



PLEASE CONTINUE
APCOS
OUTSOURCING
EMPLOYEES'
REQUEST

TPN Correspondent |
Amaravati

APCOS, Andhra Pradesh Corporation for Outsourcing Employees, is going to be closed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh—this is the talk circulating among employees for the last four months. As APCOS was established by the Government under YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY, the present Government is allegedly planning to abolish it and bring back the old system of recruiting outsourcing employees through individual departments. Earlier, under the TDP regime, outsourcing employees were recruited by individual authorities as per the rules of the Government of Andhra Pradesh. Allegedly, many got jobs through the references of TDP leaders. Keeping that allegation in view, YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY decided to remove all those employees and start fresh recruitment through the corporation APCOS. By taking this step, YSRC allegedly tried to replace those employees with their affiliated people. Now, the Alliance Government is allegedly trying to abolish APCOS. Though Ministers have denied such allegations, the fear among outsourcing employees has not subsided. Almost 4 lakh outsourcing employees are working under APCOS now, equal to the number of Government Employees. Under APCOS, they receive facilities like ESI, PF, and even reservations are implemented through APCOS recruitment. This is why the associations of outsourcing employees are requesting the Government to continue the corporation. Mr. SAMPATH KUMAR, Vice President, Association of Outsourcing Employees, said, “We are requesting the Government to continue APCOS. If they change the format, the facilities provided by APCOS will be gone. Almost 4 lakh employees are working under APCOS. Though there is a work burden, they are not taking a backstep at any cost. They are working equal to Government Employees but with lower salaries. If APCOS is not there, then those facilities will not be available, and that is what we fear. We request the Government to continue APCOS.”

FIRST SAKSHI, THEN JAGAN
CASES READY, WAITING
FOR RIGHT TIME

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

The Government of Andhra Pradesh under the alliance is taking steps to close YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY politically. Before that, there is a move to shut down SAKSHI, the publication owned by YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY. Chief Minister N. CHANDRABABU NAIDU and Deputy CM PAWAN KALYAN have coordinated with the Union Government through Home Minister AMIT SHAH on the cases of YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY. Already, SAKSHI under JAGATI PUBLICATIONS has cases proceeding by ED and CBI. The ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE has frozen the properties, but JAGATI PUBLICATIONS has secured a stay order on it. The renewal of the publication is still pending with the Union Government's Departments. Only because of court orders, the publication is being allowed to continue. As per sources in DELHI, everything is ready to vacate the stay orders, and immediately after that, JAGATI PUBLICATIONS will be seized, which implies stopping the publication of SAKSHI PAPER and the broadcasting of SAKSHI CHANNEL. After that, cases will be moved to arrest YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY, as per reports. Already, in the LIQUOR SCAM CASE, the files are ready, and they say YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY is the ultimate beneficiary of the scam. Apart from that, even in the KAKINADA SEZ CASE, YS JAGAN's name will be included very soon. In both cases, VIJAYASAI REDDY is going to play a key role, allegedly. All the evidence is ready, and the officials need just a green signal from the GOVERNMENT OF AP. A political decision to arrest JAGAN has already been taken, as per reports. However, they are waiting to execute it at a time when JAGAN will not gain public sympathy, ensuring it does not result in any political advantage



The ruling alliance took time to establish inquiries on YSRCP leaders.

They do not want the public to sympathize with JAGAN.

Now, the files have been moved to stop SAKSHI publication and channel broadcasting.



VIJAYASAI REDDY is going to play a key role in the entire episode.

In the LIQUOR SCAM CASE and KAKINADA SEZ CASE, JAGAN's name will be included.



After that, they are planning to arrest YS JAGAN.

First, they started registering cases against various YSRCP leaders.

for him. Ex-Minister PERNI NANI said, “The government is trying to arrest YS JAGAN. They have taken a report from VASUDEVA REDDY, Ex-MD and accused in the LIQUOR SCAM CASE accordingly. But we don't care about all these developments.” If we observe, TDP has executed cases very strategically. Initially, the government faced criticism for its delayed response to complaints against YSRCP leaders. However, after nine months, it seems they have started executing the plan. PERNI NANI and JOGI RAMESH have already faced legal trouble, while

VALLABHANENI VAMSI is in remand. Cases against ROJA have been accelerated, and fresh cases have been mounted on Ex-Minister VIDADALA RAJINI. Meanwhile, KODALI NANI and SAJJALA RAMAKRISHNA REDDY are actively seeking anticipatory bail. By exposing the corruption and wrongdoings of YSRCP leaders, the ruling alliance is creating an anti-YSRCP political atmosphere. Once this is established, they will move to shut down SAKSHI and subsequently arrest YS JAGANMOHAN REDDY. Reports suggest that all these actions may take place within months.



AP Collectors' Conference
Mega DSC Date
Confirmed, Thalliki
Vandanam in May

- Mega DSC notification to be released in April
- CM urges Collectors to focus on field-level governance
- Pension increased from ₹400 to ₹4,000 under TDP rule
- 204 Anna Canteens set up as a model for welfare governance
- ₹55,000 crore allocated for national highways and ₹75,000 crore for rail projects

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

The Andhra Pradesh Collectors' Conference commenced today at the Amaravati Secretariat, where Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu addressed the officials, outlining his governance priorities. He urged the Collectors to focus on public welfare and refrain from mere administrative formalities. Emphasizing the importance of field visits, he remarked that governance varies with leadership—some build, while others destroy. Chandrababu reaffirmed his commitment to rebuilding the state through a combination of development, welfare, and good governance. He stressed that poverty eradication is impossible without welfare schemes and that development is necessary for effective welfare implementation. Highlighting his government's initiatives, he mentioned that the Telugu Desam Party had initially introduced pensions

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Polavaram Excavations
Claiming Lives

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Minister Narayana Inspects
Amaravati Capital Works

- 90% of tenders for capital works completed
- 186 bungalows for ministers, judges, and secretaries under construction
- Loans from World Bank, ADB will be repaid as land value increases

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister Ponguru Narayana visited Amaravati on Tuesday to inspect the progress of capital city development. He reviewed the under-construction bungalows for secretaries and principal secretaries, as well as the CRDA project office. Addressing the media, he emphasized that Amaravati's construction is moving forward systematically, despite challenges left by the previous government. Minister Narayana reiterated that every state needs a capital, but Andhra Pradesh



remains the only state without one due to previous setbacks. He stated that tenders worth ₹43,000 crore were called for during the previous government, and significant progress had been made before the work was stalled. “The buildings for officials, MLAs, MLCs, and All India Service officers were nearly complete, but the previous government neglected the project. Even after the coalition government took over, several issues persisted. We brought in IIT Madras to assess the quality of construction,

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Mega DSC...

Continued from page 1

at ₹400 and gradually increased them to ₹4,000, a scheme unmatched anywhere in the country. He also pointed out the establishment of 204 Anna Canteens, calling them an inspiration for welfare governance.

The Chief Minister announced that the long-awaited Mega DSC notification for teacher recruitment would be released in the first week of April. He emphasized the need for strict implementation of the recruitment process, recalling that the TDP government had provided the highest number of jobs in previous years. He also noted that his administration had given a 10% reservation for Gita workers in liquor shops to promote BC economic development and had abolished GST on handloom weavers.

Chandrababu also spoke about key welfare measures, such as distributing free LPG cylinders to girls under the Deepam scheme, repealing the Land Titling Act, and scrapping the garbage tax. He asserted that welfare should not be seen as charity but as a rightful entitlement for beneficiaries.

Speaking on development projects, Chandrababu highlighted that 29,000 farmers had contributed 34,000 acres for the state capital, setting a precedent for land pooling in projects like the proposed steel plant in Visakhapatnam or Anakapalle. He informed the Collectors that ₹55,000 crore worth of work was underway for national highways, while ₹75,000 crore was allocated for railway projects. He urged officials not to dismiss these as central projects but to ensure their smooth execution in the state. In a significant announcement, the Chief Minister revealed that in May, the government would launch the Thalliki Vandanam initiative, under which ₹15,000 would be given to every mother for each of her children. He called this scheme a tribute to motherhood and a step toward empowering families. The conference set a clear agenda for AP's governance, with a focus on employment, welfare, and infrastructure development.

Minister Narayana Inspects Amaravati Capital Works

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discussed with contractors, and resolved many of these challenges,” he explained.

Key Developments in Capital Construction

Minister Narayana provided key updates on the ongoing works, stating that 186 bungalows are being constructed for ministers, judges, secretaries, and principal secretaries. Additionally, 1,440 houses are being built for gazetted officers, while 1,995 structures are being developed for NGOs. He mentioned that 16.85 lakh square feet have been allocated for the High Court, and the Assembly is planned to be constructed at a height of 250 meters. He also assured that the necessary infrastructure for contractors will be in place within 15 days. He clarified that 90% of the required tenders have been completed and that work initially began with large-scale cleaning operations.

“No Financial Burden on the Public”

Minister Narayana assured that Amaravati’s construction would be completed without imposing any financial burden on the people. “We have secured loans from the World Bank and ADB. Once land values rise, the loans will be repaid. The opposition’s claims that public money is being wasted are completely baseless,” he stated. He reaffirmed the government’s commitment to completing the capital and ensuring that Amaravati emerges as a world-class administrative hub.

No Private Land Should Be in 22A: A Satya Prasad

- Govt aims to remove private lands from 22A disputes
- Special drive to resolve land issues and ensure transparency
- District collectors urged to focus on land-related grievances



TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Revenue, Registration and Stamps Minister Satya Prasad emphasized that no private land should remain in the 22A category in Andhra Pradesh. He urged district collectors to take proactive measures in resolving land-related disputes, ensuring that people, especially the poor, can live without legal complications regarding their properties.

Speaking at the 3rd District Collectors’ Conference held at the Secretariat on Tuesday, the minister highlighted Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu’s commitment to justice for the poor. He noted that the coalition government has prioritized addressing public concerns through frequent collectors’ conferences—three times in just nine months, an unprecedented move in the state’s history.

Satya Prasad criticized the previous administration’s approach to land reforms, stating that many landowners were unaware of why their properties were listed under 22A. He pointed out that the current government repealed the controversial Land Titling Act and introduced the Land Grabbing Prevention Act and amendments to the ROR Act. By shifting appeal powers from DROs to RDOs, the government aims to expedite dispute resolution.

Special Drive to Resolve Land Disputes
The minister announced a state-wide special drive to regularize land holdings for the poor and address 22A-related issues. He called on district collectors to actively par-

ticipate and ensure that rightful landowners receive due recognition. He criticized the re-survey conducted by the previous government, citing numerous errors. The coalition government has since taken corrective measures, conducting re-surveys in a phased manner at a rate of 20 acres per day while issuing new passbooks with geo-tagging for enhanced transparency.

Satya Prasad also emphasized the importance of resolving court cases related to land disputes. He instructed district collectors to coordinate with government pleaders for speedy resolutions. Additionally, he directed field-level officials to provide clear explanations to landowners when disputes cannot be settled immediately.

Special Real Estate Committees in Districts
To prevent land disputes from hindering investment, the minister proposed the formation of special real estate committees at the district level. These committees will include representatives from the revenue department, municipalities, panchayats, urban development bodies, and banks. They are expected to meet every one to two months to resolve government land-related issues, ensuring a smoother investment climate in Andhra Pradesh.

Satya Prasad concluded by reiterating that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu’s vision is to make land management more transparent, efficient, and citizen-friendly. He urged all officials, especially those in MRO offices, to adopt a service-oriented approach and resolve public grievances efficiently.

AP Oil Fed MD K. Balaji Nayak Holds Meeting with Vijaya Oils Distributors

TPN Correspondent | Visakhapatnam

A key meeting was held today at 10:00 AM at Vijaya Oils Manor Food Plaza Conventions, where AP Oil Fed Managing Director K. Balaji Nayak met with senior officials and Vijaya Oils distributors. The discussion focused on enhancing the sales of Vijaya Oils, identifying challenges faced by distributors, and providing necessary suggestions to improve distribution and market reach.

During the meeting, K. Balaji Nayak emphasized the importance of increasing Vijaya Oils’ market presence and assured distributors of the federation’s support in resolving their issues. He stated that efforts would be made to streamline distribution channels and implement strategies for sales growth.

The meeting was attended by AP Oil Federation Chairman, Visakhapatnam District TDP President, and former MLA Gandhi Babji, along with key officials and distributors. The discussions aimed at strengthening Vijaya Oils’ market position and ensuring smooth operations for distributors across the state.



Major Fire Accident in NTR District

Chilli Stock Worth ₹12 Crore Guttled

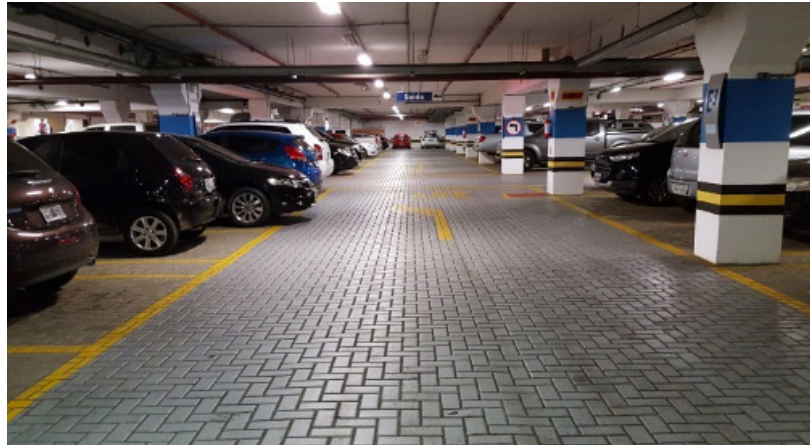
TPN Correspondent | NTR District

A massive fire broke out in Sai Tirumala Mirchi Cold Storage in Torraguntapalem, Jaggayyapet mandal, leading to the destruction of chilli stocks worth an estimated ₹12 crore. The fire, which spread rapidly, caused heavy smoke that affected nearby villages, including Sher Mohammed Peta, Jaggayyapet Shantinagar, and Anumanchipalli.

Upon receiving information at 2:30 am, Jaggayyapet MLA Sri Sri-ram Rajagopal (Tataiah) rushed to the spot and alerted fire personnel from Jaggayyapet and Nandigama, along with police and revenue officials. Firefighters managed to control the flames, but the exact cause of the accident is yet to be determined.

The thick smoke led to panic among local residents, prompting youth in Shantinagar and Sher Mohammed Peta to advise people to wear masks as a precaution. The MLA, along with officials, interacted with affected chilli farmers and directed them to register their details with the Revenue Department for necessary assistance.

AP Fire DG Madireddy Pratap also visited the site along with MLA Rajagopal to assess the damage. Authorities are working to determine the full extent of losses and support the affected farmers.



Free parking in multiplexes and malls in AP – Conditions apply!

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

The Andhra Pradesh government has taken a significant decision regarding parking fees in multiplexes and malls, addressing a long-standing concern among motorists. Despite multiple consumer forum and court rulings on parking charges, enforcement has remained inconsistent. In response, the state government has introduced new regulations to standardize parking fees.

According to the latest directive, vehicle parking in multiplex and mall parking lots will be completely free for the first 30 minutes. After this period, parking fees can be charged, but with specific conditions. Those attending movies in multiplex theaters will not be required to pay for parking upon presenting their movie tickets. Similarly, individuals shopping at malls will be exempt from parking fees if they show their purchase receipts.

However, visitors who do not shop or watch a movie will be charged parking fees after the initial 30-minute free period. The government order does not specify the exact parking rates, implying that the existing charges in multiplexes and malls will continue to apply. These new rules are set to take effect from the 1st of next month, offering relief to moviegoers and shoppers while ensuring regulated parking charges.

Rushikonda Beach Reclaims Blue Flag

– What Went Wrong & How It Was Restored?

TPN Correspondent | Visakhapatnam

The prestigious Blue Flag certification for Visakhapatnam’s Rushikonda Beach, which was revoked due to management lapses, has now been restored. The cancellation of this international recognition had sparked debate across Andhra Pradesh. However, following concerted efforts by the state government and tourism department, Blue Flag representatives have confirmed its reinstatement. Officials from the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), which grants the certification, visited Rushikonda Beach from Delhi to conduct inspections. They later informed Vi-

sakhapatnam District Collector Harrendri Prasad of their decision to restore the Blue Flag status. As a result, AP Tourism Minister Kandula Durgesh will oversee the official flag hoisting ceremony at Rushikonda Beach, marking the return of beach activities. Expressing his happiness, Minister Kandula Durgesh emphasized that the government has fulfilled its promise of regaining the certification, which was lost due to administrative lapses during the previous YSRCP regime. He credited the swift response from tourism department officials and the district administration for regaining the certification in record time. He also extended gratitude to CM Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kaly-

an for their support in the process. Rushikonda Beach was among the first eight beaches in India to receive Blue Flag recognition. To maintain its status, the state government has directed officials to implement strict measures, including enhanced safety protocols, environmental conservation, improved traffic management, water purification, and waste disposal. Additionally, the government is now considering proposals to secure Blue Flag certification for more beaches across Andhra Pradesh to boost tourism and environmental standards.

The Blue Flag certification is awarded by Denmark-based FEE to beaches, marinas, and boating zones that



meet 33 stringent criteria, including water quality, environmental education, safety, and tourist facilities. Given its international significance, only eight beaches in India currently hold

this distinction. Rushikonda Beach had lost its certification temporarily due to mismanagement, but proactive measures by the AP government have ensured its swift reinstatement.

Big Blow to YS Avinash Reddy as AP Govt Submits Affidavit in SC

TPN Correspondent | Kadapa

In a significant development, the Andhra Pradesh government has filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court regarding YSR Congress MP YS Avinash Reddy's alleged involvement in the murder case of his uncle, former minister YS Vivekananda Reddy. This move comes as a major setback for Avinash Reddy, who is currently out on bail after being accused by the CBI in the case. The Supreme Court's response to this affidavit is now eagerly awaited. The CBI launched an investigation following the murder of YS Vivekananda Reddy, initially

suspecting his personal assistant (PA) Krishna Reddy's involvement. However, Krishna Reddy later filed a police complaint against CBI SP Ram Singh, Viveka's daughter Sunitha Reddy, and son-in-law Narreddy Rajasekhhar Reddy, leading the Pulivendula police to register a case. Upon further inquiry, the police determined that Krishna Reddy's complaint was fabricated and was allegedly filed under the instructions of YS Avinash Reddy. According to the affidavit submitted to the Pulivendula court, Avinash Reddy, with Krishna Reddy's help, attempted to falsely implicate Vivekanan-

da Reddy's daughter and son-in-law in the murder case. Now, an additional affidavit has been submitted in the Supreme Court reinforcing these claims.



This latest development has intensified the legal troubles for Avinash Reddy, raising questions about the Supreme Court's upcoming decision in the case.

YCP MP Tanuja Rani Objects to Araku Coffee Stall Inauguration Snub

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MP Tanuja Rani has expressed her disappointment over not being invited to the inauguration of the Araku coffee stall in Parliament. She alleged a violation of protocol, questioning why she, as the elected MP from the Araku constituency, was left out of an event that should have been conducted beyond political lines. Recently, an Araku organic coffee stall was set up in the Parliament premises with the permis-

sion of the Lok Sabha Speaker, following a request from coalition MPs. The stall, which promotes the famous Araku coffee, was inaugurated a few days ago. However, MP Tanuja Rani stated that she was not invited to the event, calling it a serious insult. She criticized the organizers, questioning how leaders who fail to acknowledge an elected representative could be expected to care for the people. She also announced that she will formally complain to the Lok Sabha Speaker regarding the incident.



Will create 20 lakh Jobs in the State by 2029: Minister Lokesh



TPN Correspondent | Undavalli

Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh reiterated that 20 lakh jobs will be created in the state by 2029. The second meeting of the Sub-committee of Ministers on job creation was held today at his Undavalli residence. Officials presented a PowerPoint report detailing investments received, job creation, and the status of various MoUs. Minister Lokesh stated that agreements signed so far are expected to bring in investments worth ₹8,73,220 crore, which will create employment for 5,27,824 people. As Chairman of the Sub-committee, he issued key directives to officials, stressing the importance of making the Investment Tracker Portal more efficient. He instructed that all land allotment and permission details be integrated into the tracker. He emphasized the need for policy reforms to remove hurdles for investors and called for efforts to attract both domestic and international companies. Minister Lokesh also stressed the importance of supporting industries already operating in the state by offering necessary

subsidies and incentives to facilitate expansion. "Many industrialists are keen to invest in Andhra Pradesh. Necessary land allotments, permissions, and subsidies should be granted promptly. The MSME sector will play a major role in job creation, and it must be encouraged on a large scale. ITIs and polytechnics should focus on providing the skilled workforce required by industries. Additionally, the development of ports and tourism investments should receive special attention," he stated. Minister Lokesh also highlighted the untapped potential in the mining sector and directed officials to explore opportunities for investment and job creation in this field. Industries Minister TG Bharat, Power Minister Gottipati Ravikumar, Urban Development Minister P. Narayana, MSME and SERP Minister Kondapalli Srinivas, Mines Minister Kollu Ravindra, and senior officials Ajay Jain, N. Yuvraj, Katamaneni Bhaskar, Praveen Kumar, Saikanth Verma, and M. Abhishek Kishore attended the meeting.

Sharmila accuses TDP and YCP of playing politics over fuel prices

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) President YS Sharmila has slammed both the ruling TDP and opposition YSRCP, accusing them of engaging in "dirty politics" over fuel price reductions. She alleged that both parties have burdened the people with high taxes on petrol and diesel while making misleading promises. Sharmila pointed out that fuel prices in Andhra Pradesh are higher than in neighboring states like Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka. "Currently, the price of petrol per liter in Andhra Pradesh is ₹109.60, while diesel is ₹97.47. In Tamil Nadu, petrol is ₹100.86, and diesel is ₹92.39; in Karnataka, petrol is ₹102.90, and diesel is ₹88.99; in Telangana, petrol is ₹107.46, and diesel is ₹95.70. It is clear that Andhra Pradesh has higher fuel prices than other states due to excessive tax-

ation," she stated. Criticizing the past and present leadership, Sharmila reminded that TDP chief and current Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, during his tenure as opposition leader, had demanded a ₹17 per liter reduction in petrol prices. "Now that he is in power, he should fulfill his own demand. Similarly, Jagan Mohan Reddy, when in opposition, had criticized high fuel prices but later increased them after forming the government. Both these parties have looted ₹50,000 crore from the people in the name of fuel taxes," she alleged. Sharmila demanded an immediate reduction in fuel prices, as promised by the TDP before the elections. "Chandrababu Naidu assured people that fuel prices would be reduced if the coalition government came to power. Now that he is in office, we demand a clear response on when the ₹17 reduction will be implemented," she asserted.



Sharmila accuses TDP and YCP of playing politics over fuel prices



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

TDP Parliamentary Party leader and MP Lavu Srikrishna Devarayulu has called for an Enforcement Directorate (ED) investigation into the liquor scam that took place in Andhra Pradesh during the YSRCP regime, claiming it to be bigger than the Delhi liquor scam. Speaking in the Lok Sabha on Monday during the debate on the Finance Bill,

he alleged that the Andhra Pradesh liquor scam far exceeded the one in Delhi. He stated that in five years, liquor sales in the state amounted to ₹99,000 crore, out of which ₹18,000 crore was misused. MP Devarayulu further claimed that ₹4,000 crore was illegally transferred to Dubai and Africa under benami transactions. He specifically alleged that a person named Sunil Reddy funneled ₹2,000 crore to Dubai through a Hyderabad-based infrastructure company. He urged the ED to investigate these financial transactions and take strict action against those involved.

Babu-Pawan Combination is Good: Actor Suman

TPN Correspondent | Tirupati

Renowned actor Suman has praised the alliance between Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, stating that their combination is proving beneficial for the state. Speaking in Tirupati, he noted that the NDA government is providing governance that is being well-received by the people. He emphasized that while it is impossible to implement all schemes at once, Chandrababu is executing them step by step. On Pawan Kalyan, Suman remarked that he is balancing his roles as both an actor and a politician effectively. He also shared his observations on changes in Tirumala, particularly after B.R. Naidu took charge as the TTD Chairman. He pointed out that crucial decisions favoring common devotees are being made in governing body meetings, leading to improved facilities.

Suman highlighted that rooms are now more easily accessible for devotees, and darshan times have been significantly reduced. He further added that the construction of Srivari temples abroad could enhance devotion among people. Addressing the topic of language policies, Suman stated that while Hindi is necessary, it should not be imposed forcefully. He also commented on Tamil Nadu politics, noting that actor Dalapathi Vijay is making efforts to establish himself in the political arena.



Rajani Ordered to Raid Stone Crushers: IPS Officer Joshua

TPN Correspondent | Guntur

A CID case has been registered against YSRCP leader and former minister Vidadala Rajani, alleging illegal mining and tax evasion. Following this, he said he initiated a confidential inquiry into the allegations. He further stated that the stone crusher management had political connections with the then TDP leadership, while Rajani had an ongoing political rivalry with them. He revealed that the raids on the stone crushers were carried out solely based on Rajani's complaint. Additionally, Joshua alleged that crucial documents related to her complaint had disappeared from the office, and some vigilance files had been tampered with or deleted. The case has sparked political controversy, raising questions over the missing documents and the alleged misuse of power.



365-Day Work Target for Handloom Weavers: Minister Savita

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

State Handloom and Textile Minister S. Savita reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring 365 days of work for handloom weavers by expanding marketing opportunities. She announced that more exhibitions would be organized across the state to increase sales of handloom fabrics. The minister made these remarks while inaugurating a handloom exhibition and sales stalls at a wedding hall in Vijayawada on Tuesday.

Speaking to reporters, Savita emphasized that exhibitions are being held in major cities to promote handloom products. In anticipation of Ugadi celebrations, a large exhibi-

tion has been set up in Vijayawada, featuring sarees and dress materials from Padanur, Uppada, Angara, Pulagartha, Bandaru, Mangalagiri, Venkatagiri, Dharmavaram, Madanapalle, Amiganur, Gadwal, Kanchipuram, and Pochampally. Around 89 stalls have been set up by weavers from Telangana, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh. The government is also providing free accommodation and food for participating weavers.

Implementing Promises Made to Weavers
Minister Savita highlighted that since coming to power, the coalition government has fulfilled key promises to handloom weavers. As pledged



by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Nara Lokesh, the government is providing 200 units of free electricity to looms and 500 units to spinning looms. Additionally, a 15% subsidy on yarn is being offered, along with a 90% subsidy on modern work-

ing tools for weavers. Subsidized raw materials are also being supplied to reduce production costs.

The minister noted that the government has increased its contribution to the Thrift scheme from 8% to 16%, benefiting many handloom work-

ers. Ten clusters were established last year to support weavers, marking a significant improvement compared to the previous administration. She criticized the Jagan-led government for raising electricity charges nine times, which had placed a heavy financial burden on the weavers.

Minister Savita announced that more exhibitions would be held in the coming months to further boost the visibility and sales of handloom textiles. She urged people to embrace tradition by choosing handloom fabrics, especially during the Telugu New Year celebrations.

Weavers Grateful for Regular Work

During her visit to the stalls, Minister Savita interacted

with weavers and artisans, inquiring about their products and experiences. Many weavers expressed gratitude for the frequent organization of exhibitions, which has led to increased sales and stable employment. They acknowledged that since the formation of the coalition government under CM Chandrababu Naidu, their financial conditions have improved significantly.

The event was attended by several officials, including Corporation Chairmen Veeranki Venkata Gurumurthy and Abaddhaiah, along with State Handloom and Textiles Commissioner Rekha Rani, Joint Director Kanna Babu, AAPCO GM Raja Rao, and other key representatives.

Govt Announces 50% Interest Concession on Property Tax

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

In a major relief to property tax defaulters, the Andhra Pradesh government has announced a 50% concession on interest arrears for those who clear their dues by the end of this month. The municipal department has issued a government order (GO) formalizing this decision, which is expected to bring significant revenue to the state.

The move comes after the government received multiple requests from taxpayers seeking relief on pending dues. With this decision, the state aims to recover crores of rupees in outstanding property taxes while also reducing the burden on the public.

Taxpayers have welcomed the initiative, stating that it will help them clear their dues without excessive financial strain. The government has urged property owners to take advantage of this opportunity before the deadline.

Samineni Udayabhanu Inspected the Fire Accident Site. Janasena Leader Urges Govt to Support Farmers Affected

TPN Correspondent | NTR District

Jana Sena Party NTR District President Samineni Udayabhanu expressed deep regret over the massive fire accident at Sai Tirumala Cold Storage in Torraguntapalem, Jaggayyapet, which was reportedly caused by a short circuit. Visiting the site on Tuesday, he inspected the damages and interacted with officials to understand the extent of the loss.

Speaking on the occasion, Udayabhanu stated that the fire incident was unfortunate and had severely impacted around 400 farmers who had stored chillies and pulses in the facility for over a year. He estimated the financial loss to be approximately ₹20 crore. During his visit, he spoke

with Andhra Pradesh Fire Services Director General Madireddy Pratap and Nandigama RDO Balakrishna to gather details on the cause of the fire and the measures taken. He emphasized that the farmers should not be discouraged and assured them of the Jana Sena Party's support. "We will request the government to extend financial assistance to every farmer who has suffered losses. The cold storage management should also take responsibility and ensure justice for the affected farmers," Udayabhanu stated. He further noted that such a fire accident was unprecedented in the Jaggayyapet constituency and called for strict safety measures to prevent similar incidents in the future.



TDP leader Varla Ramaiah criticizes Jagan's statement



TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

The interrogation of YCP supporter Pawan Kumar in connection with the Vivekananda Reddy murder case has triggered a fresh controversy. Pawan Kumar, who was questioned based on a complaint by accused Sunil Yadav, alleged that the police assaulted him during the interrogation.

Responding to Pawan Kumar's complaint, YSRCP chief Jagan Mohan Reddy reportedly assured him, saying, "Be brave, we are coming back to power... I will make the same DSP and CI salute you."

TDP Polit Bureau member Varla Ramaiah

strongly criticized Jagan's statement. He questioned whether it was appropriate for a leader to make such remarks about law enforcement. "Jagan garu, if the police interrogate an accused, is it right to say that after coming to power, the officers will have to salute him? Is this how you governed the state for five years? Are you trying to blackmail the police? Are you behaving like an anti-social force?" Ramaiah asked.

The comments have sparked political debate, with the opposition accusing Jagan of undermining law enforcement and attempting to intimidate officials.

Three Officers Transferred in Town Planning Department

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

In a significant administrative reshuffle, three officers in the Town Planning Department have been transferred to new positions. Vijayawada Chief City Planner GV GSV Prasad has been transferred to the office of the Town Planning Director, where he will now take on new responsibilities.

Along with this, the monitoring responsibilities of the department have been assigned to the Urban Master Plan Cell and the Urban Development Authority. Meanwhile, K. Sanjay Ratna Kumar has been appointed as the new Chief City Planner of Vijayawada.

Additionally, V. Shilpa has been given full additional responsibilities as the Joint Director of VKPCPIRUDA (Visakhapatnam Kakinada Petroleum, Chemical, and Petrochemical Investment Region Urban Development Authority), further strengthening the administration in the region.

Vallabhaneni Vamsi's remand extended till April 8

Former MLA arrested in Satyavardhan kidnapping case

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

The Vijayawada SC and ST court has extended the remand of former MLA Vallabhaneni Vamsi till April 8 in connection with the kidnapping case of a Dalit youth, Satyavardhan, a computer operator at the Gannavaram TDP office.

Vamsi, who was arrested recently, has been

in judicial custody at Vijayawada jail. His earlier remand, which was set to end today, was extended once again after he was produced before the court. The court had previously remanded him till March 25. Apart from the kidnapping case, Vamsi is also an accused in the attack on the Gannavaram TDP office. In this case, the CID court had remanded him till March 28.



Gudivada MLA participates in Ramadan prayers at Noor Mosque

TPN Correspondent | Gudivada

Gudivada MLA Venigandla Ramu emphasized that the Iftar feast, held for Muslim brothers observing the holy month of Ramadan, stands as a symbol of religious harmony and unity. On Monday evening, MLA Ramu participated in the holy Ramadan prayers at Noor Mosque in Nizampet, Gudivada. After the prayers, he warmly embraced Muslim brothers and later joined them in the Iftar feast alongside community elders.

Speaking to the media on the occasion, MLA

Ramu acknowledged the deep devotion with which Muslim brothers observe fasting during Ramadan. He expressed joy at being part of the holy prayers and wished that Allah's blessings remain with everyone. He highlighted that Ramadan fosters unity and strengthens the spirit of brotherhood among people. He extended early greetings to Muslim brothers, wishing for peace and happiness for all.

Gudivada Jana Sena Party In-charge Booragadda Srikanth, Gudivada Town TDP Presi-

dent Dintyala Rambabu, and several minority elders, including Sheikh Ibrahim, Sheikh Sarkar, Sheikh Moulali, Syed Jabeen, Mohammed Rafi, Abdul Munwar, Mohammed Noor, Karimullah, Noor (Bachcha) Rabbani, and Syed Ghaffar, attended the event. TDP leaders Lingam Prasad, Chekur Jaganmohan Rao, Gudivada Jana Sena President Majji Srinivas, Miyakhan Mosque President Mohammed Vali, Noor Mosque Committee members, and other minority leaders and Muslim brothers were also present.



Cisco Partners with AP



- **Aims to Train 50,000 Youth in Digital and IT Skills**
- **MoU signed in presence of Minister Lokesh**

TPN Correspondent
| Undavalli

The Andhra Pradesh government has signed an MoU with leading IT company Cisco to enhance IT and advanced technology skills among students pursuing higher education and vocational courses. The agreement, signed between Cisco and AP Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) in the presence of State Education, IT, and Electronics Minister Nara Lokesh, aims to train 50,000 youth in digital and IT skills. As part of the collaboration, Cisco will provide high-quality training content in areas such as networking, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence (AI). The initiative will also offer virtual internships to students across the state, with courses designed based on the priorities set by the Higher Education Department. The training will be conducted through Cis-

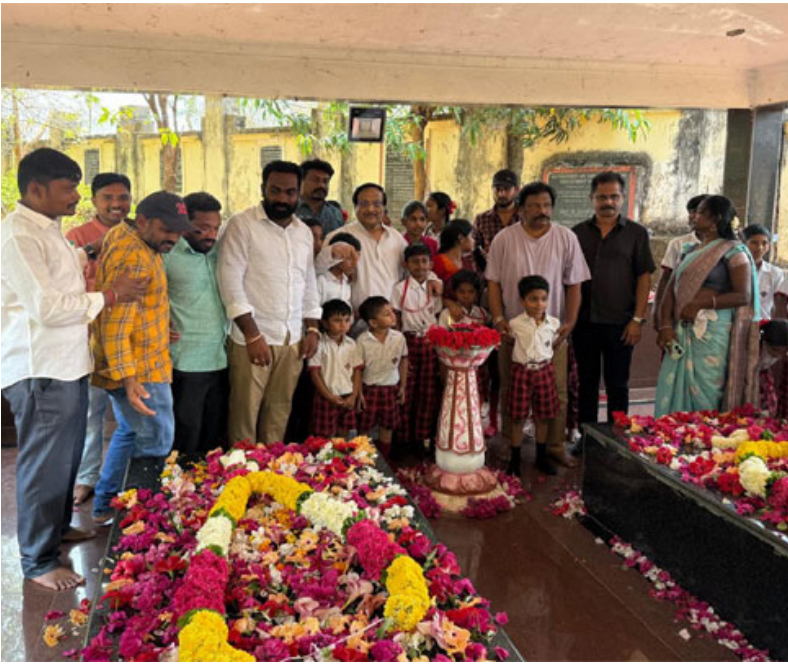
co's NetAcad portal, offering self-learning, instructor-led, and industry exposure programs. Officials stated that the partnership aligns with the AP government's vision to bridge the skills gap and boost employment opportunities in emerging technology sectors. Cisco will issue certifications for students and employees completing the training. Special programs like 'Women Rock IT' (WRIT) for women in IT careers and 'Find Yourself in the Future' (FYIF) for youth in advanced technology fields will be funded through Cisco's CSR initiatives. Skill Development and Training Department Secretary Kona Shashidhar, APSSDC MD & CEO G. Ganesh Kumar, Executive Director K. Dinesh Kumar, Cisco Senior VP & Global Innovation Officer Dr. Diedrich, and other key officials participated in the event.

Writer Yandamuri, Director Krishna Vamsi pays tribute to Freedom fighter Alluri

TPN Correspondent
| Anakapalle

Renowned writer Yandamuri Veerendranath and filmmaker Krishna Vamsi visited Lakshmipuram village in Golugonda mandal, Anakapalle district, on Monday. Accompanied by Kusi Reddy Shiva, founder of the Nenu Saitham Charitable Trust Foundation, they paid homage at the park where freedom fighters Alluri Sitarama Raju and Gantam Dora's tombs are located. Speaking at a press conference, Yandamuri Veerendranath praised Krishna Vamsi's patriotism, recalling the director's film Khadgam. "Krishna Vamsi bowed before Alluri's tomb

with deep respect. He has always made patriotic films," he said. Krishna Vamsi expressed his long-held desire to visit Alluri's historical sites, which was finally fulfilled. He mentioned that Green Sunrise, a book by Gokaraju Narayana Rao based on 20 years of research on Alluri, inspired him further. "I am working on making a film that accurately portrays Alluri's history," he stated. Later, members of the Nenu Saitham Charitable Trust visited the family of Alluri's close associate Gantam Dora in Koyyuru mandal and distributed clothes.



Case Against Kakani in ₹250 crore illegal Mining Scam

- **FIR registered against Kakani Govardhan Reddy and 7 others**
- **Allegations of illegal mining worth ₹250 crore in Rustom mine**
- **Two arrests made, Kakani listed as A4 in the case**

TPN Correspondent | Podalakur

Former Andhra Pradesh minister Kakani Govardhan Reddy has been booked in connection with an illegal quartz mining case, dealing him a major setback. A case has been registered at Podalakur police station based on allegations of looting ₹250 crore worth of quartz. An FIR has been filed against Kakani and seven others, with Kakani being listed as A4 in the Rustom illegal mining case. His arrest appears imminent. Mining Deputy Director Balaji Nayak lodged a complaint stating that Kakani obstructed official duties and engaged in illegal mining. The police investigation

confirmed corruption, leading to the registration of a case on February 16 against Kakani's associates, including Shyam Prasad Reddy, Vakati Shiva Reddy, and Vakati Srinivasulu Reddy. Two of them have already been arrested and sent to remand. A total of ten names have been listed in the FIR, with Shyam Prasad Reddy as A1, Vakati Srinivasulu Reddy as A2, and Vakati Shiva Reddy as A3. Sarvepalli MLA Somireddy had previously raised concerns over the use of gelatin sticks and unauthorized quartz excavation at night. Former Mining Deputy Director Srinivas Kumar, Supervisor Sudhakar, Revenue Inspector H. Devi Singh, and



Technical Assistant Haseenaban inspected the site and found that 61,313 metric tons of quartz had been illegally mined. As a result, fines and sewerage charges amounting to ₹7.56 crore were imposed, and show-cause notices were issued. Podalakur CI Sivaramakrishna Reddy confirmed that two individuals have been arrested in the Rustom mine case and will be presented in court soon.

10th class paper leak in Kadapa goes viral on WhatsApp

TPN Correspondent | Kadapa

A 10th class mathematics exam paper was leaked on WhatsApp at the 'B' centre of Vallur Zilla Parishad High School in YSR Kadapa district. Officials discovered that a water boy at the school had sent the paper to Vivekananda School's Vigneswara Reddy, leading to the suspension of multiple individuals involved. The ongoing 10th board exams in both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have been

marred by paper leaks. Recently, a similar incident occurred in Telangana, where the Telugu question paper from Nakirekal Gurukula School in Nalgonda district was leaked on March 21 and circulated on social media. In the Kadapa case, officials inspecting the exam centre found that the mathematics paper had been shared on WhatsApp before the exam concluded. Further investigation revealed that the school's water

boy took the paper from students and forwarded it to Vigneswara Reddy through WhatsApp. Following this, the police registered a case against the water boy and launched an investigation. Based on findings, officials suspended multiple staff members, including the Chief Superintendent, Department Officer, and Invigilators.

Industrial Workers Union Registration Program Held in Gudivada

TPN Correspondent | Gudivada

A registration program for the Krishna District Industrial and Automobile Workers Union was organized in Gudivada Autonagar under the leadership of District General Manager of the Industries Department R. Venkat Rao, IPO B. M. Manoj, and MUD Chairman Matta Prasad. The event, held on March 25, 2025, saw the registration of over 200 workers under the CITU-affiliated Gudivada union (Registration No. G 15 60). Speaking at the event, Industries Department General Manager R. Venkat Rao

assured workers that discussions with banks would be initiated to arrange loans for those who have acquired stations. He urged workers to take advantage of this opportunity.



MUD Chairman Matta Prasad announced that a 40-acre industrial corridor would be established two kilometers from Gudivada, creating new opportunities for workers in the region. CITU Town Secretary T. Lakshman Rao, union president Abdul Hamid (Ameer), and general secretary Abdul Quddus were present at the event. Leaders Bobbarapally Anjaneyulu, Md. Rashid Beg, S.K. Mohiddin Bhasha, Kalvakunta Nagaraju, S.K. Kaja, Gedela Trinath Reddy, and several other prominent members also participated in the program.

Govt Focuses on Land Issues and Welfare Schemes: CS Vijayanand

TPN Correspondent
| Andhra Pradesh

Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad held a key review meeting with District Collectors to discuss governance strategies, land surveys, and the implementation of welfare schemes. Each Collector will present district-specific challenges, with a focus on resolving land-related issues and ensuring smooth governance. **Vision 2047 and People-Centric Governance** Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav underlined that the government is working with a "people-first" approach, ensuring that all administrative

decisions align with public aspirations. He criticized the previous government for misusing Collector meetings and urged officials to align their work with the CM's vision. "Collectors must take decisions that reflect the CM's priorities and work towards a state where land disputes are minimal and governance is efficient," he said. The meeting also included discussions on WhatsApp governance as a tool for efficient communication, land surveys for better resource management, and strategies for implementing welfare schemes over the next six months.

Guntur SI Attacks Youth over Land Dispute

TPN Correspondent | Guntur

Tension gripped Firangipuram, Guntur, after a shocking incident where a Sub-Inspector (SI) allegedly attacked a youth with a gun. The clash erupted over a land forgery dispute concerning a 3-cent plot in the village committee hall. The youth was reportedly recording a video of the altercation when SI Ravindra Babu attacked him. As the youth sustained injuries, enraged villagers retaliated by pelting stones and sticks at the police. They damaged a police vehicle, breaking its windows, and staged a protest, demanding action against the SI. The situation led to traffic disruptions in the area, and the CI involved in the matter attempted to pacify the protesters. Meanwhile, in a separate



case, Pithapuram Rural SI Gunasekhar of Kakinada district was caught red-handed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) while accepting a ₹20,000 bribe. The SI had allegedly demanded money from two individuals, Dontamur Killadi Durga Prasad and Sanaboya Gangaraju, in a case. Acting on their complaint, the ACB, led by DSP Kishore Kumar, conducted a raid and arrested SI Gunasekhar along with his personal driver. Kakinada Additional SP Manish Devaraj Patil confirmed that a departmental inquiry has been initiated into the bribery case.

Polavaram Excavations Claiming Lives

TPN | NV SURYA

Tuni, March 26: The villagers of Kotha Kummari Lova in Tuni Mandal are in distress as the ongoing excavations for the Polavaram canal are taking lives and destroying homes. The situation has worsened due to open blasting activities behind Tallur, which are causing severe damage, particularly to the nearby village. To date, around 12 houses, including water tanks, have suffered partial damage, leaving the villagers in a state of anxiety and uncertainty about their future. The villagers have expressed concerns that if the blasting continues, there is a significant risk of houses collapsing, which could result in loss of life. The negligence of the authorities, who have not provided compensation to the residents of the new Kummarilowa area, has come under scrutiny. These villagers are among those who were excluded from compensation despite being affected by the construction work. Villagers' Agitation In response to the repeated damage caused by the blasting, the villagers have launched an agitation. Reports indicate that senior officials, including Yesubabu, a senior engineer from the Irrigation Department, visited the area to inspect the damages. When the villagers sought clarification, Yesubabu reportedly assured them that the blasting would be changed to controlled blasting to minimize further damage. However, it was pointed out that the vibrations from the explosions could spread up



to 500 meters, yet only an area of 350 feet was considered for safety measures, showing clear negligence from the authorities. Polavaram Technical SE is expected to conduct further inspections on Wednesday, but the villagers remain doubtful about the effectiveness of these actions, as their homes continue to suffer. Compensation Concerns The villagers are also questioning whether they will receive compensation for the damages and losses already incurred. While those who received the RR package for the bridge construction did not face similar issues, the residents of the new Kummarilowa area, who were excluded from compensation, are bearing the brunt of the damage. Authorities have yet to clarify whether these affected individuals will receive any support, further deepening the doubts and frustrations of the villagers. As the situation remains unresolved, the villagers demand immediate action and compensation for their losses, urging the authorities to take responsibility for the damage caused by the ongoing excavation work.

Trump’s New Social Media Policy

- Indian Green Card Holders may have to disclose social media handles
- Policy extends existing visa scrutiny to permanent residency seekers

THE POINT DESK

Green card holders in the United States may soon be required to submit their social media account details to the government under a new policy proposed by President Donald Trump's administration. While visa applicants applying from outside the country already need to provide their social media handles, this policy seeks to extend the requirement to those living in the US legally and applying for permanent residency or asylum.

The move has sparked concerns, particularly among Indian immigrants, many of whom are vocal about political issues in both India and the US. Critics argue that this increased scrutiny could discourage open expression on social media due to fear of government action. The policy could potentially be used to deny immigration benefits to individuals based on their online activity.

Purpose of the Policy

A notice issued by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) on March 5 outlined the administration's rationale for the proposal. According to the notice, USCIS has identified a need to collect social media handles and platform names from applicants as part of national security and identity verification measures. The agency claims that monitoring social media activity is crucial for vetting individuals and ensuring public safety.

“The vetting of social media accounts is necessary for enhanced identity verification, vetting, and national security screening,” the document states. The government is currently



seeking public feedback on the policy before finalizing its implementation.

Impact on Green Card Holders

Currently, social media screening applies only to visa applicants outside the US. However, this proposed change will bring green card applicants and asylum seekers under the same level of scrutiny. Individuals already residing in the US on valid visas but seeking permanent residency will need to disclose their social media activities, allowing authorities to monitor their online presence. This could have significant implications, particularly for Indian immigrants who use social media to engage in discussions about US and Indian politics. Experts fear that this increased surveillance might push people to self-censor their views due to concerns about how their online activity could be interpreted by immigration officials.

Part of Trump’s Broader Immigration Crackdown

Since returning to the White House,

Trump has taken a hardline stance on immigration. On his first day back in office, he signed an executive order directing federal agencies to take aggressive action against illegal immigration, describing it as an “invasion” threatening national security. His administration has ramped up enforcement efforts, with federal law enforcement agencies conducting widespread raids and arrests.

Trump has frequently claimed that undocumented immigrants are responsible for crime and economic instability, although these assertions are not fully supported by government data. His administration’s immigration policies have drawn sharp criticism for being overly harsh and targeting legal residents as well. The proposed social media scrutiny policy is seen as an extension of this broader crackdown. While the government argues it is a necessary security measure, critics warn that it could be used to suppress free speech and silence dissent among immigrants hoping to settle permanently in the US.

From June, UPI and ATM to Enable Provident Fund Withdrawals

THE POINT DESK

In a major reform aimed at enhancing financial flexibility for India's workforce, the Employees' Provident Organisation (EPFO) will soon enable Provident Fund (PF) withdrawals through Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and ATMs. This significant initiative, approved by the Labour and Employment Ministry, is expected to be rolled out by the end of May or June this year, providing seamless and instant access to PF savings.

Sumita Dawra, Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment, announced the development, stating that the integration of UPI with the EPFO system would allow members to instantly withdraw up to ₹1 lakh. Additionally, the introduction of ATM-based withdrawals will offer another convenient mode of accessing funds, reducing the dependency on traditional claim processes. With this upgrade, PF account holders will be able to check their balance directly via UPI, transfer funds to their preferred bank accounts, and execute instant withdrawals. This initiative is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "ease of living," aiming to simplify social security procedures for employees and employers across the country.

Expanded Withdrawal Options for Members

The EPFO has expanded the scope of withdrawals beyond retirement benefits. Members can now withdraw funds for various purposes such as housing, education, and marriage, in addition to the existing provisions for medical emergencies. These changes provide much-needed financial flexibility, allowing workers to access their hard-earned savings when re-



quired without lengthy bureaucratic hurdles.

“The EPFO has significantly strengthened its digital infrastructure, integrating over 120 databases to streamline the withdrawal process. As a result, the claim processing time has been reduced to just three days, with 95% of claims now being processed automatically,” Dawra said. She further added that the government is actively working to further simplify the withdrawal process, ensuring that members receive their funds with minimal delay. The integration of digital payment platforms like UPI will eliminate unnecessary paperwork and speed up transactions, making EPFO services more accessible to millions of contributors.

Improved Pension Withdrawal System

Apart from PF withdrawals, pensioners have also benefited from recent reforms introduced by the EPFO. Since December, nearly 78 lakh pensioners have gained increased flexibility in accessing their funds. Previously, pension withdrawals were restricted to select bank branches, causing inconvenience to many retirees. However, with the latest reforms, pensioners can now withdraw their funds from any bank branch across the country, removing geographical

restrictions. These measures are part of the government's broader agenda to modernize social security mechanisms and improve the financial convenience of employees and pensioners alike. The reforms also reflect the government's commitment to leveraging digital technology to enhance service delivery in the financial sector.

Massive Scale and Growing Membership

The scale of EPFO's operations highlights the importance of these reforms. With over 7.5 crore active members, the organization continues to expand, adding 10-12 lakh new members every month. Operating through 147 regional offices across India, the EPFO is a vital institution ensuring financial security for millions of employees. Implementing UPI and ATM-based withdrawals will further strengthen the EPFO's role in providing accessible and efficient financial services to India's workforce. The move also aligns with India's push toward digital financial inclusion, reinforcing the country's status as a global leader in digital payments.

A Landmark in Digital Financial Transformation

The introduction of UPI and ATM-based PF withdrawals marks a historic moment in India's financial landscape. With instant withdrawals, reduced processing time, and increased accessibility, the initiative will significantly improve the ease of managing PF accounts. For employees across industries, this reform will provide a seamless and efficient way to access their savings without the delays associated with traditional banking channels.



Is the Government Considering Bringing Back NJAC?

TPN | G Avinash

Hyderabad, March 26: The controversy surrounding Delhi High Court Judge Justice Yashwant Varma and the discovery of burnt cash at his residence has brought the issue of judicial appointments and accountability back into focus. While the immediate fallout centers around the credibility of Justice Varma and his involvement, the bigger picture is about the integrity and transparency of India's judicial system. This raises an important question: is it time for the government to revive the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) and replace the existing collegium system?

The Background of NJAC vs Collegium

In 2015, the Supreme Court struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, which sought to replace the collegium system of judicial appointments with a body consisting of both judiciary and executive representatives. The Court argued that NJAC violated the Constitution's basic structure and undermined judicial independence. This ruling entrenched the collegium system, in which a group of senior judges, without any direct electoral mandate, decides the appointment of judges to the highest courts in the country. The NJAC, introduced through the 99th Constitutional Amendment, was designed to ensure a balanced, transparent, and democratic approach to judicial appointments. The idea was to bring accountability and prevent allegations of nepotism or favoritism within the judiciary. However, the Supreme Court's verdict left the power of judicial appointments entirely within the hands of the judiciary, effectively sidelining the executive's role in the process.

Is the Collegium System Truly Democratic?

The collegium system, while championed for its focus on judicial independence, also raises critical concerns about accountability. The primary issue lies in the fact that the people, through their elected representatives, do not have a say in selecting the judges who will interpret laws, make decisions on public policies, and influence governance. The judiciary's actions have a profound impact on the lives of ordinary citizens, yet those sitting in judgment are not directly accountable to the public.

The collegium system, without any checks from the legislative or executive branches, creates a scenario where a group of unelected judges appoints their peers. This setup not only perpetuates an insular and self-reinforcing system, but it also makes it difficult to address concerns about transparency and fairness. As we've seen in the case of Justice Varma, the discovery of cash raises questions about the accountability of judges in the absence of external scrutiny or oversight.

The Case for Bringing Back NJAC

The case for bringing back the NJAC is compelling, particularly in light of recent events. If we look at the Justice Varma controversy, the judicial system has once again shown the limitations of an unaccountable body of unelected officials. The centre's decision to convene an all-party meeting on this issue reflects growing concerns about transparency and judicial oversight, but the root issue remains: the judiciary operates in a vacuum, with limited external accountability. A reformed NJAC could serve as a safeguard against the kind of problems that have plagued the collegium system. A body that includes both judiciary and executive members, with clear procedures for selection and monitoring, would ensure more public transparency and offer a mechanism to address grievances. Elected representatives, accountable to the people, could play a role in judicial appointments, creating a more democratic system in which the judiciary remains independent but not entirely isolated.

A System of Balance and Accountability

In a democracy, elected representatives should have a role in law-making, policy decisions, and, to some extent, judicial appointments. A system that prioritizes judicial independence must still strike a balance with accountability. The judicial branch must not be an isolated fortress immune to oversight and scrutiny. The NJAC, with proper checks and balances, offers a solution to this dilemma, ensuring the judiciary can function without fear or favor but within the boundaries of the democratic system.

India's legal system must evolve with the times, and reviving a form of NJAC could be the way forward. It would empower the people through their representatives, ensuring that the judiciary remains independent yet accountable. The current status quo—where a group of unelected judges governs judicial appointments—no longer seems sustainable in a democratic framework that values transparency and fairness.

The recent events surrounding Justice Varma and the public outcry over the discovery of cash raise critical questions about judicial accountability. The government's engagement with political parties on the issue indicates a growing concern for a system that can balance judicial independence with transparency and public trust. If the judiciary is to retain its credibility, it must operate within a framework that includes checks and balances, and that framework may very well involve reviving the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC). It is time to reconsider the collegium system and bring accountability into the heart of the judiciary.

New Income Tax Bill to Be Discussed in Monsoon Session: Nirmala Sitharaman



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced on Tuesday that the new Income Tax Bill will be taken up for discussion in the monsoon session of Parliament. The bill, which was introduced in the Lok Sabha on February 13, is currently under review by the Select Committee. While addressing discussions on the Finance Bill 2025 in the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman confirmed that the Select Committee has been directed to submit its report by the first day of the upcoming session. "...We will take it (new income tax bill) up in the monsoon session," she stated. The monsoon session of Parliament typically begins in July and continues through August. The new Income Tax Bill aims to bring about a simplified tax structure by reducing complexities and eliminating ambiguities in the existing law. The Income Tax Department previously

highlighted that the revised legislation seeks to provide tax certainty while minimizing litigation and the scope for fresh interpretations. One of the major highlights of the proposed bill is its concise structure compared to the existing Income Tax Act of 1961. The new bill contains 2.6 lakh words, significantly less than the 5.12 lakh words in the current Act. Additionally, it has 536 sections, down from the 819 effective sections in the current law. The number of chapters has also been streamlined from 47 to 23. The revised legislation introduces 57 tables, an increase from the 18 found in the existing Act, but has removed 1,200 provisos and 900 explanatory notes, thereby simplifying legal provisions. These changes aim to create a more comprehensible and user-friendly tax regime for taxpayers and tax professionals alike. The move to re-

vamp the Income Tax Act is seen as a significant step in modernizing India's tax framework, ensuring greater efficiency and transparency in tax administration. The government hopes that the new law will reduce tax disputes and enhance compliance by making the provisions clearer and more structured. The Select Committee's review and recommendations will be crucial in shaping the final version of the bill before its discussion in Parliament. With its reduced complexity and restructured format, the proposed Income Tax Bill 2025 is expected to be a landmark reform in India's taxation system. Stakeholders, including businesses and tax professionals, are keenly watching the developments surrounding the bill, as its implementation could have a significant impact on the country's economic and taxation landscape.



Separatism in Kashmir Ends as Two Hurriyat Groups Sever Ties

- Hurriyat factions sever separatist ties.
- Amit Shah calls it historic.
- Govt policies credited for shift.
- Article 370 abrogation played role.
- Kashmir moving toward unity, peace.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday announced a significant political shift in Jammu and Kashmir, stating that two factions of the separatist Hurriyat Conference have officially severed ties with separatism. He asserted that this move is a testament to the success of the Modi government's policies aimed at fostering national unity and eliminating separatist tendencies in the region. Hurriyat Conference, an amalgamation of various separatist groups in Jammu and Kashmir, has played a pivotal role in advocating for the region's separation from India for decades. However, recent developments indicate a departure from this ideology, marking what Shah described as a "historic victory" for Bharat's unity. Taking to social media platform 'X', Shah welcomed the decision and urged other separatist groups to follow suit, emphasizing that abandoning separatism is the only path toward peace, development, and progress. "Two organizations associated with the Hurriyat have announced the severing of all ties with separatism. I welcome this step towards strengthening Bharat's unity and urge all such groups to come forward and shed separatism once and for all," Shah posted. The Home Minister further highlighted that the government's strategic policies, including the abrogation of Article 370, development initiatives, and stringent security measures, have played a crucial role in dismantling separatist sentiments in the valley. He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for fostering a sense of belonging and integration among the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Shah reiterated that the government remains committed to transforming the region into a peaceful, developed, and unified part of India. He stated that the latest move by the Hurriyat factions is proof that separatist ideology is losing its ground and that more groups are realizing the benefits of aligning with the national mainstream. The announcement comes in the wake of a series of measures undertaken by the central government to curb separatist activities in Jammu and Kashmir. Over the past few years, authorities have cracked down on terror financing, taken legal action against separatist leaders, and promoted economic development to ensure stability in the region. With this latest development, political analysts believe that the separatist movement in Kashmir has suffered a significant blow. The disintegration of Hurriyat factions from their separatist stance signals a new chapter in the region's history, aligning with the Modi government's broader vision of a peaceful and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir within a unified Bharat.

"India, China Discuss LAC, Strengthen Ties"

India and China held a high-level meeting in Beijing today, marking the 33rd session of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on India-China Border Affairs. The discussions primarily focused on reviewing the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and exploring ways to improve diplomatic and military coordination. Both sides emphasized the importance of maintaining stability and ensuring the early resumption of cross-border cooperation, including trans-border river management and the Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra. The Indian delegation was led by Gourangalal Das, Joint Secretary (East Asia) in the Ministry of External Affairs, while the Chinese delegation was headed by Hong Liang, Director General of the Boundary and Oceanic Affairs Department of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting was described as "positive and constructive," with both nations reaffirming their commitment to strengthening diplomatic channels and enhancing mechanisms for border management. A key outcome was the agreement to make "substantial preparations" for the next meeting of the Special Representatives (SRs) on the boundary question, which is scheduled to take place in Delhi later this year. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated that the discussions covered various proposals and measures aimed at implementing the decisions made during the 23rd meeting of the Special Representatives on the India-China boundary issue, which was held in Beijing in December 2024. Both nations acknowledged the need to advance effective border management while preventing escalations along the LAC. Additionally, they agreed to strengthen existing diplomatic and military mechanisms to ensure quick resolution of any disputes. Following the meeting, Gourangalal Das paid a courtesy visit to China's Assistant Foreign Minister, Hong Lei, signaling continued diplomatic engagement between the two nations. The discussions are part of broader efforts to return to a pre-2020 status quo along the LAC and improve bilateral ties. This initiative gained momentum after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping met in October 2024 on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia. He stressed the need to rebuild trust and maintain a constructive relationship. Modi also acknowledged the ancient civilizational ties between India and China, emphasizing that the two nations had historically coexisted peacefully for millennia. He advocated for a spirit of healthy competition rather than conflict. China responded positively to Modi's remarks, with the Chinese Foreign Ministry stating that cooperation between the two nations, referred to as a "dragon-elephant dance," was the best path forward. The spokesperson reiterated that in over 2,000 years of interaction, India and China had maintained friendly exchanges and contributed to human progress. The latest diplomatic engagements indicate a continued effort to resolve border tensions and strengthen bilateral cooperation.

Top Maoist with ₹25 Lakh Bounty Killed in Chhattisgarh Encounter"

- Maoist leader killed in encounter.
- ₹25 lakh bounty on head.
- Security forces intensify operations.
- 116 Maoists killed this year.
- Government vows Maoist-free India.

A Maoist carrying a reward of ₹25 lakh on his head was among three insurgents killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district on Tuesday, police said. The gunfight took place at around 8 am in a dense forest area along the border of Dantewada and Bijapur districts. Security personnel were conducting an anti-Maoist operation based on intelligence reports about Maoist presence in the forests surrounding Girsapara, Nelgoda, Bodga, and Ikeli villages under the Geedam police station limits, according to Superintendent of Police Gaurav Rai. The operation involved personnel from the District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Bastar Fighters, both special units of the Chhattisgarh state police, known for their expertise in counter-insurgency operations. As the security forces reached the targeted location, a fierce exchange of fire broke out between the two sides. After the gunfight subsided, the security personnel recovered the bodies of three male Maoists from the site, along with an Insas rifle, a .303 rifle, explosive materials, and other items used in their daily activities. Among the three slain Mao-



ists, one was identified as Sudhir, also known as Sudhakar or Murlu, a resident of Warangal in Telangana. He was an active member of the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee, the most powerful faction of Maoists operating in the region. Authorities had placed a bounty of ₹25 lakh on his head due to his involvement in multiple attacks on security forces and civilians. The identities of the other two deceased Maoists are yet to be confirmed, officials said, adding that search operations are still ongoing in the area to trace any remaining insurgents or hidden weapon caches. Chhattisgarh, particularly the Bastar division, has been a stronghold of Maoist insurgents for decades. However, security forces have intensified their operations in recent years, leading to a significant number of encounters and Maoist casualties. Just a few days prior, on March 20, security forces carried out two major operations in Bijapur and Kanker districts, killing 30 Maoists.. Union Home Minister Amit

Shah recently reaffirmed the government's aggressive stance against Maoist insurgency, stating that the Narendra Modi-led administration is implementing a "zero-tolerance policy" against Maoists who refuse to surrender despite multiple opportunities and rehabilitation offers. He asserted that the government is committed to eradicating Maoism from the country and aims to make India completely Maoist-free by March 31, 2026. The growing success of anti-Maoist operations in Chhattisgarh reflects a shift in the balance of power in favor of security forces. The use of specialized units like the DRG and Bastar Fighters, combined with improved intelligence and coordination, has significantly weakened Maoist influence in the region. However, sporadic attacks by Maoists indicate that the insurgency is not completely dismantled. Authorities remain vigilant, continuing operations to eliminate the remaining Maoist factions and restore lasting peace in the region.



India may interfere in General Election on April 28: Canada

TPN Correspondent | Ottawa

Canada's national security agency has raised concerns over possible foreign interference in the upcoming general election, scheduled for April 28, 2025. According to the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), both China and India, alongside Russia and Pakistan, are likely to attempt to influence the election.

The warning comes amid growing tensions between Ottawa and both Beijing and New Delhi. Vanessa Lloyd, deputy director of operations at CSIS, highlighted that hostile state actors are increasingly utilizing advanced tools like artificial intelligence to meddle in democratic processes. "The People's Republic of China is highly likely to use AI-enabled tools to attempt interference in Canada's election," Lloyd stated at a press conference.

Canada's relations with both India and China have been strained in recent years. Beijing retaliated against Canada's tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles and steel by imposing tariffs on over \$2.6 billion worth of Canadian agricultural and food products. Additionally, Canada condemned China's execution of four Canadian citizens on drug smuggling charges.

Relations with India have also deteriorated, with Canada expelling six Indian diplomats last year, including the head of mission, after allegations of involvement in a plot against Sikh separatists in Canada.

Despite previous concerns over election interference during the 2019 and 2021 federal elections, an official investigation concluded that the results were not affected by foreign influence. However, the CSIS emphasized that while it may be challenging to directly link foreign interference activities to electoral outcomes, such actions could undermine public confidence in Canada's democratic systems.

Lloyd also cautioned that Russia and Pakistan have the potential to engage in interference activities, further complicating Canada's efforts to safeguard its elections.

The CSIS comments serve as a reminder of the growing risks posed by foreign interference in democratic processes and the increasing use of advanced technology by hostile actors.

Starlink Poised for Major Expansion in India, Boosting Ambitions for Global Growth

For Musk's Starlink, India Approval Could Unlock Emerging Markets

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

As Starlink nears regulatory approval for satellite broadband services in India, analysts believe this move could significantly boost the company's global expansion, especially in emerging markets. A successful entry into India could potentially add \$25 billion in revenue, reshaping the country's satellite broadband industry and attracting interest from other developing markets.

However, despite the promising outlook, Starlink faces legal hurdles and stiff competition from players like Eutelsat and China's SpaceSail, which is expanding into Brazil, Malaysia, and Kazakhstan. Additionally, SpaceX contends that U.S. regulations place it at a disadvantage compared to foreign rivals.

Starlink, owned by Elon Musk's SpaceX, has been waiting for licenses to operate commercially in India since 2022. The company has been embroiled in a regulatory standoff over spectrum allocation, with debates on whether India should auction satellite broadband spectrum, benefiting telecom giants like Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio



and Sunil Mittal's Bharti Airtel, or allocate it administratively to newer players like Starlink. In October, India opted for administrative allocation, giving Starlink a potential edge.

This month, both Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel signed separate agreements with SpaceX, signaling that regulatory challenges may soon be resolved. Analysts suggest this development indicates that Starlink is closer to entering the Indian market.

The entry into India is a strategic move for Starlink, which operates in over 120 markets globally. Goldman Sachs forecasts a significant drop in

prices for low Earth orbit (LEO) broadband services, projecting a reduction from \$148 per month in 2023 to just \$16 by 2035. With India being one of the largest potential markets, analysts expect Starlink to add 3 million global subscribers in 2025, with India being the leading contributor.

Starlink's pricing strategy will be crucial for success, with some experts predicting competitive plans starting at \$15 per month. As the satellite internet market in India grows, Starlink's entry will offer employment opportunities and fuel competition within the sector, enhancing India's global space industry competitiveness.

Mamata Banerjee's "Warm-Up" Jog in Saree and Slippers at London's Hyde Park

TPN Correspondent | Islamabad

Mamata Banerjee's "Warm-Up" Jog in Saree and Slippers at London's Hyde Park

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was recently spotted jogging in London's Hyde Park, dressed in her signature white saree with a green border and white slippers, showcasing her usual simplicity. The "warm-up" was part of her visit to the UK, where she was seen strolling around from Buckingham Palace to Hyde Park, soaking in the city's charm. In addition to her saree and slippers, Ms. Banerjee wore a black cardigan and shawl to stay warm amidst London's chilly weather.

Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Kunal Ghosh shared pictures and videos from the occasion, including a post on X (formerly Twitter), where he quoted the Chief Minister saying, "Today it is not a walk, but a warm-up." Ms. Banerjee was also seen engaging in some "back-walking"

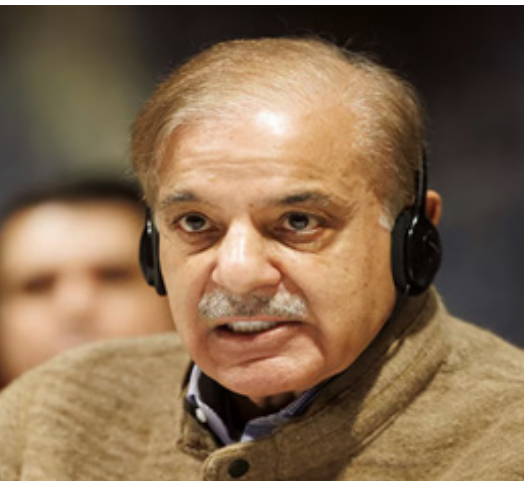


and clapping as part of her fitness routine. This moment resonated with her health-conscious approach, having previously jogged in a saree and slippers during her official visit to Spain in 2023. Her message, "Stay fit, stay healthy," continues to inspire others to adopt a fitness-friendly lifestyle.

Mamata Banerjee arrived in London on Sunday for an official visit, which aims to strengthen Bengal's historical and cultural ties with Britain. Reflecting on the shared history of both regions, she remarked, "As we landed in London yesterday, we

stepped into a city that, much like Kolkata, carries the weight of its past while embracing the dynamism of the present." She highlighted the enduring relationship between Bengal and Britain, rooted in history, culture, and commerce.

The Chief Minister's visit underscores her desire to deepen Bengal's engagement with Britain, reinforcing the longstanding bond between the two regions. Her "warm-up" in Hyde Park, however, offered a lighter moment during her diplomatic trip, blending fitness with international diplomacy.



Canada Cites "India's Growing Global Influence" In Allegation Against Pak

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Canada has raised concerns over potential foreign interference in its upcoming April 28 general election, warning that Pakistan, India, China, and Russia could be involved in attempts to sway the democratic process. Vanessa Lloyd, Deputy Director of Operations at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), highlighted that Pakistan may conduct interference activities to counter India's growing global influence. She explained that Pakistan's actions could align with its strategic aims to maintain political and economic stability while curbing India's rise on the world stage.

Lloyd also addressed the possibility of Indian interference, stating that the Indian government has both the intent and capability to influence Canadian communities and the election process. This builds on similar allegations made last year, which India firmly rejected.

In a 2024 report, CSIS detailed "clandestine" foreign interference by both India and Pakistan during Canada's 2021 and 2019 general elections. The agency accused India of targeting electoral districts with large Indian-origin populations, particularly those sympathetic to the Khalistani movement, and alleged the use of illicit financial support to sway candidates. Similarly, it claimed that Pakistan tried to influence federal politics in 2019 to further its interests.

Tensions between India and Canada have escalated in recent months, particularly following allegations from former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau about India's involvement in the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, which India denied as "absurd."

In addition to Pakistan and India, Canada's security agency also warned that China and Russia might attempt to interfere in the election. Lloyd stated that China could use AI-enabled tools and social media to target Chinese-Canadian communities with favorable narratives. Russia, according to the report, may amplify Kremlin talking points via social media and news websites, attempting to manipulate information to influence Canadian voters.

The Canadian government is committed to safeguarding its electoral process and ensuring that foreign interference does not disrupt its democracy.

Malaria Confirmed as Cause of Fatal Outbreak in Northwest DR Congo

TPN Correspondent | Kinshasa

Late on Monday, the National Public Health Institute (INSP) of the Democratic Republic of Congo confirmed that an outbreak in the northwest of the country, which claimed the lives of more than 50 people, was caused by malaria. The illness, which primarily affected Equateur province, resulted in 943 reported cases and 52 deaths at the beginning of the year.

The symptoms, which included fever, fatigue, vomiting, and weight loss, initially led health officials to suspect food poisoning or malaria as the potential cause. However, following laboratory tests on samples from affected individuals, malaria was de-

finitively identified as the culprit.

Christian Ngandu, coordinator of the INSP, confirmed the results of the tests over the phone, reassuring the public that the outbreak was now understood. Despite the confirmation, the health institute continues to await the results of additional tests on water, drinks, and food samples sent abroad to further investigate whether there was any potential contamination involved.

This recent outbreak follows a similar occurrence in December, where an unknown illness initially puzzled health authorities before being traced back to malaria. These outbreaks have prompted increased vigi-

lance and ongoing monitoring in the region.

Health officials have stressed the importance of public awareness regarding the symptoms and prevention of malaria, which is a major health concern in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. With the confirmation of malaria as the cause, authorities are focusing on controlling the spread of the disease and providing support to affected communities.

As the investigation continues, the INSP has urged the public to seek medical help promptly if they experience symptoms, especially in malaria-prone areas, to prevent further fatalities.



Markets Take a Breather After Six-Day Surge; Profit Booking and Global Factors Limit Gains



The six-day streak of gains came to an end. The bull run slowed down today. Domestic stock markets ended flat on Tuesday. The indices, which had aggressively reached intraday highs within an hour of opening, then suddenly collapsed. They reached their lowest from their daily highs. The reasons for this are Trump's announcement of a 25% tax on countries buying oil from Venezuela, negative signals from global markets, and investors taking profit booking. Overall, the Nifty settled at 23,668 and the Sensex at 78,017. There is a strong resistance at the crucial 23,600 level for the Nifty. It is important for the index to consolidate at this level for a few sessions.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 77,984 in the previous session, opened at 78,296 on Tuesday. It touched an intraday low of 77,745. It reached an intraday high of 78,741. It ended at 78,017, up 32 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,751, touched a low of 23,601 and a high of 23,869. It closed at 23,668, up 10 points. The Nifty Bank lost 97 points and settled at 51,607.

In the Nifty50, 19 companies gained and 30 lost. Consumer, PSU bank, media, realty, metal, energy, oil, PSE, pharma, auto, commodities stocks rose. Ultratech Sem, Trent, Bajaj Finserv, Grasim, Infy were the top gainers. IndusInd Bank, Dr. Reddy's, Adani Enterprises, CoalIndia, Adani Ports were the biggest losers.

Market breadth turned in favor of sellers on the NSE today. Of the 2998 stocks traded, 674 gained. A total of 2258 lost. 30 stocks hit 52-week highs and 96 stocks hit 52-week lows. 105 stocks crossed the upper circuit and 157 stocks crossed the lower circuit.

Rupee weakened by 13 paise to settle at

85.76 against the dollar. Wari Energies to set up additional module manufacturing unit at Gujarat plant. Punjab and Sindh Bank shares rose 6% after QIP price was announced at 40.38. UBS has given a buy rating to Dalmia Bharat with a target price of Rs 2100. Jefferies has maintained a buy rating, reducing the Infy target from Rs 2150 to Rs 1835. S&P has reduced India's GDP forecast for FY26 to 6.5%. Motilal Oswal has given a buy rating to Suzlon Energy with a target price of Rs 70. CLSA expects Bandhan Bank shares to rise by up to 50%. Bansal Wire Industries signs a MoU with the Steel Ministry. IR-DAI finds some irregularities in StarHealth Insurance settlement practices. 10 lakh shares changed hands in Delhivari. Nee-la Infra wins an order worth Rs 63 crore. Bazel Projects wins an EPC order worth Rs 100-200 crore.

UltraTech Cement Ltd.



UltraTech Cement is India's largest cement manufacturer, with a dominant market presence. The company has consistently expanded its production capacity and is investing in green energy initiatives. Strong demand from the housing and infrastructure sectors, coupled with cost-efficiency measures, supports its long-term growth. Despite raw material cost fluctuations, UltraTech remains a resilient player due to its pricing power and extensive distribution network.

Grasim Industries Ltd.

A flagship of the Aditya Birla Group, Grasim Industries operates in diversified sectors, including cement (via UltraTech),



chemicals, and textiles. The company is venturing into the paints business, which could drive future revenue growth. Strong balance sheets, expansion plans, and steady performance in core businesses make Grasim an attractive long-term investment.

Coforge Ltd.

Coforge, a mid-cap IT services company, has grown significantly with a strong presence in digital transformation, cloud



computing, and automation. With a focus on key sectors such as banking, insurance, and travel, the company is well-positioned to capitalize on IT spending trends. Strategic acquisitions and high client retention add to its long-term potential.

Polycab India Ltd.

Polycab is India's leading manufacturer of



wires, cables, and electrical goods. With the push towards electrification, infrastructure development, and increasing consumer demand for premium electrical products, Polycab has strong growth prospects. Its expansion into FMEG (Fast Moving Electrical Goods) and rising exports further strengthen its outlook.

JB Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

JB Chemicals is a growing player in the Indian pharmaceutical space with a strong portfolio in cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and dermatology segments. The company's expansion into the US and emerging markets, coupled with increasing domestic demand, supports its long-term prospects. Cost efficiencies and new product launches add to its growth momentum.



New Income Tax Bill To Be Introduced In Monsoon Session: Nirmala Sitharaman

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced on Tuesday that the new Income Tax Bill will be taken up for discussion during the upcoming monsoon session of Parliament. While responding to the debate on the Finance Bill 2025 in the Lok Sabha, Sitharaman clarified that the bill, which was introduced in the House on February 13, is currently under review by the Select Committee. The committee is expected to submit its report by the first day of the next parliamentary session.

"The new income tax bill will be taken up in the monsoon session," said Sitharaman. The monsoon session is typically held from July to August, marking the period when the government expects to finalize discussions on the bill.

The proposed Income Tax Bill aims to simplify the country's taxation system. The new bill, which is significantly shorter than the current 1961 Income Tax Act, seeks to reduce the complexity of tax laws and improve tax certainty. The bill has been designed to minimize the scope for litigation and reinterpretation, a key objective for streamlining the tax process.

The new bill is approximately half the size of the existing law, with a word count of 2.6 lakh compared to 5.12 lakh in the current Act. The number of sections in the bill has also been reduced, from 819 to 536. Additionally, the number of chapters has been halved from 47 to 23, while the number of tables has increased to 57 from the 18 present in the existing Act. The new bill has also removed over 1,200 provisos and 900 explanations, further simplifying the language and structure of tax regulations.

This overhaul of the Income Tax Act is seen as a significant step towards creating a more transparent and efficient taxation system in India, ensuring easier compliance and reducing unnecessary litigation.



India slaps Samsung with tax demand of ₹5,156 crore for telecom imports

India has directed Samsung and its executives to pay \$601 million in back taxes and penalties for allegedly evading tariffs on the import of key telecom equipment. This marks one of the largest tax demands in recent years, according to a government order.

The \$601 million demand represents a significant portion of Samsung's net profit in India for the previous year, which was reported at \$955 million. As one of the largest players in India's consumer electronics and smartphone market, the company's operations are under close scrutiny from local tax authorities.

Samsung has the option to challenge the tax demand through a tax tribunal or in the courts. The case is related to allegations that the company avoided paying the necessary import tariffs on certain telecoms equipment. This tax dispute could have significant financial implications for the company, considering the substantial penalty involved.

As the dispute unfolds, Samsung will likely consider its legal options while continuing to operate in one of the world's largest markets for consumer electronics. The outcome of this case could set a precedent for other multinational corporations operating in India and could influence future tax regulations and enforcement practices.



S&P Cuts India's GDP Growth Forecast to 6.5% for FY 2025-26



S&P Global Ratings has revised India's GDP growth forecast for the fiscal year 2025-26, reducing it to 6.5%, down from an earlier projection of 6.7%. The global credit rating agency cited external

factors, including rising US tariffs and a broader pushback against globalization, as key reasons for the downward revision in its Economic Outlook for the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region.

Despite these external headwinds, S&P expects strong domestic demand to drive growth in most emerging-market economies, including India. The revised forecast reflects the agency's belief that the Indian economy will maintain momentum, aided by factors such as the expectation of a normal monsoon season and softening commodity prices, particularly crude oil.

S&P highlighted several domestic factors that could support India's economic growth. These include cooling food inflation, tax benefits introduced in the national budget for FY 2025-26, and lower borrowing costs, which are anticipated to boost discretionary consumption. The ongoing economic recovery in

India is also expected to benefit from government policies designed to stimulate growth, despite the global uncertainties.

The agency also noted that central banks across the APAC region, including the Reserve Bank of India, are likely to continue cutting benchmark interest rates throughout the year, providing further support to the domestic economy.

Although the forecasted 6.5% growth is consistent with the previous fiscal year's outcome, it reflects a more cautious outlook given the global challenges. The revised growth projection underscores the balancing act facing India's economy—navigating external pressures while maintaining robust internal demand.

Boat Storm Infinity Smartwatch Launched in India With Bluetooth Calling and 15-Day Battery Life

Boat has introduced its latest smartwatch, the Boat Storm Infinity, in India, promising an extensive battery life of up to 15 days under heavy usage and up to 20 days with regular use. Launched on Tuesday, the smartwatch comes with a range of advanced features, including Bluetooth calling, an inbuilt speaker and microphone, and multiple health monitoring options. The Boat Storm Infinity is priced at ₹1,299 and is now available for purchase through Amazon, Flipkart, and the Boat Lifestyle website. It is offered in multiple band color options, including Active Black, Brown, Cherry Blossom, Deep Blue, Jade Gold, Silver Mist, Sports Black, and Sports Green. The smartwatch features a 1.83-inch rectangular display with a resolution of 240x284 pixels and a brightness level of 500 nits. It also supports a Flick-to-Wake gesture and is designed with a functional, rotating crown on the right side of the watch body. The watch has an IP68 rating, making it resistant to dust and water. One of its key highlights is Bluetooth calling support, allowing users to make and receive calls directly from the smartwatch. It also features an SOS mode to alert emergency contacts



and a Find My Device function to locate misplaced smartphones. The Boat Storm Infinity offers more than 100 preset sports modes, along with health tracking features such as heart rate monitoring, SpO2 tracking, sleep and stress monitoring, and menstrual cycle tracking. It also includes a sedentary alert and guided breathing exercises. Additional features include an alarm, stopwatch, weather updates, flashlight, games, calendar, cal-

culator, as well as music and camera controls. With a 550mAh battery, the smartwatch is claimed to provide up to 15 days of battery life with intensive use and up to 20 days with moderate usage. It supports ASAP Charge technology, which can fully charge the device in just 60 minutes. Weighing 45 grams, the Boat Storm Infinity aims to offer a blend of style, utility, and performance at an affordable price.

BYD Unveils Megawatt EV Charging System

Chinese EV giant BYD has introduced a megawatt fast-charging system, claiming it can charge electric vehicles as quickly as refueling traditional cars. With plans to establish a vast charging network across China, BYD is entering a competitive space dominated by existing fast-charging providers. Fast-charging technology has become crucial in addressing EV users' concerns about battery range and charging time, particularly for long-distance travel. Chinese automakers have been leveraging such innovations to boost EV adoption, with Tesla and other brands also offering ultra-fast charging solutions. BYD's "Super E-Platform" boasts a peak charging capacity of 1,000 kilowatts (kW), enabling vehicles to gain a 400 km (249 miles) range with-



in just five minutes. This is made possible through advanced 10C charging multiplier batteries, high-power motors, and fast chargers supporting 1,000 kW of power. In comparison, Tesla's 400-volt system caps at 250 kW for most vehicles, with exceptions like the Cybertruck and Semi, which support higher voltages. Other Chinese brands,

including Zeekr, Li Auto, and Xpeng, have also introduced fast-charging technologies that provide over 400 km of range within 10 minutes. Despite its dominance in EV sales, BYD has relied on third-party charging networks until now. With its new system requiring specialized chargers, the company plans to build over 4,000

charging stations across China. BYD founder Wang Chuanfu has also invited external investors to participate in the expansion. However, BYD faces stiff competition. Nio leads China's charging infrastructure with nearly 2,700 fast-charging stations, followed by Tesla, which has built over 2,000 sta-

tions. Li Auto, Xpeng, and Zeekr are rapidly expanding their networks, while Huawei has also entered the space with ultra-fast liquid-cooled charging piles supporting up to 600 kW. As BYD accelerates its charging infrastructure, the battle for the fastest and most accessible EV charging network in China is heating up.

Cocoa's Role in Muscle Strength The Science Behind Its Health Benefits



Cocoa is often associated with indulgent treats like chocolate cake and hot cocoa, but emerging research suggests that it offers more than just a delightful taste. According to nutritionist Michael Greger, natural, non-alkalised cocoa contains flavonoids that significantly improve blood circulation and reduce inflammation, both of which play a crucial role in muscle recovery and strength. Highlighting the benefits of cocoa for muscle health, Greger noted that older adults who consumed a tablespoon of unprocessed cocoa daily for 12 weeks saw a notable improvement in their muscle mass index. This has sparked interest in the potential of cocoa to enhance physical performance, particularly in endurance and muscle recovery. One of the key components in cocoa, a flavonoid called epicatechin, has been linked to improved blood circulation. Better circulation ensures efficient oxygen and nutrient delivery to muscles, aiding in growth and reducing fatigue. Additionally, flavonoids in cocoa contribute to enhanced mitochondrial function in mus-

cle cells, which supports muscle mass and grip strength. Beyond muscle health, cocoa is also known to benefit skin hydration. Experts suggest that less than a tablespoon of cocoa can increase circulation within the skin by 70% within two hours. Regular consumption for six months can lead to visible improvements in skin elasticity, density, and hydration, further underscoring its potential health benefits. Incorporating cocoa into a daily diet can be simple and enjoyable. From blending cocoa powder into smoothies and shakes to consuming dark chocolate with at least 70% cocoa content, there are multiple ways to harness its nutritional benefits. Hot chocolate made with minimal sugar and spices or even a healthy cocoa-based cake can serve as delicious yet beneficial options. While cocoa has shown promising results in muscle health and overall well-being, experts emphasize the importance of moderation. A balanced diet that includes all essential macronutrients and micronutrients remains crucial for maintaining long-term health.

Indiana Jones and the Great Circle Set for PS5 Release on April 17

Bethesda has officially announced that Indiana Jones and the Great Circle will launch on PlayStation 5 on April 17, with pre-orders now live. The announcement was made through an elaborate promotional video featuring voice actors Troy Baker, who plays Indiana Jones in the game, and Nolan North, the iconic voice behind Nathan Drake in the Uncharted series. The game will be available in multiple editions, including a Standard Edition, a Premium Edition, and a Collector's Edition. The Premium Edition will offer players early access starting April 15, along with exclusive content such as The Order of Giants sto-

ry DLC, a Temple of Doom outfit, a digital artbook, and a Last Crusade pack as a pre-order bonus. For collectors, the Indiana Jones and the Great Circle Collector's Edition will come with an 11-inch Great Circle globe featuring a plane magnet, an adventure journal, an Allmaker relic replica, and a Jumbo SteelBook display case. The collector's bundle will also include the Premium Edition disc and all its associated benefits. The release date trailer, which was teased by Bethesda on Sunday, featured North welcoming Baker to the "club," referencing their shared history of voicing legendary adventurers in gam-

ing. The Uncharted series, inspired by Indiana Jones films, has now come full circle with The Great Circle drawing influence from PlayStation's signature action-adventure franchise. Set between the events of Raiders of the Lost Ark and Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, Indiana Jones and the Great Circle follows a first-person perspective, allowing players to wield the whip and take on dangerous factions in pursuit of a mysterious global power. The game originally launched on PC and Xbox Series S/X on December 9, 2024, and will now make its way to PS5 starting April 15 for Premium Edition owners.



Punjab Kings Secure 11-Run Win in a High-Scoring Thriller



Punjab Kings clinched a thrilling 11-run victory against Gujarat Titans in a high-scoring encounter, where 244 runs were piled up in an entertaining display of power hitting. While GT started cautiously, their approach seemed well-calculated, keeping wickets in hand for a late assault. However, a series of tactical errors in the death overs cost them dearly. After a steady start, Sai Sudharsan and Jos Buttler built a strong platform, almost taking the game away from PBKS before Arshdeep Singh broke their stand by dismissing Sai. Sherfane Rutherford then took charge, accelerating the scoring rate with quick runs. But his struggles against a consistent off-side ploy proved decisive. PBKS bowlers stuck to their plan—bowling wide outside off, out of Rutherford's hitting zone—and the left-hander failed to adapt. Despite GT needing just a few big hits to tilt the game in their favor, Rutherford repeatedly chose to slice or loft through the off-side, even though the on-side field was wide open. The absence of a deep square leg, backward square leg, and fine leg offered ample opportunities to exploit the leg-side, yet he hesitated until the very end. Looking back, that phase proved to be the turning point, as GT let a winnable game slip away. On the bowling front, PBKS executed their strategies flawlessly. After three 17-run overs post the 10th over, Vyshak Vijaykumar stepped up and set the tone for a disciplined bowling effort. Marco Jansen followed suit, and the duo, despite not taking many wickets, applied immense pressure. Their precision with wide yorkers, even under dewy conditions, made all the difference.

BCCI Central Contracts Shreyas Iyer Set for Return Debate Over Senior Players' A+ Retention

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is yet to finalize its central contracts for men, amid discussions on key changes in the A+ category following the retirement of stalwarts Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, and Ravindra Jadeja from T20 Internationals. The delay has sparked speculation about possible reshuffling, with differing opinions among stakeholders on the retention of senior players in the top category. The A+ grade, offering a ₹7 crore retainer-ship, is traditionally reserved for players active across all formats. With Kohli, Rohit, and Jadeja now playing only Tests and ODIs, Jasprit Bumrah remains the lone all-format certainty. While some in the BCCI favor retaining the trio in A+, others argue for a revision based on current format participation. In the A category (₹5 crore retainership), Ravichandran Ashwin's retirement means his exclusion is certain. Axar Patel, a key all-rounder and vice-captain for the England T20I series, is a strong contender for promotion from Grade B. Shreyas Iyer, who missed out last season, is set to return after featuring in 11 ODIs this



year. Young talents like Yashasvi Jaiswal, Akash Deep, and Sarfaraz Khan are likely to be inducted, with their performances meeting the selection criteria. Nitish Kumar Reddy, having played the full Border-Gavaskar series and multiple T20Is, is also expected to be included. Meanwhile, players like Shardul Thakur and Rituraj Gaikwad may miss out, as they

do not currently meet the required match count. However, the selection committee, in consultation with the head coach and secretary, retains the discretion to make exceptions. The final contract list, expected soon, will reflect BCCI's strategic decisions regarding player retention, promotions, and future squad planning.

Chelsea Eye Permanent Jadon Sancho Deal Despite Cancel Clause

Chelsea are reportedly set to proceed with Jadon Sancho's permanent signing from Manchester United, despite having a £5 million (\$6.4 million) clause that could allow them to cancel the deal. The winger joined Chelsea on loan last August in a deal that included an obligation to buy him for £25 million. Sancho, 24, made a promising start at Stamford Bridge but has struggled for consistency, scoring just twice in all competitions and failing to find the net since December. His lack of impact has led to speculation that Chelsea could invoke the clause to back out of the deal. However, reports indicate the club remains committed to signing

him, believing he can recapture the form he showed during his Borussia Dortmund spell, where he played a key role in their Champions League final run. Chelsea manager Enzo Maresca has publicly praised Sancho's progress, stating he has been impressed by his performances despite his struggles. Sancho's move to Chelsea followed a fallout with Manchester United boss Erik ten Hag, which saw him frozen out of the squad before being loaned to Dortmund in January 2024. Meanwhile, Chelsea were linked with United winger Alejandro Garnacho in January and could still look to reinforce their attacking options in the summer, even if Sancho stays.



Pant-Goenka Chat After LSG's Loss to DC Sparks Meme Fest



Delhi Capitals pulled off a thrilling one-wicket victory over Lucknow Super Giants in their IPL 2025 clash on Monday, thanks to an explosive 66-run knock from Ashutosh Sharma. However, the post-match focus shifted to an intense conversation between LSG captain Rishabh Pant, head coach Justin Langer, and team owner Sanjiv Goenka. The interaction quickly became a talking point on social media, with fans drawing parallels to Goenka's viral chat with KL Rahul after a heavy defeat in IPL 2024. Memes flooded the internet, with some jokingly speculating about Goenka's disappointment over LSG's failure to defend 210 runs. Ashutosh, making his debut for Delhi, turned the game around after DC struggled at 65-5. His power-hitting, combined with a crucial 39-run cameo from Vipraj Nigam, guided DC to victory with three balls to spare. Lucknow had a chance in the final over with six runs needed, but a stumping opportunity against Mohit Sharma went begging as Pant failed to collect the ball cleanly. Ashutosh capitalized on the miss, smashing a six off Shahbaz Ahmed to seal the win. After the loss, LSG players looked dejected, while DC captain Axar Patel cheekily remarked, "Be prepared for it now. It's going to be like this only under my captaincy—things will be up and down a little."

Australia Unveils Plans for New Stadium for 2032 Olympics



Australia has announced plans for a new 63,000-seat stadium and an indoor aquatic centre as part of preparations for the 2032 Olympic Games in Brisbane. Queensland Premier David Crisafulli revealed the updated infrastructure strategy, emphasizing long-term benefits over short-term spending. "Finally, Queensland has a plan. The time has come to just get on with it. And get on with it we will," Crisafulli stated, confirming that the new stadium would be a permanent world-class venue for future sporting events. The aquatic centre, with temporary seating increasing capacity to 25,000, will host swimming, diving, water polo, and other aquatic sports. The main athletes' village will be constructed at the Brisbane Showgrounds, with additional accommodation hubs on the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast. This new plan replaces an earlier proposal by the previous Labor government, which aimed to renovate the historic Gabba cricket ground and build a 17,000-seat indoor stadium. Crisafulli scrapped those ideas, arguing that billions would have been wasted on temporary venues that lacked lasting value. In addition to the new stadium and aquatic centre, authorities have earmarked funds for upgrading smaller venues, including the Queensland Tennis Centre and the Gold Coast Hockey Centre. While specific costs have not been disclosed, Australia has set aside approximately \$4 billion for Olympic infrastructure.



With just three days left for the release of Robinhood, starring Nithiin and Sreeleela, the film’s promotional campaign is in full swing. Directed by Venky Kudumula, the action-comedy has already built strong anticipation among fans. Speaking about her character Neera Vasudev, Sreeleela shared, “Neera is a girl who has returned to India from abroad and believes everything revolves around her. It’s a cute, bubbly character, and I’m sure audiences will love her energy and innocence.” This marks Sreeleela’s second film with Nithiin, and she is excited about their on-screen chemistry. “Nithiin is down-to-earth and leads a calm, peaceful life. We’ve worked

hard to make sure the film connects with audiences. I believe our chemistry will make a lasting impact, and Robinhood will establish us as a hit pair.” She also recalled the fun she had while filming with Vennela Kishore and Rajendra Prasad. “We couldn’t stop laughing during scenes with Vennela Kishore. His comedy timing is impeccable, and those moments will be a treat for the audience. Rajendra Prasad sir is a legend—his humor adds so much to the film.” With high expectations and a blend of action, comedy, and romance, Robinhood is set to hit the big screens soon, promising an entertaining ride for moviegoers.

Fans Demand One More Movie with Ram Charan; Samantha Responds!



Samantha Ruth Prabhu’s career soared to new heights with Rangasthalam, where her chemistry with Ram Charan captivated audiences. Even years after its release, fans still reminisce about the duo’s on-screen magic, sparking ongoing speculation about their possible reunion. During a recent event in Sydney, enthusiastic fans demanded that Samantha work with Ram Charan

again. Flashing a bright smile, she responded, “I will make that call.” Her words immediately fueled excitement, adding weight to the rumors about her involvement in RC17, Ram Charan’s upcoming film with Sukumar. Currently, Ram Charan is filming RC16 alongside Janhvi Kapoor, directed by Buchi Babu Sana. Following that, RC17 will mark Charan’s reunion with Suku-

mar, and industry buzz suggests the director is keen on bringing Samantha back as the leading lady. After Kushi, Samantha has been focusing on her production venture Ma Inti Bangaram but has not signed any new Telugu projects as an actress. With fan demand at an all-time high, it remains to be seen whether this much-anticipated reunion will become a reality.

Aamir Khan vs Salman Khan – Who Is the Real Sikandar?

Ahead of the highly anticipated release of Sikandar, the makers surprised fans with a unique promotional stunt featuring Bollywood superstars Salman Khan and Aamir Khan. Salman Khan shared a teaser of the video, where Aamir Khan playfully asks director A R Murugadoss to decide who is the bigger “Sikandar” between the two Khans. Murugadoss’ expression in response left fans intrigued. Sharing the teaser, Salman Khan wrote, “Amar Prem ka Andaz with AR Murugadoss! #SikandarMeetsGhajini.” The video instantly went viral, drawing excited reactions from fans. One user commented, “Salman and Aamir. Baap of Bollywood and Mr. Perfectionist,” while another called it an “unexpected collaboration.” A third fan declared, “Real Sikandar Apna Bhai.” Meanwhile, during the trailer launch event on Sunday, Salman Khan addressed criticism



regarding the 31-year age gap between him and his co-star Rashmika Mandanna. Responding in his signature style, he said, “If the heroine doesn’t have any problem, or her father doesn’t have any problem, then why do you have a problem?” His remark left the audience in splits. Not stopping there, Salman humorously added, “And when Rashmika gets married, has a

daughter, and she becomes a big star, we will still work together. We will get the mother’s permission for sure.” Apart from Salman Khan and Rashmika Mandanna, Sikandar also stars Kajal Aggarwal, Sathiyaraj, and Sharman Joshi in pivotal roles. The film, directed by A R Murugadoss, is slated for a grand theatrical release on March 30.

Anchor Anjali Unveils the Teaser of “Lopaliki Ra Chepta”

Some films begin their journey quietly, without much hype, but manage to capture attention through unique promotional strategies after completion. “Lopaliki Ra Chepta” is one such film that is now generating buzz with its intriguing concept and fresh publicity approach. Produced under the banner of Mass Bunk Movies, the film features Konda Venkata Rajendra, Manisha Jashnani, Susmitha Anala, and Sanchirai in lead roles. Directed by Konda Venkata Rajendra and Lakshmi Ganesh, “Lopaliki Ra Chepta” is a horror-comedy entertainer. The film’s teaser was unveiled today by renowned anchor Anjali, marking a significant moment as it is the first time a female anchor has launched a movie teaser. Speaking at the event, Anchor Anjali expressed her excitement, stating, “I am happy to unveil the traditional teaser of Lopaliki Ra Chepta. This is a film couples should watch together. I can assure you that the movie is perfect for both youth and family



audiences.” Director Konda Venkata Rajendra conveyed his gratitude, saying, “We are delighted that senior journalist Anjali, with her kind heart, has unveiled our teaser. Our film Lopaliki Ra Chepta is crafted to entertain all sections of the audience. We will soon announce a grand pre-release event after finalizing the date and are aiming for an April release.”

The film also stars Ajay Karthik, Praveen Katari, Ramesh Kaiguri, and Vani Aida in key roles. The technical team includes music by Davzand, cinematography by Revanth Levaka and Aravind Ganesh, editing by Vamsi, and PRO services handled by B. Veerababu. The film is produced by Lakshmi Ganesh Chedella and Konda Venkata Rajendra, with the story, screenplay, and direction by Konda Venkata Rajendra.

Barun Sobti Not Replacing Ankit Gupta in Terre Ho Jaayein Hum

Rumors have been rife about Ankit Gupta’s exit from Terre Ho Jaayein Hum, the upcoming romantic drama produced by Ravi Dubey and Sargun Mehta. Speculation intensified after reports of Ankit’s alleged breakup with Priyanka Chahar Choudhary, who was cast alongside him in the show. Addressing his exit, Ankit earlier told Bollywood Bubble, “I walked out of the project with Ravi-Sargun. I don’t think I’d be able to contribute to that project

right now. Perhaps I need some time to recover and recharge myself.” Soon after, reports surfaced that Barun Sobti was being considered as Ankit’s replacement. However, sources close to the actor have now dismissed these claims. “These rumours are completely baseless. Barun was never approached for the role, nor will he be a part of it. He is currently occupied with his next big project with a well-known

filmmaker,” the source confirmed. Barun Sobti, who has made a mark with projects like Asur, Raat Jawan Hai, and Kohrra, is also gearing up for Kohrra Season 2, set to release later this year. While fans of Priyanka and Ankit are disappointed that the duo will not be reuniting on-screen, the search for a new lead actor continues. However, all reports linking Barun Sobti to the show have been denied.

