maratha Empire. Stepping into his father's shoes, Sambhaji (Vicky Kaushal) embarks on a daring assault on the Mughal stronghold of Burhanpur. Aurangzeb (Akshaye Khanna), enraged by the Maratha audacity, sees this as the perfect opportunity to crush the Marathas once and for all. Yet, Sambhaji's strategic brilliance keeps the mighty Mughal Empire on its toes. However, betrayal from within leads to his capture, setting the stage for a saga of defiance, sacrifice, and undying courage. intensity, exceptional dialogue delivery, and strong screen presence make the film captivating, particularly during the gripping climax. He elevates the film

with his portrayal of the brave and resilient warrior. Rashmika Mandanna's brief role is handled well, even though her screen time is limited. Akshaye Khanna's portrayal of Aurangzeb is decent, and supporting actors like Ashutosh Rana, Divya Dutta, and Diana Penty contribute solid performances to the overall narrative. While the film holds immense historical significance, its execution lacks finesse. Director Laxman Utekar presents the story competently, but the screenplay could have been more engaging, especially in the first half. The war sequences in the second half fall short of being truly gripping, and the internal betrayals don't have the emotional depth they deserve. Despite a strong ensemble cast, only a

few characters are given the depth they need. While Shivaji Maharaj is present through voiceovers, visual representations of him would have strengthened the emotional resonance. Aurangzeb, played by Akshaye Khanna, could have had more depth in his characterization to intensify the conflict with Sambhaji. Laxman Utekar's direction is competent, but a sharper screenplay would have enhanced the narrative. AR Rahman's music complements the film, and the dialogues by Rishi Virmani and Irshad Kamil stand out in the climax. The cinematography by Saurabh Goswami, while functional, could have been more striking, and the editing could have been tighter to improve the pacing.