



Weather Forecast

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

Trump-Zelensky clash in Oval Office sparks global uproar

Trump to Zelensky: "Be thankful, or we stop support."



- Vance warns: "Ukraine is prolonging a war it can't win."
- Democrats slam Trump, call meeting 'a betrayal of allies.'
- Republicans defend Trump's 'America First' stance.
- European leaders assure Ukraine of continued support.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A tense Oval Office meeting between US President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky took an unexpected turn on Friday, turning into a heated confrontation that sent shockwaves across global political circles. Originally meant to focus on mineral-sharing agreements and continued US military support for Ukraine, the meeting saw Trump and Vance berating Zelensky for what they claimed was a lack of "thankfulness" and pressuring him to negotiate a peace deal with Russia. Zelensky, visibly uneasy, defended Ukraine's position, arguing that Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly violated ceasefire agreements and illegally occupied Ukrainian territory, including Crimea. The dramatic encounter has sparked outrage across Washington. Democrats strongly condemned Trump's approach, accusing him of aligning with Russian interests. A Massachusetts Democratic leader remarked that Zelensky "flew to Washington but walked into the Kremlin." Senator Chris Van Hollen called the incident a "betrayal of allies," claiming

that Trump's actions were an "embarrassment for America." Republicans, however, defended Trump's stance, arguing that Ukraine must recognize the limits of US support. House Speaker Mike Johnson praised the meeting as a necessary shift in American foreign policy, while Secretary of State Marco Rubio lauded Trump for "standing up for America in a way no president has before."

How the clash unfolded

Tensions were already high before the meeting, given Trump's skepticism about continued US aid to Ukraine. The discussion initially revolved around mineral trade agreements, but Vice President Vance steered it toward Ukraine's war with Russia. He urged Zelensky to consider negotiations, arguing that the war was unwinnable. Zelensky pushed back, highlighting Russia's past treaty violations, but Vance accused him of being "disrespectful" and failing to appreciate American military assistance. Trump escalated the exchange, raising his voice and warning Zelensky that US support would end if he refused to negotiate a peace deal.

Following the meeting, Zelensky, in an interview with Fox News, expressed hope for repairing US-Ukraine relations. However, he indirectly criticized Vance, remarking, "With all due respect to the vice president, he has his own interviews."

Global reactions

The Oval Office confrontation prompted strong reactions from European allies.

- Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk assured Ukraine, saying, "You are not alone."
- British Prime Minister Keir Starmer reaffirmed "unwavering support" for Ukraine.
- Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni called for an urgent summit with US and European allies to address the Ukraine conflict.

Meanwhile, Russia reveled in the discord, with former President Dmitry Medvedev mocking Zelensky as an "insolent pig" who had been "properly slapped down in the Oval Office." Ukraine's military leadership vowed to continue fighting, while Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba praised Zelensky's "bravery" in standing firm against Trump and Vance.

Whoever Gave the Script... 'Raja' Will Suffer



- Posani claims he followed a script given by Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy
- Anitha warns that YCP leaders cannot roam freely if they act as per the Red Book
- Posani faces 17 cases across the state, says Home Minister

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vanagalapudi Anitha issued a strong warning, stating that those responsible for instigating provocative remarks will face consequences. Referring to actor Posani Krishna Murali, she said, "The 'raja' will suffer," emphasizing that freedom of speech does not permit irresponsible statements. It is known that Posani was remanded for allegedly inciting communal disharmony and making derogatory remarks against Deputy CM Pawan

Kalyan and his family. During police interrogation, he reportedly admitted that he had spoken based on a script provided by YCP leader Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy and signed a confessional statement acknowledging his actions. Speaking at the passing-out parade of SSIs in Anantapur, Minister Anitha stated that the government will not tolerate provocative comments from YCP leaders. She revealed that Posani is facing 17 cases across the state and asserted that there was no partisan approach in taking action against

him. "Everything he said is on video, and he cannot escape the consequences of his actions," she added. Anitha also criticized the YSRCP regime for financial mismanagement, stating that ₹900 crore had been deposited into the police department's accounts during their tenure. Responding to former YSRCP MP Gorantla Madhav's claims of a civil war within the ruling coalition, she dismissed them, asserting that there was no such issue and that the real concern should be the internal conflicts within the YSRCP.



The Nation's Focus on Pithapuram Sabha

Let's work together... let's make the Aavirbhav Sabha a grand success

- Manohar Said the event should showcase party strength and unity.
- Highlighted Pawan Kalyan's struggle and the party's 100% strike rate.
- Criticized YSRCP's neglect of farmers and infrastructure.
- Emphasized coordination between TDP, BJP, and Jana Sena.



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Seeing the TDP Workers Gives Me Courage: CM Naidu

- TDP's past losses due to worker dissatisfaction, not governance failures
- Promises no gap between leadership and party workers
- Calls for discipline, accountability, and coordination with alliance partners

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Posani Krishna Murali Posani staged illness to avoid jail

- CI Venkateshwarlu states Posani has no health issues
- Kadapa RIMS doctors confirm he is medically fit

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The Nation's Focus on Pithapuram Sabha

TPN Correspondent | Kakinada

Jana Sena Party's Political Affairs Committee Chairman and State Civil Supplies Minister, Nadendra Manohar, called upon party leaders, Jana Sainiks, and Veera Mahilas to make the party's formation day meeting on March 14 in Pithapuram a grand success. Addressing the organizing committee in Kakinada on Saturday, he stressed that this first major gathering after the electoral victory should demonstrate the party's strength and unity.

Manohar emphasized that the event, coinciding with Holi, should create a festive atmosphere. "This meeting should make people say that the future of Andhra Pradesh is Jana Sena," he remarked, urging the 14 organizing committees to work in coordination. Reflecting on Jana Sena's journey, he praised Pawan Kalyan's leadership and highlighted the party's 100% strike rate in the recent elections. He recalled how party workers faced false cases and harassment under the YSRCP regime but remained steadfast. Taking a dig at political opponents, he warned that reckless criticism against Jana Sena would have consequences. "There's a person in jail today, realizing that careless words have repercussions," he remarked.

Manohar criticized YSRCP's governance, accusing it of pushing the state into crisis. "They kept pressing buttons while farmers suffered, roads crumbled, and development stalled," he said. He pointed out that the previous government left ₹1,600 crore in unpaid dues to farmers, which the new coalition cleared within a month. He stressed the importance of unity among coalition partners—TDP, BJP, and Jana Sena. "No party is greater or lesser in this alliance. Our victory was possible only because we stood together," he said, urging leaders to set aside differences and work for the people. With the Pithapuram Sabha set to be a landmark event, he called on every Jana Sena supporter to contribute to its success.

Seeing the TDP Workers Gives Me Courage: CM Naidu

TPN Correspondent | GD Nellore

TDP chief and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu expressed his happiness at meeting party workers in GD Nellore, stating that their presence gave him courage. Speaking after the Poorla Sevalo program on Saturday, he said TDP's past electoral losses in 2004 and 2019 were due to worker dissatisfaction rather than governance failures. "We won GD Nellore after 30 years because of your hard work. Now, I will turn this constituency into a fortress," he declared. Taking a dig at YSRCP, he remarked, "If you do a favor to YCP, it's like giving milk to a snake." He also questioned their past slogans, asking, "What happened to those who said 'Why not 175?' and 'Why not Kuppam?'" Naidu acknowledged that past defeats stemmed from focusing more on governance than party ranks. "We achieved 13.5% growth between 2014-2019, yet we lost because we neglected our workers. This mistake will not be repeated." He assured that he would maintain constant contact with them, adding, "If I don't engage with you, dissatisfaction will grow. That's why I am here."

Emphasizing party discipline, he directed MLAs and MPs to stay connected with the cadre, resolve their issues, and work in coordination with Jana Sena and BJP. He urged workers to effectively use social media to highlight the government's work and announced a Family Empowerment Leader program for every 120 voters to strengthen grassroots connections. Reiterating his commitment to the party, Naidu stated, "I have been with you for 45 years. I even sacrificed friendships for the party. If needed, I will have tea and lunch with workers, but I will never compromise on party principles."

Investigation must continue: RBI's argument in 'Margadarshi' case

- RBI argued that Margadarshi violated Section 45(S) of the RBI Act by illegally collecting deposits.
- Stressed that the case must continue despite the demise of Ramoji Rao.
- Margadarshi's lawyer contended that there is no case after Ramoji Rao's death.
- Andhra Pradesh and Telangana governments stated reopening the case is unnecessary.
- Court adjourned the next hearing to March 7 for full arguments.



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has insisted that the investigation against Margadarshi must proceed, stating that deposits were collected in violation of RBI regulations. The Telangana High Court heard the case on Friday, with a bench comprising Justices Shyamkoushik and Sujana reviewing Margadarshi's plea to dismiss the case filed during the

erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh government.

Senior advocate L. Ravichander, representing the RBI, argued that Margadarshi had violated Section 45(S) of the RBI Act by collecting public deposits illegally. He maintained that the case should continue despite the demise of Ramoji Rao, adding that if wrongdoing is established, punishment must be imposed under Section 58(B). However, senior Supreme Court

lawyer Siddhartha Luthra, appearing for Margadarshi, countered that Ramoji Rao was solely responsible for the company's decisions and, following his death, there was no basis for pursuing the case further.

The legal representatives of the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana governments also stated that reopening the case after Ramoji Rao's death would serve no purpose. The court has adjourned the hearing to March 7 to hear full arguments from former MP Undavalli Arun Kumar, who originally filed the petition.

Minister Narayana's Good News for Municipalities

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Municipalities in Andhra Pradesh will now have full control over their funds for local development starting this April, announced Minister Ponguru Narayana. Speaking to the media on Friday, he expressed gratitude to Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu for prioritizing municipal development and CRDA in the state budget. He criticized the previous government for mismanaging funds, stating that even the 15th Finance Commission grants from the Centre were diverted, leading to stalled progress.

Minister Narayana clarified that municipal taxes paid by the people will be used exclusively for local development under self-governance laws. These funds will be allocated for essential services such as drainage maintenance, drinking water supply, and sanitation with council approval. He accused the previous administration of diverting mu-



nicipal funds to CFMS, leaving local bodies struggling even for basic sanitation needs. However, from April 1, municipalities will regain full authority to utilize their collected taxes for their own development.

On Amaravati's construction, he revealed that the election code delayed the tender process, but tenders will be finalized on March 10, with work commencing immediately after. The state government aims to complete

Amaravati's construction within three years, as per CM Chandrababu Naidu's directives. He assured that Amaravati is a self-sufficient project, funded through loans from institutions like the World Bank, EDB, and HUDCO, with no financial burden on the public. Additionally, work on roads connecting Amaravati Seed Capital to National Highway No. 16 will begin soon, followed by the pending construction of the Seed Axis Road.

New traffic rules in AP... Heavy fines for violations!

- Rs. 1,000 fine for riding a bike without a helmet
- Rs. 10,000 fine for drunk driving, license cancellation
- Rs. 5,000 fine for driving without a license

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

The new Motor Vehicle Act has come into effect in Andhra Pradesh from today, bringing strict penalties for traffic violations. Officials have warned that violators will be identified through CCTV cameras and fined accordingly. Motorists are urged to follow the updated traffic regulations to avoid heavy fines.

The new Motor Vehicle Act has come into effect in Andhra Pradesh from today, imposing strict penalties for traffic violations. Riders without helmets will face a fine of Rs. 1,000, while those driving without wearing seat belts will also be fined Rs. 1,000. Drunk driving will attract a hefty penalty of Rs. 10,000 along with license cancellation. Violations such as jumping signals or taking the wrong route will result in a Rs. 1,000 fine. Driving without a valid license will attract a fine of Rs. 5,000,



with the possibility of vehicle seizure. Those driving without insurance will be fined Rs. 2,000 for the first offense and Rs. 4,000 for repeat violations. Using a mobile phone while driving will result in a Rs. 1,500 fine for the first offense, which increases to Rs. 10,000 for the second time. Triple riding on a bike will lead to a fine of Rs. 1,000. Engaging in vehicle racing will result in a Rs. 5,000 fine for the first violation and Rs. 10,000 for repeat offenses.

Auto drivers failing to wear uniforms will be fined Rs. 150 for the first offense and Rs. 300 for the second. Authorities have warned that traffic violations will be monitored through CCTV cameras, and violators will be penalized accordingly. Motorists are urged to adhere to traffic regulations to avoid penalties and ensure road safety. Authorities have urged motorists to follow traffic rules to ensure road safety and avoid penalties.



Minister Nara Lokesh visits Mantralayam Raghavendra Swamy

TPN Correspondent | Kurnool

Andhra Pradesh Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh visited the renowned Raghavendra Swamy temple in Mantralayam, Kurnool district, on Saturday. Before offering prayers at the shrine, he also visited the local Manchalamma Ammavari temple and performed special pujas.

Speaking on the occasion, Lokesh expressed his happiness in attending the Gurusvaibhavaotsavam celebrations. He reiterated that the coalition government is committed to ensuring that there is no migration from Rayalaseema, emphasizing the region's development as a priority. As part of his visit, Lokesh participated in the temple's chariot festival following the coronation ceremony of the Swamy. He personally pulled the chariot as part of the tradition. Additionally, he inaugurated a newly constructed shopping complex within the temple premises.

Posani Krishna Murali Posani staged illness to avoid jail

TPN Correspondent | Annamayya District

Railway Kodur Rural CI Venkateshwarlu stated that actor Posani Krishna Murali has no health issues and played a drama about his illness. Speaking to the media, the CI confirmed that after conducting all medical tests, doctors at Rajampet Government Hospital and Kadapa RIMS found no health concerns. Posani, who is currently lodged in Rajampet Sub-Jail, complained of stomach pain in the morning and was taken to a local government hospital. Later, he was shifted to Kadapa RIMS for further tests. However, CI Venkateshwarlu revealed that all tests, including ECG and chest examinations, showed no medical problems, proving that he was acting. The CI reiterated that Posani is completely fit and dismissed his health complaints as a staged act.

AP Government Extends Major Benefits to ASHA Workers



TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

The Andhra Pradesh government has announced key benefits for ASHA workers, including an increase in their upper age limit to 62 years and the introduction of gratuity payments. Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has taken these decisions to improve the welfare of ASHA workers across the state. Additionally, ASHA workers will now be entitled to 180 days of paid leave for their first two deliveries. The government is set to issue official orders soon to implement these benefits. Andhra Pradesh currently has 42,752 ASHA workers, with 37,017 serving in villages and 5,735 in urban areas. At present, they receive a monthly salary of ₹10,000. With the introduction of gratuity, ASHA workers will be eligible to receive ₹1.5 lakh at the end of their service.

AP Fibernet former chairman GV Reddy praises state budget



• Hopes Chandrababu will become CM again in 2029

• TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Former AP Fibernet Chairman GV Reddy on Friday praised the state government's annual budget, highlighting its financial planning and low revenue deficit. He took to X (Twitter) to express his appreciation for the Rs. 3.22 lakh crore budget, which he noted had been designed with a minimal revenue deficit of Rs. 33,000 crores. Despite stepping away from active politics, GV Reddy affirmed his continued respect and admiration for Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu's leadership. "Even though I am pursuing my career and staying away from politics, I will always have respect and admiration for the leadership of Nara Chandrababu Naidu garu," he stated. Reflecting on his tenure, GV Reddy acknowledged the opportunities he received within the TDP and the government, expressing gratitude to Chandrababu Naidu for entrusting him with key responsibilities. He further stated that Andhra Pradesh's development and welfare depend on Chandrababu becoming Chief Minister again in 2029, calling on every Telugu person who supports progress to stand by him. It is known that GV Reddy recently resigned from his posts as AP Fibernet Chairman, TDP primary member, and national executive representative, citing personal reasons.

- Rs. 3.22 lakh crore budget planned with low revenue deficit
- Expresses admiration for Chandrababu's leadership

Jagan should publicly apologize to the people of Prakasam



- YCP leaders continue to mislead the public, says Nimmala
- Promises Veligonda reservoir will be filled by July 2026

TPN Correspondent | Prakasam

State Irrigation Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu criticized that YCP leaders have not stopped lying even after losing power. He accused them of misleading the people with false claims. The minister questioned how former Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy could dedicate the Veligonda project to the public when it remains incomplete. He demanded that YCP leaders explain how they inaugurated an unfinished project. Nimmala insisted that Jagan should publicly apologize to the people of Prakasam district for deceiving them. He assured that under the current government, the Veligonda reservoir would be filled by July 2026, ensuring water supply to the region.

Groundbreaking ceremony for Jana Sena formation meeting venue



TPN Correspondent | Kakinada
Preparations are in full swing for the Jana Sena Party formation day meeting, set to

take place on the 14th of this month at Chitrada in the Pithapuram constituency. On Saturday evening, State Civil Supplies Minister and Party PAC Chairman Nadendra Manohar formally launched the construction work for the meeting venue by performing a groundbreaking ceremony. The event was attended by party legislators, MPs, MLCs, state executive committee members, and members of the meeting's organizing committee. The groundbreaking ceremony was conducted amid the chanting of Vedic mantras, following traditional rituals. Given that this is the first formation day celebration after the party's remarkable success in the general elections, leaders are determined to make the event historic. Nadendra

Manohar urged the organizers to ensure grand arrangements, emphasizing that the event should be unprecedented in scale and impact. Before the ceremony, Manohar inspected the entire venue and reviewed the preparations, giving several suggestions to the event management team. He directed the organizing committees to continuously monitor and improve the arrangements, ensuring that the massive gathering of party supporters faces no inconvenience. The publicity and decoration teams were instructed to install grand entrance gates, line the approach roads with Jana Sena banners, and set up party-themed arches at key intersections, creating an electrifying atmosphere for the occasion.

Babu's Guarantee, A Fraudulent Surety: Palavalasa Vikrant



TPN Correspondent | Srikakulam

YSRCP MLC Palavalasa Vikrant criticized the coalition government's budget, calling it a "pile of lies" and a reflection of Chandrababu Naidu's fraudulent governance. Speaking at a press meet during his visit to Vangara mandal, he alleged that budget allocations do not align with the promises made before the elections, particularly in implementing the "Super Six" schemes. He pointed out that the meager funds allocated for schemes like Matatalli Vandanam and Annadata Sukhibhava indicate the government's insincerity. "The coalition government claimed to balance welfare and development, yet it allocated ₹2.51 lakh crore for revenue expenditure while only ₹40,000 crore was set aside for capital expenditure, proving their words don't match their actions," he said. Vikrant recalled how Chandrababu Naidu, after becoming CM in 1995, misrepresented the state's financial status to discredit NTR. He accused the current finance minister, Payyavula Keshav, of glorifying Naidu and his son Lokesh just to retain his position. He further alleged that the TDP-led government had weakened welfare programs, turning Arogyasri into an ineffective insurance model. "For the second year in a row, no funds have been allocated for the Free Bus scheme, Aadabidda Nidhi, or Unemployment Allowance, and the minimal allocations for other welfare programs raise doubts about their implementation," he said. Paru Wangara MPP U. Suresh Mukherjee, ZPTC representative Karanam Sudarshan Rao, Wangara MPTC, Sarpanch representative Kanagala Parinayudu, former AMC Vice Chairman Vemireddy Suryanarayana, Konangipadu Sarpanch Chandaka Tatababu, and other local leaders attended the event.

Panchayat Champions Meet Villagers to Drive Rural Development



TPN Correspondent | G. Kondur
On the instructions of MP Kesineni Siv-anath (Chinni), Panchayat Champions trained under NIRDPR have initiated com-

prehensive village development work in Gangineni village, Mylavaram constituency, G. Kondur mandal. A meeting with DWCRA women and villagers was held on Saturday to discuss the project. NTR District NIRDPR Program Coordinator Songa Sanjay Verma stated that MP Kesineni aims to develop 295 villages in his parliamentary constituency. As part of this initiative, six villages in G. Kondur mandal have been selected as a pilot cluster for holistic development. He explained that Panchayat Champions will work to enhance basic infrastructure based on the MP's vision. NTR District NIRDPR Program Coordinator GV Narasimha Rao emphasized that MP Kesineni, through the Shivanath Kesineni

Foundation, is committed to Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's vision of fostering entrepreneurship in every household. Trained youth will focus on improving agriculture, sanitation, healthcare, and education while ensuring adequate drinking and irrigation water. They will also promote cottage industries to boost economic self-sufficiency and create employment opportunities in villages. Former Gangineni Sarpanch Mangalampati Venkateswara Rao, village TDP president D. Ramana, party secretary Ala Kondal Rao, Mandal Samaikhya president Haimavathi, Mylavaram constituency SE cell president Kothapalli Prakash Rao, Panchayat Champions Gopi and John Paul, DWCRA women, and villagers participated in the program.

Massive Deficit in the Bahubali Budget? CPI State Secretary Ramakrishna Questions Govt's Plans

TPN | C.N.MURTHY

P.GANNAVARAM, MAR 01: CPI State Secretary K. Ramakrishna has strongly criticized the state government for presenting what he called an "overambitious" Bahubali budget, pointing out a massive deficit of ₹79,000 crore. Speaking at a meeting in Ambajipet on Saturday as part of the CPI centenary celebrations, he questioned how the government plans to bridge this shortfall. Ramakrishna, who has observed state budgets for four decades, said he had never seen such a high deficit and demanded

clarity on whether the government intends to sell assets, take on additional loans, or burden the public with new taxes. He accused the ruling coalition of sidelining its much-publicized "Super Six" schemes, despite making grand promises before coming to power. He further criticized the government for failing to implement unemployment benefits, DSC recruitment, free bus services, and the ₹1,500 monthly allowance for women. He alleged that these unfulfilled commitments were making life difficult for farmers and the common people.



The event was attended by former minister and YSRCP leader Gollapalli Surya Rao, along with YSRCP state leader Nelapudi Stalin Babu.

CPM slams state budget, says Srikakulam Neglected

TPN Correspondent | Srikakulam

CPM leaders have strongly criticized the state budget, alleging that Srikakulam district has once again been sidelined in development allocations. CPM district secretary D. Govinda Rao and secretary class member K. Mohan Rao stated that the budget has failed to address key irrigation projects crucial for the district, which largely depends on agriculture. They pointed out that no funds have been allocated for the construction of the Neredu Barrage, which was expected to connect multiple rivers and provide irrigation up to Ichapuram. The leaders claimed that despite requiring ₹600 crore, not a single rupee has been allotted for the

project. They further added that the Vamsadhara reservoir, built with the sacrifices of 21 villages, will remain underutilized unless fully operational. The CPM leaders emphasized that filling the Vamsadhara reservoir with 20 TMC of water could support two crops across 2.5 lakh acres, potentially generating ₹1,000-1,500 crore in revenue for farmers. However, they questioned why the government has not initiated work on the Neredu Barrage despite having a "double-engine" government at the Centre and state. They also criticized the Nagavali-Vamsadhara river linkage, calling it mere advertisement without real progress.



Gang Involved in Child Trafficking Busted in Vijayawada

Police Rescue Three Children, Arrest Five Women



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
A gang involved in the illegal sale of children was busted in Vijayawada, with the city police rescuing three children and arresting five women. Acting on specific information, NTR District Police Commissioner S.V. Rajasekhara Babu directed the Task Force ADCP A. Srinivasa Rao, along with ACPs K. Lathakumari and Sravanthi Rai, to take action. A coordinated operation led by the Task Force and Nunna Police resulted in the arrests in Prakash Nagar under Nunna Police Station limits. The police also seized ₹4 lakh, which was received from the sale of one child. The arrested accused have been identified as Baglam Sarojini alias Balagam Sarojini (31) from Sitara Center, Vijayawada; Sheikh Farina (26) and Sheikh Saidabi (33) from

Ajit Singh Nagar, Vijayawada; Kovwarapu Karuna Sri (25) and Pedala Sirisha (26) from Prakash Nagar, Vijayawada. Modus Operandi Balagam Sarojini, the alleged mastermind, initially got involved in egg donation for infertile couples. She later expanded her activities into child trafficking after being introduced to a Hyderabad-based woman involved in illegal child sales. Sarojini collaborated with individuals named Preeti Kiran from Delhi and Anil from Ahmedabad, who supplied children for ₹1-2 lakh each. She then resold them to childless couples for ₹4-5 lakh. She engaged Karuna Sri and Sirisha to look after the children, while Farina and Saidabi were responsible for transportation. Investigations revealed

that Sarojini had been previously arrested in similar cases in Medipally and Mumbai but resumed her illegal activities after her release in August last year. Over the past six months, she had sold seven children—four of whom were traced to Eluru and Guntur. While attempting to sell three more children, the gang was apprehended, and a case was registered under Cr.No 78/2025 U/s 143 BNS, 81, 87 of the Juvenile Justice Act. Police Commissioner S.V. Rajasekhara Babu commended the Task Force and Law & Order officers for their swift response. DCPS Gautami Shali IPS and K.G.V. Saritha IPS, along with ADCPs G. Ramakrishna, A. Srinivasa Rao, ACPs K. Lathakumari, Sravanthi Roy, and other officials, participated in the operation.

Draft Act to regulate teacher transfers online



Invites suggestions from the public through the official portal and email. Deadline for feedback submission set for March 7.

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh Education Minister Nara Lokesh stated that the government is committed to conducting teacher transfers in a transparent manner. To ensure a flawless process, a draft act has been formulated and made available online for public review. Lokesh emphasized that the government is focused on strengthening educational standards in the state. He invited stakeholders to provide their feedback and suggestions on the draft act through the official portal cse.ap.gov.in/documents/DRAF or via email at draft.appta2025@gmail.com by March 7.

Budget focuses on Welfare and Development

- MLA Sriram Rajagopal Tataiah

TPN Correspondent | Jaggayyapet

MLA Sriram Rajagopal (Tataiah) praised Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu for presenting a well-planned budget that prioritizes both welfare and development, despite the challenges inherited from the previous government. Speaking at a press conference at his residence in Jaggayyapet on Saturday, he emphasized that the ₹3.3 lakh crore budget is designed to rebuild the state from financial mismanagement, debt burdens, and administrative failures. He accused the previous government of severely damaging the agricultural sector and weakening the state's industries and contract system. He stated that the current budget addresses these setbacks while ensuring a balance between welfare initiatives and economic growth. MLA Tataiah expressed confidence that Andhra Pradesh will progress further under the leadership of the coalition government, with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's vision and the guidance of Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan. Leaders and party members, including Kotharu Satyanarayana Prasad, Kasukurthi Srinivasa Rao, Sheikh Qasim, Syed Anwar, Mundlapati Ramu, Palleboyna Nagaraju, Sheikh Nabhi, Akbar, Sheikh Shahjahan, and others, participated in the program.



Govt Presented a Progressive Budget

- Former Minister Devineni Uma



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
Former Minister and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) State General Secretary Devineni Umamaheswara Rao has hailed the state budget as positive and progressive, stating that it will change the course of Andhra Pradesh. Addressing a press conference, he asserted that the coalition government has introduced a well-balanced budget of ₹3,22,359 crore, ensuring both development and welfare. Devineni Uma criticized YSRCP chief Jagan Mohan Reddy, stating that he has no moral right to talk about farmers or the Polavaram

project. "We boldly and proudly say that we will implement all the 'Super Six' promises made to the people. The double-engine government is working towards achieving Swarnandhra 2047," he stated. He further claimed that Jagan Reddy, who now wants opposition status, failed to react even 24 hours after the budget presentation. "Jagan, who once controlled the blue media from Tadepalli Palace, is now in complete silence," he remarked. He praised Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav and Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for presenting a budget that people can be proud of. Devineni Uma alleged that the YSRCP government had stalled crucial projects, including Polavaram, which was 72% complete during the previous TDP regime but was later neglected, delaying it by five years and causing the state to lose power generation capacity. He also blamed the previous government for halting the Polavaram-Banakacharla connection project and stopping work on the Vaikunthapuram-Damuluru barrage on the Krishna River. Highlighting the coalition government's commitment to social welfare, he said that Andhra Pradesh is the only state in the

country to allocate ₹27,500 crore for pensions. He criticized Jagan Reddy for his "destructive rule" and accused him of failing to change his governance approach even after being rejected by the people. Devineni Uma dismissed the criticisms from YSRCP leaders regarding welfare schemes such as Annadata Sukhibhava, Thaliki Vandanam, and Matsyakara Bharosa, emphasizing that the coalition government is dedicated to poverty eradication through its P-4 policy. He also noted that the government reaffirmed its commitment to farmers by introducing an agricultural budget of ₹48,341 crore and allocating over ₹18,000 crore to revamp the water resources department, which had been neglected for five years. He further highlighted the focus on education, stating that Minister Nara Lokesh will transform the education sector, with ₹34,311 crore allocated to make it a source of pride for the state. Devineni Uma concluded by congratulating the coalition government for drafting a comprehensive budget aimed at rebuilding Andhra Pradesh from the setbacks of the previous administration.

VMC Fire Officers Conduct Fire Safety Awareness Program at NTR Complex

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
On the directives of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) Commissioner Dhyanchandra, VMC Fire Officers organized a fire prevention awareness program for businessmen and staff at NTR Complex on Saturday morning. The session focused on fire safety precautions, proper usage of fire prevention equipment, and methods to ex-

tinguish fires effectively. Participants were educated on the installation and functioning of fire sprinklers, smoke detectors, and alarms, as well as essential fire safety measures to be followed around the complex to prevent accidents. District Fire Officer Malyadri, Station Fire Officer Raja, and several NTR Complex businessmen and staff attended the program.



Mahesh slams budget as anti-people, questions alliance's promises



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
The coalition government has completed its eight-month tenure and presented its first full budget, but Pothineni Mahesh, Vice-President of SRP, has strongly criticized it, calling it "anti-people" and filled with "lies, fraud, and deceit." Mahesh accused the government of burdening the people with debt while failing to focus on wealth creation. "They have already taken ₹1 lakh crore in loans, and now they plan to take another ₹1.04 lakh crore. Instead of generating revenue, they are relying solely on borrowing," he said. Attack on Chandrababu's leadership Mahesh ridiculed the speech of Chief

Minister Chandrababu Naidu, questioning whether he was praising himself over Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Did he imply that he is better than Modi? He even insulted several prominent figures," Mahesh remarked. He also accused Naidu of spreading falsehoods about former CM Jagan Mohan Reddy, stating that Naidu lacks the ability to implement development and welfare programs. "Jagan uplifted the poor through Navaratnalu, but the alliance calls it an economic disaster. Why can't they implement the Super Six when Jagan successfully ran Navaratnalu?" he questioned.

Mahesh pointed out discrepancies in budget allocations, particularly for welfare schemes. "They allocated ₹12,000 crore for Amma Vodi under Jagan's government, but now only ₹8,500 crore has been set aside. What happened to the remaining ₹4,000 crore?" he asked. He also accused the government of ignoring job creation. "They promised four lakh jobs a year, but after coming to power, four lakh jobs were lost, and eight lakh people became unemployed," he alleged. Criticism on liquor revenue and farmers' issues Mahesh condemned the government's reliance on liquor sales, saying, "They claim to earn ₹27,000 crore from liquor. Is this how Swarnandhra will be achieved?" He further criticized the administration for failing to support agriculture. "During Jagan's rule, agriculture was celebrated, but now farmers are being neglected. Jagan built farmer assurance centers and provided crop insurance, but where is the support now?" he asked.

Rift in Prathipadu

Silent Feud Between MLA Satyaprabha and Party Activists



- Activists distancing themselves from the MLA
- Mudragada Padmanabham strengthening YCP grip in the region
- Jana Sena and BJP leaders express dissatisfaction over alliance dynamics

TPN Correspondent | Prathipadu

Internal discord is growing within the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in Prathipadu, as a rift emerges between MLA Varupula Satyaprabha and party activists. Despite the constituency being a TDP stronghold, the party suffered a setback in the 2024 elections when YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) candidate Varupula Subbarao won with a margin of 38,768 votes. Now, just eight months into her tenure, Satyaprabha is facing distancing from key party members and growing political pressure.

Party Activists Distancing Themselves

Satyaprabha's entry into politics was unexpected yet impactful, as she stepped in after the demise of her husband, senior TDP leader Varupula Jogiraju. She was backed by TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu, contested as part of the alliance, and secured a landslide victory. However, political observers note that she has been unable to consolidate her position within the party. There is dissatisfaction within TDP ranks over the influence of leaders from neighboring constituencies in Prathipadu's affairs. Party activists believe that Sa-

tyaprabha, despite her initial goodwill, is struggling to maintain unity and coordination among local leaders. Many who once stood behind her during her political debut now feel sidelined.

Growing Influence of Mudragada Padmanabham

Meanwhile, former minister Mudragada Padmanabham is making strategic moves to strengthen YSRCP in Prathipadu. He has positioned his son, Giribabu, as the party's key coordinator, intensifying political competition. Amid this, there is growing speculation that Satyaprabha's current approach could limit her to being a one-term MLA.

There are also reports that leaders from alliance partners, Jana Sena and BJP, feel sidelined. While the coalition secured victory, Jana Sena and BJP leaders allege they are being given respect only in public statements and photographs, but not in actual decision-making. Party WhatsApp groups frequently trend with dissatisfaction over the lack of collective efforts. TDP leaders are reportedly concerned that officials are not prioritizing party recommendations. Additionally, allegations persist that local YSRCP leaders continue to control key revenue-generating sectors, such as quarries and land dealings, with little intervention from the ruling party. There are plans within TDP circles to escalate these concerns to senior leadership after Ugadi.

A Critical Political Crossroad

Political analysts believe Satyaprabha still has time to solidify her leadership if she takes corrective measures. Many suggest that as an educated woman, she must focus on regaining control over governance and addressing party grievances to ensure a stronger political future.

Kapaka Gangadhar Elected as President of Tadepalligudem Photographers Association



TPN Correspondent | Tadepalligudem

Kapaka Gangadhar has been unanimously elected as the new president of the Tadepalligudem Photographers Association. The general meeting of the association was held at TTD Kalyanamandapam on Friday morning, where the executive committee elected K. Gangadhar Rao, the owner of Golden Photo Studio, located near the Tadepalligudem RTC depot gate. Three-district chairman M. Ramu, who has overseen the association's affairs until now, along with Tadepalligudem Association president Mullapudi Chiranjeevi, secre-

tary B. Suresh, and other executive members, participated in the meeting. Gangadhar announced that a new executive committee would soon be formed through a steering committee, consisting of senior photographers and in their presence.

Speaking on the occasion, Gangadhar stated that he would work towards resolving the issues faced by photographers and strive to construct an association building. He assured that the new committee would actively address all challenges faced by photographers and take necessary steps for their welfare.

Thalliki Vandanam, Annadata Sukhibhav to be Implemented this Year: Minister Narayana



TPN Correspondent | Nellore

State Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister Dr. Ponguru Narayana announced that the government will implement the Thalliki Vandanam and Annadata Sukhibhav schemes within this year. He stated that funds have already been allocated for these initiatives in the state budget.

Participating in the NTR Bharosa pension distribution program at Bhagat Singh Colony, 54th Division in Nellore on Saturday, the minister highlighted the government's commitment to welfare. Under Thalliki Vandanam, ₹15,000 will be provided per child to mothers, while Annadata Sukhibhav will offer ₹20,000 annually to farmers under the PM Kisan scheme.

Pensions for 68 lakh beneficiaries

Minister Narayana emphasized that the first day of every month has become a pension festival in the state. "As per Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's orders, pensions are being provided to 68 lakh beneficiaries across Andhra Pradesh on the first of every month, with 99% of them being distributed on time," he said.

He reiterated that, as promised during the elections, pensions have been increased—₹4,000 for the elderly, ₹6,000 for

the disabled, and ₹15,000 for bedridden individuals. Additionally, the government is reopening Anna Canteens to serve the poor and providing free gas cylinders to women under the Deepam scheme.

SC, ST, and BCs prioritized in the budget

The minister affirmed that the budget has given significant importance to SC, ST, and BC communities. Despite financial constraints, the government is committed to fulfilling its election promises while balancing development and welfare.

Minister Narayana also thanked CM Chandrababu Naidu for granting autonomy to the state's 123 municipalities, allowing them to utilize tax revenue for local development. He termed this as a landmark decision.

Looking ahead, Minister Narayana stated that the government aims to provide drinking water taps to every household within three years. "This is a people's government that prioritizes the needs and welfare of the public," he assured.

The event was attended by Joint Collector Karthik, Municipal Commissioner Suryateja, Deputy Mayors Roopkumar Yadav and Tahseen, local corporator Sheikh Safia Begum, and other officials.

Police Save Youth Who Attempted Suicide

TPN Correspondent | Eluru

The timely response of the Eluru One Town police saved the life of a 20-year-old youth who attempted suicide in the early hours of Saturday. Jaladi Sudheer, a resident of Chataparru in Eluru mandal, attempted to end his life within the jurisdiction of the Eluru One Town police station.

Fortunately, One Town CI Satyanarayana, who was on patrol at the time, immediately intervened along with

his staff and rescued Sudheer. The police counseled him and later handed him over to his parents.

According to the police, Sudheer was pursuing his degree privately and is believed to have been under severe mental stress, leading to the suicide attempt. The humane approach of CI Satyanarayana and his team in handling the situation has been widely appreciated by the local residents.



Efforts should be made for the development of cities and towns under NUD: District Collector Anand

TPN Correspondent | Nellore

District Collector Anand emphasized the need to work towards the development of Nellore city and surrounding towns under the Nellore Urban Development Authority (NUDA). Speaking at the NUD Authority meeting held at the NUD office in Gandhinagar, Vedayapalem, on Saturday, the Collector urged officials and committee members to focus on urban development and affordable housing.

During the meeting, NUD Junior Accounts Officer Suresh presented 21 agenda items for approval, including staff recruitment, layout development, and budget allocations for NUD activities. The Collector reviewed and approved the agenda in the presence of NUD Chairman Kotamreddy Srinivasulu Reddy, Vice Chairman Suryateja, and other members. He stressed the importance of planning well-structured

layouts to ensure affordable housing for the people in Nellore and other areas under NUDA.

NUD Chairman Kotamreddy Srinivasulu Reddy stated that efforts would be made to develop low-cost MIG layouts with proper approvals across Nellore city, towns, and panchayats. He warned citizens against purchasing plots in unauthorized layouts and assured strict action against those encroaching on government lands. Addi-



tionally, he proposed installing "I Love You Nellore" selfie points at government offices, shopping complexes, schools, and public places to enhance the city's identity. Vice Chairman and Municipal Commissioner Suryateja noted that the NUD Authority meeting, attended by 11 members, resulted in key approvals for new layouts, budget allocations, and urban development initiatives. He assured that the authority would accelerate these programs to ensure rapid district development.

The meeting saw the participation of senior officials, including Irrigation and R&B SEs Deshnayak and Gangadhar, Industries Department GM Prasad, RDO Vamsi Krishna, Chief Planning Officer K Himabindu, NUD Secretary Penchala Reddy, Planning Officer M Himabindu, and several other key personnel.

Summer Has Arrived, Be Alert!! - MLA Vemireddy Prashanthi Reddy's Directives

TPN Correspondent | Nellore

MLA Vemireddy Prashanthi Reddy has directed officials to remain vigilant and address drinking water issues promptly in Kovur constituency during the summer. In a review meeting held at her residence in Magunta Layout, Nellore city, she instructed Mandal Parishad Development Officers (MPDOs) and Rural Water Supply (RWS) officials to ensure that drinking water problems are resolved within 24 hours wherever they arise.

She emphasized the need for an additional motor to be readily available as a backup in case of breakdowns in water-lifting motors used for overhead tankers. If any village faces motor issues, a spare unit should be immediately deployed to prevent disruptions in water supply. She suggested utilizing funds from the 14th and 15th Finance Commissions, as well as general and panchayat funds,



to ensure an uninterrupted drinking water supply. Acknowledging the frequent power cuts during summer, she advised officials to coordinate with the electricity department to maintain the regular filling of overhead water tankers. Additionally, in view of the upcoming Ramadan fasting period starting March 2, she instructed officials to undertake special sanitation measures at mosques. She also announced that cooling water would be supplied to mosques across the constituency through cans with the support of VPR Foundation. The review meeting was attended by MPDOs, RWS officials, and local public representatives.

Communist Confusion Mock Hindu Idols, Worship decaying Lenin body



Hindu Worship



Communist worship

The preservation of Lenin's decaying body in Red Square serves as a powerful symbol for many Communists, representing not just a historical figure but the ideals and aspirations of the Communist movement. For them, maintaining Lenin's body is an act of faith, respect, and commitment to the revolutionary principles he espoused. It signifies dedication to socialism and the ongoing struggle for a classless society. More than a relic, Lenin's embalmed body is a political statement, reinforcing the permanence of his ideology and serving as a source of inspiration for future generations.

However, this veneration presents an ideological paradox. Many Communists, particularly those adhering to Marxist principles, often criticize religious practices—such as Hindu idol worship—as superstitious and regressive. They argue that the worship of deities diverts attention from material struggles, fostering a “false consciousness” that prevents the working class from recognizing and challenging their economic oppression. According to this perspective, religious symbols reinforce existing power structures rather than dismantling them, making Hindu deity veneration a barrier to social progress.

Yet, the juxtaposition of Lenin's embalmed body and Hindu idols raises an important question: Why is one form of veneration seen as legitimate while the other is dismissed as irrational? Both involve the preservation of a physical representation—whether a revolutionary leader or a deity—imbued with profound ideological and emotional significance. This contradiction suggests an underlying cognitive dissonance within communist thought, wherein devotion to Lenin mirrors the very religious practices many Communists seek to dismantle.

Historically, Communism has positioned itself in opposition to organized religion, viewing it as an opiate that dulls the masses' revolutionary potential. Karl Marx's famous dictum that “religion is the opium of the people” underscores this belief. Commu-



Dr Buragadda Srinadh

nist regimes, from the Soviet Union to China, have often sought to suppress religious practices, replacing them with state-sanctioned ideology. Yet, paradoxically, these same regimes have built elaborate cults of personality around their leaders, elevating figures like Lenin, Stalin, and Mao to almost divine status.

In Lenin's case, his body has been preserved for a century, displayed in a glass sarcophagus under constant surveillance and maintenance. This effort, requiring state resources and scientific expertise, is reminiscent of religious relic preservation. The Mausoleum itself functions like a shrine, drawing visitors who view Lenin with a sense of reverence akin to pilgrims visiting a sacred site.

Similarly, in North Korea, the embalmed bodies of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il are enshrined in the Kumsan Palace of the Sun. In China, Mao Zedong's body lies in state in Tiananmen Square, despite his earlier opposition to such practices. These leaders, once vehemently opposed to religious rituals, have ironically become the subjects of quasi-religious adoration themselves. The selective rejection of religious symbols while embracing revolutionary iconography reveals a deeper truth: human beings, regardless of ideology, seek symbols to ral-

ly around. Whether it is a deity in a temple or a revolutionary leader in a mausoleum, these figures provide a tangible focal point for faith, identity, and collective aspirations.

This raises the question: If Lenin's body can be preserved as an enduring symbol of socialism, why should Hindu idols be dismissed outright as irrational? If a Hindu devotee finds meaning in an image of Krishna or Shiva, is that fundamentally different from a communist drawing inspiration from Lenin's preserved remains? Both function as conduits for ideological and spiritual fulfillment.

The contradiction highlights the broader challenge faced by rigid ideological frameworks—they often struggle to account for the emotional and symbolic dimensions of human belief. Cognitive dissonance arises when people hold conflicting values, and in this case, communists must reconcile their reverence for Lenin with their critique of religious devotion. This tension invites a deeper reflection on the role of symbols in shaping political movements, cultural traditions, and personal identities.

Ultimately, the preservation of Lenin's body and the critique of Hindu idol worship underscore the complexities of belief systems and the ways cultural practices are interpreted through ideological lenses. They reveal that, despite opposing religion, communist movements have adopted their own sacred symbols—transforming political leaders into objects of reverence.

This paradox invites a broader discussion on the universality of symbolism in human societies. Whether through religious imagery, revolutionary relics, or nationalistic monuments, people across cultures seek tangible representations of their values and aspirations. Rather than dismissing one form of veneration while embracing another, it may be worth acknowledging that all societies, regardless of ideology, create symbols to inspire, unify, and sustain their beliefs.

Cultural Transformation: The Key to India's Path to 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047

The goal of a “Viksit Bharat” (Developed India) by 2047 is ambitious, but its realization hinges on fulfilling critical prerequisites. One of the most vital of these is cultural transformation.

No nation has reached developed status without undergoing a cultural shift that aligns people toward a common purpose, vision, and identity. A unified culture promotes shared values, behaviors, and practices, which are essential for social cohesion. This collective spirit fosters change, creativity, and understanding across different societal groups. It also explains why countries like China have made remarkable technological strides—such as developing DeepSeekAI—while others, like India, have yet to follow suit.

Cultural transformation creates an environment conducive to innovation, which is a key driver of long-term growth and productivity. Without innovation, economic progress



becomes unsustainable. Nations with robust manufacturing sectors, such as China, Singapore, Germany, and the Netherlands, benefit from consistent trade surpluses, which result from their strong cultural emphasis on manufacturing and innovation.

The process of cultural transformation involves aligning vision, mission, and core values to build a national consensus around crucial issues. As

Peter Drucker aptly stated, “Culture eats strategy for breakfast,” underscoring the importance of culture in achieving strategic objectives.

So, what exactly constitutes cultural transformation? It's about embedding desired behaviors into processes, procedures, and systems. Education, discipline, and organization are fundamental to nation-building and cultural change. Education helps foster open-mindedness, critical thinking, and the understanding of due processes. Due process ensures that people accept unfavorable outcomes when the process is fair and transparent.

Discipline, which is voluntary and not enforced, is the cornerstone of a law-abiding society. It promotes productivity, enhances decision-making, clarifies goals, and builds trust among people, ultimately improving professional relationships and accountability.

Pakistan Faces Dual Crises: Cricket's Collapse and Rising Terrorism Threats



Pakistan's recent exit from the 2025 Champions Trophy without securing a single victory has left the nation reeling. A critical editorial in *The Daily Times* titled ‘Abandoned!’ describes the exit as “disgraceful,” emphasizing the disappointment felt by fans. The editorial notes that Pakistan's cricket team failed to live up to expectations, plagued by mismanagement and underperformance. It states, “Watching the matches felt less like cheering for a national team and more like witnessing a tragic farce unfold on the global stage.” It also questions the lack of planning and strategy in both batting and countering aggressive bowling attacks, issues that have haunted the team for years.

In *Dawn's* editorial, the deep connection between cricket and politics in Pakistan is underlined. Cricket has long been a source of national pride, but it has also been heavily politicized, with a structure that is, according to the editorial, “in shambles.” The editorial criticizes the influence of former cricketers and the patronage politics that have undermined the sport, calling for an inquest into how these dynamics have stunted Pakistan's cricketing progress. The editorial concludes that this inquest must be swift to ensure that the sport's future can be restored to its former glory.

Meanwhile, Pakistan is also grappling with a growing security crisis. A recent suicide bombing at Darul Uloom Haqqania in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has raised alarms over the rise of a faction of the Islamic State (IS) in the region. *Dawn* reports that the bombing marks a departure from the usual pattern of attacks targeting security personnel and government officials, pointing to a potentially escalating threat from IS in the area. The editorial calls this a “fresh security challenge” and highlights the ongoing instability in parts of Balochistan and KP, where militant activity remains rampant. It suggests that this attack could prompt Pakistan and Afghanistan to work together to combat the growing IS threat.

In *The Nation's* editorial, the assassination of Maulana Hamidul Haq Haqqani, a key figure in peace negotiations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, is mourned as a serious setback. Haqqani, who was killed in the suicide bombing, had played a pivotal role in fostering dialogue between the two nations. The editorial raises questions about the motives behind the attack—whether it was an attempt to derail peace talks or the result of a factional dispute. It also speculates that the assassination could be part of a larger conspiracy aimed at undermining diplomatic efforts.



The New Era of Governance: IAS officers must not fear demands of digital age

Imagine a world where policies are debated, shaped, and implemented in real time—where governance evolves as quickly as a trending hashtag. This isn't a future vision; it's already happening.

Public institutions, once the steady backbone of governance, now find themselves in an era of rapid change. With the rise of social media, instant communication, and shifting public expectations, governments are transforming the way they interact with citizens. Decisions that used to take time and careful planning now unfold in an environment where public sentiment can change overnight.

For civil servants and policymakers, this new landscape offers both opportunities and challenges. While increased public engagement fosters transparency and participation, it also shortens the time frame in which institutions must act. The challenge today is not just implementing policies efficiently but balancing speed with substance and adaptability with structure.

Historically, governance followed a deliberate and structured path. Political leaders set broad directions, and public institutions ensured continuity, expertise, and regulatory safeguards. Decision-making

was driven by data, expert advice, and long-term vision. Then came the digital revolution, reshaping the process. Social media now plays a pivotal role in shaping public discourse and policy agendas. A 2024 Pew Research study revealed that 54% of Americans rely on social media for news, a shift that has made governance more transparent and participatory than ever before.

However, greater access to information has heightened expectations, placing pressure on public institutions to respond quickly. No longer insulated from the pulse of public opinion, institutions must navigate an environment where policy debates happen in real time. The question is: How can institutions maintain stability while adapting to this fast-paced world?

The key is not resisting change but strategically adapting. Governments worldwide are using digital platforms to improve services and engage citizens. India's Digital India initiative, for instance, has enhanced public service delivery through online platforms, while Singapore's Smart Nation program leverages data to improve governance. These examples show how technology can make institutions more effective and accessible.

India now emerging as factory of world: PM Modi

- India rises as manufacturing hub
- Vocal for Local" boosts exports
- PM Modi: India is a world force

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized the success of his "vocal for local" initiative on Saturday, noting that Indian products are gaining international recognition and making their mark globally. Speaking at the NXT conclave during the launch of the 'NewsX World' channel, Modi proudly asserted that India is no longer seen merely as a back office for the world, but is emerging as a global manufacturing powerhouse.

The prime minister highlighted the transformation India is undergoing, with a shift from being a provider of cheap labor to becoming a significant player on the world stage. "For decades, the

world viewed India as its back office, but now, India is moving beyond that role and becoming the factory of the world," Modi stated. He underscored that this transformation is a result of the government's focus on encouraging local industries and the "vocal for local" movement, which has been instrumental in boosting domestic manufacturing and innovation.

India's growing global presence is being driven by a surge in the export of Indian-made products, which are now competing on the world market. Modi emphasized that Indian industries are not only creating jobs but are also contributing to the country's economic growth and reinforcing India's standing as a key player



in the global economy. "India is no longer just a workforce; it is a world force," he added.

The prime minister's remarks were a strong endorsement of the ongoing efforts to strengthen India's manufacturing sector, improve infrastructure, and promote indigenous brands internationally. He also lauded the role

of technology and innovation in helping Indian companies expand their reach globally. The shift from being merely a service provider to a manufacturing hub marks a significant milestone in India's economic journey and highlights the impact of government initiatives in fostering self-reliance and global competitiveness.



If anyone has the capacity to make PoJK part of India, it is Modi: Union minister

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Union Minister Jitendra Singh described Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) as a "miscarriage of history, justice, and Indian foreign policy" and expressed confidence that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the leader who can make it a part of India. Speaking at an event organized by the Jammu and Kashmir People's Forum and Mirpur Balidan Samiti, Singh emphasized Modi's leadership, stating, "If anyone has the capacity to do it, it is Modi... Modi hai to Mumkin hai" (It is possible, if there is Modi).

Singh, who is both a lawmaker from Jammu and Kashmir and a minister in the Prime Minister's Office, was addressing the 25th anniversary of a resolution passed by the Indian Parliament on February 22, 1994. The resolution reaffirmed Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India and emphasized that any attempts to separate it from India would be resisted by all means necessary. The resolution also called for the vacating of territories occupied by Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir through aggression.

In his remarks, Singh blamed India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, for allowing Pakistan to occupy a portion of Jammu and Kashmir, attributing the creation of PoJK to the "blunder" of the 1947 Partition. He asserted that PoJK is not just a result of partition but rather a fallout of it, further criticizing Nehru's handling of the situation during the early years of India's independence.

Singh's comments highlighted the ongoing political discourse over the status of PoJK, with the Indian government maintaining that the region belongs to India. As tensions continue to simmer over Jammu and Kashmir, Singh's remarks reiterate India's stance on the territorial dispute, reflecting the broader sentiment of reclaiming the region from Pakistan's control.

Omar Abdullah Ensures Smooth Arrangements for Ramadan in Jammu and Kashmir



TPN Correspondent | Srinagar

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah chaired a high-level meeting on Saturday to review the arrangements for the holy month of Ramadan, which begins on Sunday. During the meeting, he directed the Power Department to ensure there are no electricity outages during Sehri and Iftar times, ensuring a smooth and comfortable experience for the people observing the fast.

Abdullah emphasized that during Ramadan, the public expects the government to provide essential services without inconvenience. He stressed the importance of delivering services effectively, particularly in the power sector. "People want, and we must strive, to ensure that there are no power outages during Sehri and Iftar time," he said. Any required shutdowns, he instructed, should be planned and implemented during the day, allowing for maintenance work at more convenient times.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the importance of addressing any issues with the electrical system and faulty distribution transformers (DTs) immediately to prevent disruptions during Ramadan. On the water supply front, Abdullah noted that the recent spell of snow and rain had improved the situation, but still emphasized the need to maintain a steady supply of clean drinking water to households.

In addition to the power and water supply concerns, Abdullah directed officials to ensure cleanliness around mosques and shrines, optimize traffic management, and bolster security arrangements. Both the inspectors general of police for Jammu and Kashmir have already addressed security measures, ensuring that public safety is a top priority.

Occurrence of crimes against women in Kerala is concerning: CM Vijayan

TPN Correspondent | Chennai

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Saturday highlighted that while crimes against women in the state have decreased due to government interventions, the ongoing occurrence of such incidents in a progressive society like Kerala remains a matter of serious concern.

In his address at the International Women's Day celebrations organized by the Kerala Women's Commission (KWC), the Chief Minister acknowledged the state's significant strides in empowering women but stressed that more work needs to be done to ensure women can live free from fear of violence. "While the numbers have come down, the fact that crimes against women still take place is a serious issue," Vijayan said, urging every-



one to join forces in eliminating such crimes from society.

The CM pointed out that despite Kerala's rich history of promoting women's rights, many women still feel hesitant to step out into public spaces. "As a result, they are unable to fully utilize the various opportu-

nities available to them today. This situation needs to change," he emphasized.

Vijayan also praised the Kerala Women's Commission for the significant role it has played in advancing women's empowerment over the past three decades. He

expressed hope that the Commission's continued efforts would contribute further to improving the status of women in the state. "The KWC has brought about notable changes in society with respect to women's rights, and I believe this progress will continue," he said.

The Chief Minister highlighted Kerala's pioneering role as the first state in India to implement gender budgeting, a move that earned international recognition from the United Nations. He also mentioned the government's aim to allocate 25 percent of the state's project funds toward women empowerment initiatives, reinforcing the state's commitment to gender equality. Through these initiatives, the state hopes to foster an environment where women can feel safe, confident, and fully empowered to participate in all aspects of society.

Bullet Train Project: First Make In India Steel Bridge To Be Launched In Gujarat

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The first span of a 200-meter-long steel bridge, part of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train corridor, is set to be launched this month in Nadiad, Gujarat. This bridge, an essential component of the ambitious bullet train project, is located along National Highway-48, which connects major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai. The bridge is slated to be completed by August 2025.

Weighing approximately 1,500 metric tonnes, the bridge is 14.3 meters wide and 14.6 meters high. Fabricated at the Salasar workshop near Hapur in Uttar Pradesh, the steel bridge parts have been coated with a pioneering C-5 system, which provides an advanced protective coating. The steel components have been joined using Tor Shear Type High Strength Bolts (TTHSB), designed to ensure the bridge has a lifespan of 100 years.

Typically, steel bridges have spans of 40 to 45 meters, making them ideal for facilitating highway, expressway, and railway crossings. The Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project will feature a total of



28 steel bridges, with 11 being constructed in Maharashtra and 17 in Gujarat, as part of the infrastructure development for the high-speed train network.

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw recently inspected the Ahmedabad Railway Station Redevelopment Project and provided updates on the bullet train project's progress. Vaishnaw shared

that 360 kilometers of the total 508-kilometer route of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train have been completed, with the Maharashtra section showing significant progress. Notably, nearly 2 kilometers of the undersea tunnel in Maharashtra are already finished.

The Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project, developed in collaboration with Japan, aims to rev-

olutionize regional connectivity. The high-speed rail network will link major business hubs such as Mumbai, Surat, Vadodara, and Ahmedabad, stimulating economic growth and employment opportunities in Gujarat and Maharashtra. With a total sanctioned cost of Rs 1,08,000 crore, the project is expected to significantly enhance transportation infrastructure in India.



Texas Schoolgirl Who Killed Self Had Flagged Sexual Abuse By Family

TPN Correspondent | Texas

The Gainesville Independent School District has confirmed that 11-year-old Jocelynn Rojo Carranza, who allegedly died by suicide last month, was sexually abused by a family member, contradicting claims by her mother, Marbella Carranza. The revelation came after students reported the abuse to school officials, prompting an investigation that also uncovered reports of bullying related to the girl's immigration status.

Jocelynn, a student at a local school, was found unresponsive at her home on February 4 and passed away on February 8, devastating her family and community. Initially, Ms. Carranza attributed her daughter's death to relentless bullying by classmates over the family's immigration status, claiming the harassment drove Jocelynn to take her own life. She alleged that students on a school bus threatened to report the family to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), targeting Hispanic children, including Jocelynn, who overheard the comments. The bus driver confirmed the incident, though he noted Jocelynn was not directly part of the conversation but was nearby.

However, the school district's investigation revealed a more complex and troubling picture. Multiple students reported that Jocelynn had confided in them about being inappropriately touched by a family member, requesting they keep it secret to avoid getting them in trouble. Superintendent DesMontes Stewart stated, "Multiple students reported that [Jocelynn] told them she had been inappropriately touched by a family member and wished to keep this a secret to avoid getting them in trouble." The district also learned that Jocelynn had previously expressed suicidal intentions to a cousin, raising concerns about missed opportunities for intervention.

Ms. Carranza has vehemently denied the allegations of sexual abuse, stating, "Nothing about that is true." She emphasized that she had repeatedly discussed the topic of sexual abuse with her daughter, instructing her that no one should touch her body. Ms. Carranza, who has retained a lawyer, is awaiting a response from the district and has accused the school of negligence for failing to inform her about her daughter's therapy or the severity of her struggles.

India to remain fastest-growing economy with 6.5% GDP growth in FY26: IMF

- IMF projects India's GDP growth at 6.5% in 2025-26.
- Strong private investment and macroeconomic stability to drive growth.

TPN Correspondent | New York

India will maintain its position as the world's fastest-growing major economy, with a projected GDP growth of 6.5% in 2025-26, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The multilateral financial agency attributed this growth to robust private investment and continued macroeconomic stability.

The IMF's latest assessment, released after its Article IV consultations with India, emphasized that the country's strong economic performance presents an opportunity to implement critical structural reforms aimed at achieving its goal of becoming an advanced economy by 2047.

"Real GDP is expected to grow at 6.5% in both 2024-25 and 2025-26, supported by sustained macroeconomic and financial stability, along with strong pri-



ivate consumption," the IMF report stated. It also noted that headline inflation is expected to stabilize as food price shocks subside.

The agency highlighted the importance of structural reforms to sustain long-term economic growth, create high-quality jobs, and attract greater private

investment. Key recommendations include labor market reforms, improvements in human capital, and measures to enhance women's participation in the workforce.

Boosting foreign direct investment (FDI) and private sector involvement will require a stable policy environment, en-

hanced ease of doing business, governance reforms, and deeper trade integration through tariff and non-tariff reductions, the IMF added.

Despite a slight moderation in recent quarters, India's economic growth remains strong. GDP grew 6% year-on-year in the first half of 2024-25, while inflation remained within the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) tolerance band of 2-6%, though food price fluctuations caused some volatility. The financial sector remains resilient, with non-performing loans at multi-year lows. Fiscal consolidation efforts continue, and the current account deficit remains under control, supported by strong growth in service exports. With the IMF reaffirming India's robust economic outlook, the focus now shifts to policy measures that can sustain this momentum and drive long-term development.

Russia reacts to Trump-Zelensky clash at White House

TPN Correspondent | Moscow

Russia has responded with satisfaction to the fiery exchange between US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky at the White House. The tense meeting, which saw Trump sharply criticize Zelensky over the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, ended with the Ukrainian leader abruptly cutting his visit short.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova praised Trump for his "restraint" in handling Zelensky. "How Trump and Vance held back from hitting that scumbag is a miracle of restraint," she wrote on Telegram, accusing the Ukrainian president of "biting the hand that feeds him."

Dmitry Medvedev, deputy head of Russia's Security Council and former Russian president, was even harsher in his remarks.



He called Zelensky an "insolent pig" who received "a proper slap down in the Oval Office." Medvedev claimed Trump had finally confronted Zelensky with the truth, warning that Kyiv was "playing with the third world war."

Kirill Dmitriev, head of the Rus-

sian Direct Investment Fund, described the confrontation as "historic" and a sign of shifting US policy. Meanwhile, Yevgeny Primakov, head of Russia's Agency for International Humanitarian Cooperation, accused Zelensky of planning "provocations" to gain sympathy.

Russian state media celebrated the incident, with RT posting on X (formerly Twitter): "Zelensky sits with hands between legs as US President and VP hammer him."

While several European leaders expressed support for Zelensky, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, a long-time ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, sided with Trump. "Strong men make peace, weak men make war," Orban wrote on X, praising Trump for his efforts to broker a ceasefire.

Before the meeting, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov reiterated Russia's willingness to engage in dialogue with the US but emphasized the need for mutual respect. "We want to build dialogue not only with the U.S. but with all countries from a position of mutual respect and mutual benefit," Peskov told Russian media.

US stocks, Bitcoin struggle in Trump's first weeks in office

- Nasdaq down over 1% as inflation concerns rise.
- Bitcoin plunges 16% after peaking at \$1,06,000.
- Walmart's warning fuels fears of economic slowdown.

TPN Correspondent | Washington

US stock markets and Bitcoin have struggled since President Donald Trump took office on January 20, 2025, defying initial optimism about his business and crypto-friendly policies. All major US stock indexes are in the red, with the Nasdaq dropping over 1% so far this year.

A key factor behind the market slump is rising inflation concerns. The Conference Board's consumer confidence index saw its sharpest monthly decline since August 2021, raising fears of economic uncertainty. Additionally, a recent consumer confidence survey pushed the Fear & Greed Index into the "extreme fear" zone for the first time since December 2024.

Bitcoin, which soared to \$1,06,000 during Trump's inauguration, has fallen nearly 16% over the past month, now trading around \$88,000. Investors, wary of market volatility, are shifting towards safer assets like government bonds.



Adding to the concerns, retail giant Walmart issued a warning about slower sales growth in 2025, fueling fears of a broader economic downturn.

In contrast, global markets are showing resilience. Europe's STOXX 600 Index has gained nearly 10% in 2025, while Chinese stocks have outperformed their US counterparts. Analysts from Goldman Sachs noted that China's tech sector, particularly

after the launch of DeepSeek's LLM, is seeing significant growth. European tech stocks are also performing well, boosted by ongoing geopolitical developments.

Technology stocks, which have driven market growth in recent years, are now showing weakness. Companies like Nvidia, Palantir, and Tesla have suffered heavy losses, with Tesla's market value dropping below \$1 trillion after an 8.4% decline.

China To Send Pak Astronaut As 1st Foreign Guest To Its Space Station

TPN Correspondent | Beijing/Islamabad

China has announced plans to send an astronaut from Pakistan to its space station Tiangong, making Pakistan the first foreign country to have its astronaut aboard the Chinese orbital facility.

The agreement was signed between the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) and Pakistan's Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) on Friday. The deal, signed in Islamabad in the presence of Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, includes collaboration in selecting and training Pakistani astronauts before they are sent to Tiangong, which orbits 400 km above the Earth, state-run China Daily reported.

China has already been assisting Pakistan's space program by launching satellites for its close ally over the past few years. Now, this step marks a new level of space cooperation between the two nations.

Tiangong, China's independently built space station, was developed after Beijing was reportedly excluded from the International Space Station (ISS) due to concerns over military involvement in its space program. The Chinese station is seen as a rival to the Russian-built Mir space station and a potential com-

petitor to Western space initiatives. China's expanding space program has raised international concerns, particularly regarding the station's robotic arms, which have the capability to grab objects, including satellites, in orbit. This feature has led to speculation about the station's potential military



applications. In addition to sending a Pakistani astronaut to space, China has set ambitious goals for its space exploration program. Deputy Director of CMSA Lin Xiqiang recently announced that China plans to land astronauts on the moon before 2030, aligning with global space ambitions. Meanwhile, the US has scheduled its lunar return for 2025.

With this latest development, China has further strengthened its space diplomacy, positioning itself as a key player in global space exploration while deepening its strategic partnership with Pakistan.

India's GST collection rises 9.1% to ₹1.84 lakh crore in February 2025

India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections have surged by 9.1% in February 2025, totaling approximately ₹1.84 lakh crore, according to official data released on Saturday. This growth marks a significant uptick, driven by a notable increase in both domestic and import-related revenues.

The GST revenue breakdown reveals a 10.2% increase in domestic revenues, reaching ₹1.42 lakh crore. Additionally, revenues from imports saw a 5.4% rise, amounting to ₹41,702 crore during February. This demonstrates the continued strength of the domestic economy, while import-related activity remains resilient.

Further details show that the Central GST (CGST) generated ₹35,204 crore, while the State GST (SGST) accounted for ₹43,704 crore. The Integrated GST (IGST) contributed ₹90,870 crore, and the compensation cess collected stood at ₹13,868 crore. The total refunds issued for the month amounted to ₹20,889 crore, reflecting a 17.3% increase compared to the previous year.

Net GST collections, after refunds, also saw a healthy growth of 8.1%, reaching approximately ₹1.63 lakh crore. This marks an increase from the ₹1.50 lakh crore recorded in February 2024. Gross GST revenues in February 2024 were ₹1.68 lakh crore, with net



collections at ₹1.50 lakh crore. Vivek Jalan, Partner at Tax Connect Advisory Services LLP, commented on the figures, stating that the GST collections are aligning closely with targets. This positive trend contributes to the projected fiscal deficit for FY24-25, estimated at 4.8%, which is below the budgeted 4.9%.

Jalan also noted a key observation in the data: the growth rate for GST on imports is 7.2%, compared to a 10.1% rise in domestic GST collections. This suggests that India is becoming more self-reliant, as domestic

consumption and production are outpacing imports. Furthermore, the 15.8% increase in refunds, including those related to exports, signals that India is making strides in global manufacturing, positioning itself as a key player in international trade.

Amidst global geopolitical uncertainties, India's performance in managing its GST collections reflects the strength of its economic fundamentals, providing a positive outlook for the country's fiscal health and economic resilience.

LPG Cylinder Price Hike in March Commercial Gas Rates Increased by ₹6

In March 2025, oil marketing companies (OMCs) have raised the price of commercial Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders by ₹6 across various cities in India. Following this price hike, the cost of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder has increased from ₹1,797 to ₹1,803.

The price increase comes after a slight reduction of ₹7 in February 2025, offering some relief to businesses such as hotels and restaurants. However, this new hike is expected to negate those benefits. It is important to note that the price hike follows a significant increase of ₹352 in March 2023 for commercial LPG cylinders. Domestic LPG cylinder prices, on the other hand, have remained stable for several months.

Commercial LPG cylinders are primarily used for business purposes, including in hotels, restaurants, and other commercial establishments. The recent hike in prices for commercial cylinders is seen as a setback for these businesses, which were expecting continued relief following the previous month's price reduction.

While the price increase in March is marginal, it may still have an impact on businesses that rely on LPG for cooking and heating. The hike is unlikely to cause widespread disruption, as it is relatively small and comes on the heels of a reduction. However, local variations in prices, such as local taxes and transport costs, could lead to differences in the LPG prices across various cities. Business owners are advised to check with local gas operators to confirm the exact price in their area.

Despite the increase in commercial LPG cylinder rates, the cost of domestic LPG cylinders has remained unchanged since August 2024, providing some stability for households.



India's Fiscal Deficit Reaches 74.5% of Revised Target by January



India's central government fiscal deficit surged to 74.5% of the revised annual target by January, a significant increase from 63.6% at the same time last year. The rise in the fiscal gap is attributed to higher capital expenditure and a double tranche of devolution payments made to states in January, according to official data released on Friday.

Despite this increase, analysts remain optimistic that the fiscal deficit will stay within the government's target of 4.8% of GDP for the financial year 2024-25 (FY25). The government's fiscal policy is aimed at balancing the need for increased spending, particularly in infrastructure and welfare programs, with maintaining macroeconomic stability.

The fiscal deficit is the difference between the government's total expenditure and its total revenue, and a higher deficit often reflects a need for borrowing. The recent spike in capital expenditure has been part of the government's effort to boost economic growth, particularly through infrastructure investments. Additionally, the advanced devolution of funds to states in January, while supporting state-level development, also contributed to the widening fiscal gap.

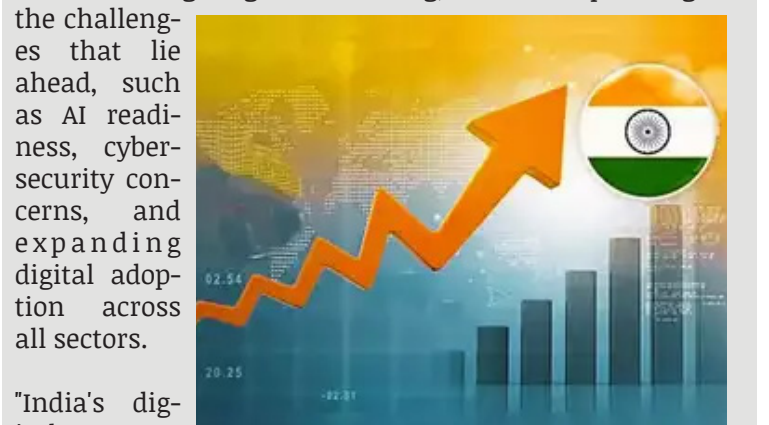
In response to these challenges, the government is expected to continue managing its finances carefully over the remainder of the fiscal year. Analysts predict that while the deficit may temporarily overshoot the target in the short term, it will be brought back on track through disciplined revenue collection, strategic fiscal policies, and a potential reduction in spending during the latter part of the year.

As India strives to achieve its fiscal deficit target, it will also need to navigate a complex economic landscape, balancing growth with fiscal responsibility. The government's ability to manage these competing priorities will be critical in ensuring continued economic stability in the coming years.

India's Digital Economy Set to Reach One-Fifth of GDP by 2029

India's digital economy is expanding at twice the rate of the overall economy and is projected to contribute one-fifth of the nation's GDP by 2029, according to a report by Dutch investment firm Prosus and the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).

The "State of India's Digital Economy (SIDE) 2025" report highlights India's growing prominence in the digital world, ranking as the third most digitized nation globally, after the United States and China. The report outlines how India's digital transformation is reshaping the economy and bolstering its global standing, while also pointing to the challenges that lie ahead, such as AI readiness, cybersecurity concerns, and expanding digital adoption across all sectors.



"India's digital transformation is rapidly redefining its economy and global position. The SIDE 2025 report offers valuable insights into how India can harness its digital strengths while addressing key challenges," said Sehraj Singh, Managing Director at Prosus.

The country's ability to capitalize on technology is largely attributed to its large, youthful population that is enthusiastic about adopting new technologies. In addition, India has seen a significant rise in mobile internet penetration and the successful implementation of key digital public infrastructures, such as Aadhaar (the biometric identification system), the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), and Digilocker, a digital locker system for storing documents securely. These initiatives have played a pivotal role in driving digital engagement and economic transformation.

As India continues to evolve digitally, the growth of its digital economy is expected to not only enhance its global competitiveness but also create new opportunities for innovation, entrepreneurship, and job creation. However, addressing the remaining challenges will be essential to sustaining this growth and ensuring that the benefits of digitalization reach all segments of society.

Mahindra & Mahindra Reports 15% Growth in February Auto Sales

Mahindra & Mahindra reported strong growth in its overall auto sales for February, with total sales reaching 83,702 vehicles, marking a 15% increase compared to the previous year. This growth includes both domestic sales and exports.

In the 'Utility Vehicles' segment, Mahindra saw a significant rise in its SUV sales, selling 50,420 units domestically, which represents a 19% growth. Overall, including exports, the company sold 52,386 utility vehicles. The domestic sales for Commercial Vehicles were also robust, with 23,826 units sold.

Veejay Nakra, President of the Automotive Division at Mahindra & Mahindra, attributed this strong performance to the continued positive momentum for the company's SUV portfolio. "In February, we clocked SUV sales of 50,420, a growth of 19 percent and 83,702 total vehicles, a growth of 15 percent. This reflects the ongoing success of our offerings in the market," Nakra stated.

Meanwhile, Mahindra's Farm Equipment Sector (FES) also reported positive sales growth. In February, the company sold 23,880 tractors in the domestic market, a 19% increase compared to February 2024, when 20,121 units were sold. Total tractor sales, including exports, stood at 25,527 units, compared to 21,672 units last year. Exports accounted for 1,647 units in February.

Hemant Sikka, President of Mahindra's Farm Equipment Sector,

attributed the growth to favorable weather conditions for the Rabi crop and continued government support for the agricultural sector. He added, "The increase in Agri credit limits, ongoing government efforts to boost farmer incomes, and a strong Rabi harvest will further contribute to rising tractor demand." Exports also saw a healthy growth of 6% year-on-year.

Mahindra & Mahindra remains one of the largest multinational federations, with a workforce of 260,000 employees operating in over 100 countries. The company's strong performance in both the automotive and farm equipment sectors is reflective of its successful strategy and market demand.



Shin-chan Makes His Debut in India with New Movie; Fans Eager for the Release



Shin-chan, the beloved mischievous cartoon character, is making his first appearance in India with a brand-new movie titled *Eiga Crayon Shin-chan Cho Karei! Shakunetsu no Kasukabe Dancers* ("Crayon Shin-chan the Movie: Super Magnificent! Scorching Kasukabe Dancers"). The movie's newly released trailer has already sparked excitement among fans, as it promises a fun-filled adventure through iconic Indian landmarks.

In the trailer, Shin-chan and his friends are shown traveling to India for the first time. The gang is seen in awe as they explore vibrant cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Jaipur, with famous landmarks making an appearance. The excitement builds as Shin-chan and his friends enthusiastically dance, embracing the lively atmosphere of India. This dance-themed movie marks an exciting new chapter for the *Crayon Shin-chan* franchise and brings a fresh, energetic vibe to the much-loved series. The film's trailer has raised fans' anticipation, with many eager to see how their favor-

ite characters will interact with India's rich culture and landmarks. Shin-chan's energetic antics and dance moves are sure to add to the thrill of the movie, set in the heart of India. The movie, releasing in the summer of 2025, marks the return of screenwriter Kimiko Ueno and director Masakazu Hashimoto. Fans can expect even more details in the coming months as the movie's release date draws closer.

The *Crayon Shin-chan* series, created by Yoshito Usui, has been a fan favorite since its debut as a comic in 1990, thanks to its unique humor and relatable characters. Even after Usui's passing in 2009, his team continued the legacy under the banner Yoshito Usui & UY Studio, ensuring the beloved series continued to thrive.

After more than 30 years of airing and expanding into movies, TV specials, and more, *Crayon Shin-chan* continues to captivate audiences worldwide, and this new movie is sure to add to its growing popularity. Fans are eagerly waiting for Shin-chan's Indian adventure!

"Just Amazing" - Viral Video Shows Intricate Designs Made With Melted Sugar In China

A viral video showcasing a unique "edible" art form in China has captivated audiences on Instagram. The video features the traditional Chinese art of "sugar painting," where molten sugar is used to create intricate, edible masterpieces. In the clip, an artist skillfully crafts two stunning designs in front of a mesmerized audience.



For the first piece, the artist dips a ladle into a pot of molten sugar and begins to pour it onto a metallic surface. With deft movements, they shape the sugar into the outline of a butterfly, adding fine details like whorls and stripes. Once the sugar hardens, the butterfly design is carefully lifted off the surface and presented to an onlooker.

The second creation features a cartoon girl, based on a photo the artist has been given. Using molten sugar, the artist meticulously forms the girl's face, hair, and upper body, even including delicate features like her eyes, nose, and mouth. A thin stick is placed at the center of the design, allowing the

artist to later lift the piece. The video is captioned, "Sugar painting is a traditional Chinese folk art where artists use molten sugar to create intricate, edible designs like butterflies and dragons. In Nantong, this craft is recognized as an intangible cultural heritage, with artisans creating these sweet works to delight both the eyes and taste buds." The video has struck a chord with viewers, with many impressed by the artist's remarkable talent and attention to

detail. Comments on Instagram include, "So talented," "Beautiful and impressive," and "Mind-blowing art!! The detailing is phenomenal." Sugar painting dates back to the Ming Dynasty, where it was originally used for religious rituals. Today, it remains a cherished form of folk art, celebrated for its intricate craftsmanship and cultural significance. The art has even earned recognition as an intangible cultural heritage, highlighting its enduring legacy.

Unusual Ocean Events: Are They Signs of a Changing Environment?



Something strange is unfolding in the oceans, with unusual sightings and behaviors among marine life raising alarms. Deep-sea creatures are surfacing more frequently, and marine animals are exhibiting unpredictable actions. From the rare appearance of the so-called "doomsday fish" to baffling whale strandings, these events have left experts pondering whether they are signs of a changing environment or a warning of something even larger to come.

One of the most discussed mysteries is the sudden appearance of the oarfish, a long, serpent-like creature that has become the subject of various disaster myths.

Recently, one of these elusive fish washed ashore in Lanzarote, sparking renewed fears that their appearance could be linked to natural disasters, such as earthquakes or tsunamis. In Japanese folklore, oarfish are considered "Messengers of the Sea God" and are believed to surface before major seismic events, adding to their mystical reputation. While such sightings have long been tied to legends, scientists are investigating whether the oarfish's unusual behavior could indicate changes in the ocean's ecosystem or broader environmental shifts. Some experts speculate that the rise in sightings could be linked to disruptions in the ocean's

conditions, such as rising temperatures or increased seismic activity, which might drive these deep-sea creatures closer to the surface. In addition to the oarfish, unexplained whale strandings are adding to the growing sense of unease. Although strandings have been observed for centuries, the frequency of these events seems to be increasing, with no clear explanation as to why. Some researchers suggest that the disruptions in marine environments, such as noise pollution from ships or changes in water temperature, might be disorienting these animals, leading them to strand themselves. With these events unfolding in real time, many are left wondering if they are isolated incidents or signs of a broader environmental shift. As scientists continue to monitor these phenomena, the possibility of a significant ecological or geological change remains an open question.

Woman Rides Helmetless With Parrot, Video Goes Viral in Bengaluru

Bengaluru, a city famous for its tech scene, has become a hot spot for quirky and sometimes risky traffic videos, and a new incident is adding to the city's colorful reputation. A video recently went viral showing a woman riding a two-wheeler without a helmet while carrying a vibrant parrot on her shoulder. Captured by an onlooker and shared on X (formerly Twitter) by Rahul Jadhav, the clip quickly caught the attention of social media users, with many calling it a perfect example of Bengaluru's unpredictable daily life.

The video, titled "Never a dull moment in Bangalore," showcases yet another bizarre moment on the city's busy streets. In the footage, the woman calmly rides the motorcycle, completely helmetless, while a colorful parrot perches on her shoulder. The combination of reckless driving and the unusual companion has sparked a range of reactions online. This incident is just one in a series of unusual traffic behaviors observed in Bengaluru. The city has gained attention for incidents like a woman working on a laptop while driving through heavy traffic or a rider seen without a helmet, with a passenger sitting



in an unsafe, forward-facing position. Such occurrences are becoming more frequent, highlighting the city's unique, and often dangerous, traffic culture. Social media users have had mixed reactions to the viral video, with one commenting, "This is clearly a peak moment." The city, known for its chaotic traffic and frequent violations, is often the subject of viral content that underscores the ongoing challenges around public safety and responsible

driving practices. Despite repeated warnings and traffic regulations, these kinds of reckless behaviors continue to be a concern. Whether it's ignoring basic safety gear like helmets or engaging in distractions while riding, the need for improved traffic discipline in Bengaluru is more pressing than ever. The viral video has once again brought the spotlight on the city's traffic issues, prompting calls for greater awareness and enforcement of safety norms.

Consumers Sue Apple Over False "Carbon Neutral" Claim on Watches

Apple is facing a lawsuit from consumers who allege that the company's claim of three versions of its Apple Watches being "carbon neutral" is false and misleading. The lawsuit, filed on Wednesday in the federal court in San Jose, California, accuses Apple of making deceptive environmental claims regarding the Apple Watch Series 9, SE, and Ultra 2 models. Seven customers, who purchased these watches labeled with a "green" carbon-neutral tag, argue that they would not have bought the products or would have paid less if they had known the truth about the environmental impact. The plaintiffs claim that the watches, advertised as "car-

bon neutral," may not meet the criteria, misleading them about the actual environmental benefits of their purchases. Apple introduced the carbon-neutral Apple Watches in September 2023, proudly stating that the watches would achieve carbon neutrality through a combination of reduced emissions and the purchase of carbon offsets. The company promoted these models as environmentally friendly, aligning with its broader efforts to address climate change and reduce its carbon footprint across various product lines. However, the plaintiffs contend that the claims made by Apple were not ac-

curate, challenging the validity of the company's environmental assertions. According to the lawsuit, Apple failed to adequately disclose the full scope of emissions associated with manufacturing and the potential limitations of its carbon offset strategy. This legal action highlights growing concerns about corporate environmental claims, particularly in the tech industry, where companies like Apple often face scrutiny over their sustainability efforts. The outcome of this lawsuit could set a precedent for how companies market their environmental initiatives and the level of transparency required when claiming carbon neutrality.



Karun Nair's Unbeaten 132 Puts Vidarbha in Command in Ranji Trophy Final

Karun Nair's brilliant, unbeaten 132 powered Vidarbha to a commanding position in the Ranji Trophy final against Kerala. Nair's 280-ball knock, including 10 fours and 2 sixes, extended Vidarbha's lead to 286 runs at the end of Day Four. The highlight of Nair's innings came when he was dropped on 31 by Kerala's Akshay Chandran off a regulation catch at first slip. Nair made the most of the reprieve, scoring his fourth century of the season and signaling his nine centuries this season across two competitions with a special gesture.



Vidarbha, who began Day Four with a 37-run lead, were in early trouble at 7/2, but Nair and Danish Malewar (73) steadied the ship with a 182-run stand. Vidarbha now have the title within reach with one day remaining.

10-Year-Old Atiqah Mir Becomes First Indian to Join F1 Academy Driver Program

10-year-old karting prodigy Atiqah Mir has made history by becoming the first Indian and Asian racer to be signed by Formula 1 Academy for its prestigious driver program. The female-only racing series, owned by Formula 1, chose Atiqah for its Discover Your Drive (DYD) program after closely monitoring her impressive karting performances. Atiqah, hailing from Jammu and Kashmir, is one of only three drivers worldwide in the mini category (ages 8-11) to be selected for the program. She will compete in the Champions of the Future Academy Program Championship, with races scheduled in Europe and the Middle East, starting this weekend.



F1 Academy will provide her with financial and technical support, covering her fitness, driving, and mental preparation, marking a major milestone in her burgeoning racing career. Atiqah expressed her excitement, saying, "Being chosen by Formula 1 Academy is a huge honor. I will work hard to repay the faith in me and represent India with pride."



Champions Trophy: South Africa Dominates England to Qualify for Semi-finals

South Africa stormed into the Champions Trophy semi-finals with a dominant seven-wicket victory over England in the final Group B match. After dismissing England for a paltry 179, South Africa comfortably chased down the target in just 29.1 overs, securing the win with 20.5 overs to spare. England, already eliminated from the semifinal race, struggled from the outset, with Marco Jansen (3/39), Wiaan Mulder (3/25), and Ke-

shav Maharaj (2/35) putting in an outstanding bowling performance. The Proteas dismissed England for the lowest total of this edition in 38.2 overs. In the chase, Heinrich Klaasen (64) and Rassie van der Dussen (72*), who shared a 127-run partnership, steered South Africa to victory. This win sent the Proteas to the semi-finals, where they will face Australia after topping the group.

Armand Duplantis Breaks His Own Pole Vault World Record with 6.27m Leap



Swedish Olympic champion Armand Duplantis once again rewrote history by breaking his own world pole vault record at the All Star Pole Vault event in Clermont-Ferrand, France. After securing victory with a 6.07m jump, Duplantis raised the bar to 6.27m and cleared it on his first attempt.

"It's always special, like a feeling of euphoria," said Duplantis after the jump. This marks the 11th time he has improved his world record, having first set it in 2020 with a leap of 6.16m. Duplantis, 25, also celebrated the moment with his song "Bop," which was

playing during the jump. The record-breaking feat came just months after his Olympic gold in Paris and a previous record of 6.26m in August 2024. Duplantis will continue his journey with future competitions in Sweden and China.

Prague Masters: R Praggnanandhaa Wins First Round, Aravindh Chithambaram Takes Sole Lead



Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa secured his first win in the Prague Masters with a dominant victory over Nguyen Thai Dai Van of the Czech Republic. The Indian chess prodigy comfortably navigated the complexities of the Nimzo-Indian defense, capitalizing on a decisive advantage early in the game to win a rook for a minor piece. After two draws in earlier rounds, Praggnanandhaa's commanding win placed him in a strong position, sharing second place with Germany's Vincent Keymer. Meanwhile, Aravindh Chithambaram emerged as the sole leader after defeating top seed Wei Yi of China. Aravindh's deep understanding of the Ragozin opening and brilliant calculation led to a 44-move win, taking him to 2.5 points from 3 rounds. Aravindh's performance also saw him break into the world's top 20 in live ratings for the first time.

Uttar Pradesh CM Wishes UP Warriorz Ahead of WPL Home Leg

Ahead of their home leg at the Women's Premier League (WPL), UP Warriorz captain Deepti Sharma and Capri Sports' Director Jinisha Sharma met Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow. They invited him to attend the team's games at the Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium. Owner Jinisha Sharma expressed gratitude for the CM's support, stating, "His good wishes inspire our team to give our best. We hope to make him and Uttar Pradesh proud." Captain Deepti Sharma also shared her honor in meeting the CM and appreciated his support. The UP Warriorz, led by Deepti Sharma, are gearing up for their home leg, starting with a match against Gujarat Giants on March 3. They will also face Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru on March 6 and 8, respectively.



Punjab Warriors Storm into InBL Pro U25 Final with Dominant Win Over Hyderabad Falcons

Punjab Warriors secured a dominant 98-72 victory over Hyderabad Falcons at the Indra Gandhi Indoor Stadium on Friday, advancing to the InBL Pro U25 final. The Warriors put on a blistering performance, especially in the third quarter, where they extended their lead to 23 points. Stokley Chaffee led the charge with a double-double, registering 15 points and 14 rebounds, while Thomas Garrett and Gurbaz Sandhu contributed 16 points each, including key

three-pointers. Punjab set the tone early, leading by 12 points in the first quarter, and continued to build on that advantage throughout the game. Despite a brief surge from Hyderabad's Harsh Dagar and Jack Purchase, the Warriors' offensive depth and strong defense kept the Falcons at bay. The Warriors now await their final opponent, having outclassed the Falcons in every aspect of the game.



Ready to Begin Second Innings in Cinema



Rambha, a celebrated actress of the 90s, is all set to make her comeback in the film industry. Known for her charm and acting skills, she ruled Tollywood alongside top heroes, and also made her mark in Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, and even Bollywood. After her marriage, she took a break from the industry, but she has remained a favorite among fans. Now, Rambha believes the time is right for her to return to acting. She expressed that cinema has always been her first love and that she is eager to take on challenging roles. Rambha aims to connect with audiences through meaningful, performance-driven characters and feels that this is the perfect time to make her second innings in the film industry. Fans eagerly await her return!

Shreya Ghoshal Alerts Fans After Her X Account Gets Hacked



Shreya Ghoshal has informed her fans that her X (formerly Twitter) account has been hacked since February 13, 2025. The singer took to Instagram to alert her followers, stating that despite her efforts, she has not been able to regain control of the account. She urged fans not to click on any links or believe any messages from the compromised account, calling them spam and phishing attempts. Sharing a photo, Shreya wrote, "I have tried everything to reach out to the X team, but have received only automated responses. I can't even log in to delete my account. I will update you personally if the account is recovered." In other news, Shreya recently supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Anti-Obesity campaign, encouraging a healthier lifestyle and nutritious food for a fitter India.

'Kannappa' Teaser Released: Manchu Vishnu's Powerful Avatar as a Warrior



The teaser for Manchu Vishnu's upcoming film Kannappa has been released, giving a glimpse of the actor's intense performance. The movie, set to release on April 25, is based on the story of 'Tinnadu,' a great devotee of Lord Shiva, who is ready to sacrifice his two eyes for the deity. In the teaser, we see the character of Kannappa in a warrior-like avatar, filled with valor and devotion. The teaser showcases scenes

of tribal communities, internal conflicts, and Kannappa's transformation from a staunch atheist to a devoted follower of Lord Shiva, which astonishes Goddess Parvati. The film features an ensemble cast, including Akshay Kumar, Mohan Babu, Prabhas, Kajal, and others. The film portrays Kannappa as a heroic figure, moving from physical strength to spiritual devotion. Fans are eagerly awaiting the film's release.

Oscars 2025: Box Office Performance of Best Picture Nominees

The box office performance of the 2025 Oscar nominees for Best Picture has shown a mixed bag of commercial success, with some films performing exceptionally well while others struggle. Dune: Part Two has emerged as a major hit, grossing \$283 million domestically and \$715 million worldwide, thanks to its star-studded cast and visually captivating storyline. Similarly, Wicked, starring Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo, has earned \$466 million domestically and \$710 million globally, showcasing its broad appeal. However, not all nominees have fared equally well. The Brutalist, despite securing 10 Oscar nominations, has earned only \$6 million do-

mestically, while Emilia Perez garnered 13 nominations but made a modest \$15.4 million domestically and \$30.7 million worldwide. Films like I'm Still Here and Nickel Boys have had disappointing box office returns, grossing just \$162,000 and \$1.1 million domestically, respectively. Despite these underwhelming earnings, both films secured nominations, highlighting the Academy's focus on quality over commercial performance. While some films, like A Complete Unknown and Conclave, have found moderate success, the overall trend shows that box office performance doesn't always correlate with Oscar recognition, as the Academy prioritizes cinematic artistry.



What's Streaming

Dabba Cartel – Netflix



This gripping series follows five middle-class women whose small-time dabba business spirals out of control when they get entangled with a drug syndicate. The action-packed drama explores their secret lives and the lengths they'll go to for survival. The cast includes Jyothika, Lillete Dubey, Shabana Azmi, and Gajraj Rao.

House of David – Prime Video



This American historical drama, directed by Jon Erwin, tells the Biblical story of how David (Michael Iskander), a shepherd boy and musician in King Saul's court (Ali Suliman), defeats Goliath (Martyn Ford) and becomes the king of Israel, anointed by the prophet Samuel (Stephen Lang).



Suzhal: The Vortex Season 2 – Prime Video



Created by Pushkar and Gayatri, this season of Suzhal: The Vortex is set against the backdrop of the Ashtakaali Festival. It unravels a murder mystery that shakes a small village in Tamil Nadu. The investigation into the murder of activist and lawyer Chellappa leads to a tangled web of lies, conspiracy, and death.

Running Point – Netflix

Isla Gordon is appointed president of the Los Angeles Waves, a prestigious basketball franchise, after a scandal forces her brother to resign. In the unpredictable, male-dominated world of sports, Isla must prove she's the right choice for the job while navigating family dynamics.