



## Gorantla Madhav Remanded for 14 Days in Assault Case

TPN Correspondent | Guntur

Former MP Gorantla Madhav has been remanded to judicial custody for 14 days by the Guntur District Court in connection with a violent incident involving obstruction of police duties and assault on an accused in custody. As per the court orders, Madhav and five others arrested along with him were shifted to Nellore district jail on Thursday. According to Guntur SP Satish Kumar, Gorantla Madhav allegedly attacked an accused named Kiran, who was under police custody, in an incident that unfolded with alarming aggression. The SP stated that Madhav, along with his followers, blocked a police vehicle at Chuttugunta and proceeded to attack the accused and even the SP's office, actions that are considered serious criminal offenses. The police registered a non-bailable case against the former MP under charges of criminal assault, obstruction of duty, and misbehavior towards police officials. SP Satish Kumar condemned Madhav's actions, labeling them a blatant attack on law enforcement. Meanwhile, Madhav refused to appear before the media, reportedly expressing anger and questioning whether a former MP should be paraded publicly. His arrest and subsequent behavior have drawn sharp criticism from several quarters, with questions being raised about the abuse of political influence and disrespect towards law enforcement. The court has scheduled the next hearing on April 24, and further investigation is underway. The police have confirmed that no leniency will be shown, and strict action will be taken against anyone who attempts to interfere with justice.

# CM Offers Silk Clothes at Vontimitta Temple, Attends Sita Rama Kalyanam



TPN Correspondent | Kadapa

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and his wife participated in the grand Sita Rama Kalyanam held at the Sri Kodanda Rama Swamy Temple in Vontimitta, Kadapa district, on the occasion of Sri Rama Navami. On behalf of the government, the couple presented silk clothes and pearl thalambras to the presiding deity, Sri Seetha Ramachandra Murthy, continuing a

time-honored tradition of devotion and respect. The CM and his wife, who flew in from Vijayawada to Kadapa Airport, reached Vontimitta by road and took part in the ceremonial offerings. After the presentation of the silk clothes, prasadam was offered to the Chief Minister and his spouse, and Vedic scholars blessed them during the sacred proceedings. The event witnessed the participation of TTD Board

Chairman B.R. Naidu, EO Shyamala Rao, Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy, along with several MLAs, MPs, ministers, and senior officials. A massive gathering of devotees from across the state assembled to witness the celestial wedding. In view of the turnout, the TTD and Endowments Department made elaborate arrangements for the devotees, ensuring smooth conduct of the ceremony with tight security in place.

CM Chandrababu and his wife are staying overnight at the local TTD guest house in Vontimitta. As per the schedule, they will leave for Kadapa Airport at 9:00 AM on Saturday and from there, return to Vijayawada by a special flight. Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister also visited Vadlamani village in Agiripalli mandal, Eluru district, where he interacted with various sections of people and enquired about their issues.



- CM and wife present silk clothes, pearl thalambras to Lord Sri Seetha Ramachandra Murthy
- Participate in the divine wedding ceremony at Sri Kodanda Rama Swamy temple
- Chandrababu to stay overnight at Vontimitta, returns to Vijayawada on Saturday morning



## BJP Finalises Alliance with AIADMK in Tamil Nadu: Amit Shah Confident of Big Win

BJP-AIADMK alliance aims to repeat 30-seat success in Tamil Nadu

TPN Correspondent | Chennai

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has officially announced that the BJP has finalised its alliance with the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Speaking at a high-level meeting in Chennai, Amit Shah highlighted the historical strength of the BJP-AIADMK partnership and expressed strong confidence that the NDA alliance would win the next elections with a huge majority. Reminding the public of past electoral achievements, Shah said, "When BJP and AIADMK fought together, we won 30 Lok Sabha seats in Tamil Nadu. That history will repeat, and this alliance will once again emerge

victorious with the people's blessings." Describing the BJP-AIADMK alliance as a "game changer", Amit Shah praised the leadership of both parties and stated that their combined efforts would bring development, stability, and national integration to Tamil Nadu. "The people of Tamil Nadu are looking for change — and the NDA will be the face of that change," he said. With this development, the BJP has strengthened its southern strategy ahead of the general elections, especially in a politically significant state like Tamil Nadu where regional parties dominate. The seat-sharing formula and joint campaign schedule are expected to be revealed in the coming days.

## "I Won Where I Once Lost – With the Blessings of Mangalagiri" - Lokesh



- Minister Lokesh distributes house titles to 1,030 poor families
- Announces LEAP School and 100-bed government hospital for Mangalagiri

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# TTD Condemns False Rumours on Cow Deaths in Tirumala Goshala

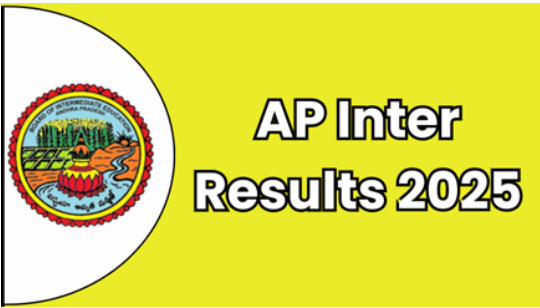


TPN Correspondent | Tirumala

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has strongly denied allegations circulating on social media regarding the death of hundreds of cows in its goshala at Tirumala. In an official statement issued on Friday, the TTD condemned the reports as completely baseless and malicious, asserting that the photos being shared online are not related to their premises. TTD clarified that its organization is committed to the welfare and care of animals, and such false propaganda is an attempt to hurt the sentiments of devotees and mislead the public. "We request all devotees and the general public not to believe or propagate these rumours," the statement said.

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## AP Inter Results to be Released on April 12th - Minister Nara Lokesh Announces

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh has officially announced that the Andhra Pradesh Intermediate Public Examination (IPE) results for both first and second years will be released on Saturday, April 12, at 11:00 AM. This much-awaited update comes as a relief to over 10 lakh students who appeared for the exams this year and have been anxiously awaiting their results. Students can check their results online by visiting the official Board of Intermediate Education website: <https://resultsbie.ap.gov.in>. In a tech-friendly move, Minister Lokesh also introduced a WhatsApp service to make result-checking more accessible. Students can simply send a "Hi" message to 9552300009 to receive their marks directly. Speaking to reporters, the minister emphasized the transparency and efficiency of the result release system this year, ensuring that students and parents can access accurate information without delay. The move is part of a broader effort by the Education Department to leverage digital tools for student services, including exam results, admissions, and academic queries. The minister also extended his best wishes to all the students and urged them to look ahead positively, regardless of the results, reminding them that this is just one step in their academic journey.

## Centre Sanctions ₹43.22 Crore to Develop DIET Colleges in AP



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

The Central Government has approved ₹43.22 crore for the development of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) colleges in Visakhapatnam, Guntur, and Nellore districts, announced B. Srinivasa Rao, State Project Director of Samagra Shiksha, on Friday. This funding is part of the second phase of the initiative aimed at transforming these institutions into Centres of Excellence. The upgradation includes the creation of modern infrastructure, deployment of advanced technological tools, and academic enhancements to strengthen teacher training and educational quality in the state. Srinivasa Rao stated that the ultimate objective is to develop all 13 DIETs across Andhra Pradesh into Centres of Excellence by the year 2028, ensuring uniformity in quality teacher education and institutional standards. The move is expected to significantly improve pre-service and in-service training for teachers and enhance the overall learning ecosystem.

# CM Naidu Calls on the Wealthy to Uplift the Poor through 'Margadarsi-Bangaru Kutumbam'

- CM urges top 10% of earners to support 20% downtrodden in society
- Inaugurates welfare outreach on Jyothirao Phule's birth anniversary in Agiripalli
- Prominent donors pledge over ₹25 crore for housing, education, and livelihoods

TPN Correspondent | Eluru Dist

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Friday reiterated his appeal to the wealthiest 10 per cent of society to extend direct and long-term support to the most underprivileged 20 per cent, stating it as the path to reducing economic inequalities. He made the call while launching the Margadarsi-Bangaru Kutumbam programme at Agiripalli, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Jyothirao Phule. "If the children from Bangaru Kutumbams (Golden Families) are properly supported, they will grow into Margadarsis (Pioneers)," the CM said, emphasizing his government's commitment to social upliftment. He announced that the programme's first phase aims to improve the lives of 20 lakh families across the state. The CM honoured philanthropists and individuals who came forward to adopt families and provide assistance. "Margadarsis are not doing this for political gain, but for goodwill and societal respect," he remarked, adding that the initiative encourages people to rise be-



yond personal success and strive for greater societal impact. Two women from Bangaru Kutum-

bams—Pyari Reshma, whose husband works as a driver, and Bonam Lakshmi Durga, a widowed dai-

ly-wage earner—shared their hardships. Responding immediately, the CM assured them of monthly pensions, 12-month arrears, housing, and livelihood assistance.

**Leading industrialists stepped up as Margadarsis:**

- **Prabhakar (Nuzvid Seeds)** pledged ₹20-25 crore over five years.
- **Siddhartha (Kusalava Group)** will build homes and sponsor education.
- **Gowtham (Happy Valley School)** provides free education to 300 students.
- **Nitin Krishna (Nitin Sai Constructions)** promised jobs to skilled youth.
- **Dhana Prakash (Model Dairy)** supports 1,000 students via Hill School.
- **Ravi Venkat Rao (NRI Engineering College)** vowed to adopt more families.

The Chief Minister called the programme a unique model of inclusive development, aiming to inspire collective action for societal transformation.



## GO 16 on Banakacharla Project Sparks Row Between AP and Telangana

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

A fresh row has erupted between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana over the Banakacharla Project, with the Telangana government strongly objecting to the issuance of GO 16 by the AP government regarding the Godavari-Banakacharla water linkage. The controversial project, aimed at diverting Godavari river water to meet the needs of Rayalaseema and other regions in AP, has been a point of contention since its proposal. In a swift reaction, the Telangana government has written a formal letter to the Godavari River Management Board (GRMB) and the Polavaram Authority, urging them to intervene and prevent AP from going ahead with the project. The letter included a copy of GO 16 and highlighted Telangana's concern that such unilateral actions by AP could violate interstate water-sharing norms and cause long-term injustice to Telangana's rightful share

of Godavari water. The Telangana government has alleged that the Banakacharla linkage, if executed, could drastically affect water availability for its regions, particularly in the backdrop of previous disputes over Krishna and Godavari allocations. CM Revanth Reddy has already taken up the issue at the national level by bringing it to the notice of the Union Jal Shakti Minister, seeking the Centre's intervention to halt the AP government's progress on the project. Both states have earlier made their arguments before the Godavari Board, but with the issuance of this GO, tensions have resurfaced. Telangana maintains that any new inter-basin water diversion requires the consent of both states and the approval of the central authorities, which it claims has not been obtained in this case. The matter is likely to be escalated further, with Telangana expected to push for a review of AP's actions in the upcoming GRMB meeting.

## Minister Narayana Praises ALEAP Startups for Urban Innovation



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development Ponguru Narayana lauded the entrepreneurial spirit and innovation of women-led startups during his visit to the ALEAP Industrial Estate Office at Pragathi Nagar, Hyderabad, on Friday. The Minister interacted with 30 startups incubated under AIC ALEAP WE-HUB, supported by the Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog. The startups presented cutting-edge solutions to address key urban and municipal challenges. Notable among them was Autocracy Machinery Pvt Ltd, founded by Santhoshi, which manufactures machines for clearing water hyacinth from water bodies. 9Nutz Millets Pvt Ltd, led by Keerthana, showcased high-protein millet-based bars and cookies aimed at improving urban nutrition. Sustech Innovations Pvt Ltd, founded by Vijaya Kumari, demonstrated power optimization devices that offer energy efficiency solutions for urban infrastructure. K Rama Devi, President of ALEAP and CEO of AIC ALEAP WE-HUB, emphasized the role of the incubation centre in empowering women

entrepreneurs. "Over 200 startups have been supported nationally and internationally, and several of them are on the verge of becoming unicorns," she stated. A product exhibition and an open interaction session followed, where the Minister personally encouraged the entrepreneurs. ALEAP Managing Committee members including Tripurambha, Maha Lakshmi, Jyothi Rao, Padmavathi, and Annapurna briefed the Minister on the various ongoing initiatives across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Senior officials present included Sri Tej Bharat (Mission Director, MEPMA), NNR Srinivas (State Mission Manager, MEPMA), Gopi Krishna (CE, APIIC), Sudarshan (ED, AP MSME), and Ekambaram (Head, Deloitte - AP & Telangana). Speaking to the media, Minister Narayana praised ALEAP's commitment to fostering women-led innovation and assured support. "I've witnessed several innovative products developed here on Friday. We will ensure that select startups are given opportunities to work with the Urban Development and Municipal Administration Department of Andhra Pradesh," he said.

## "I Won Where I Once Lost – With the Blessings of

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Minister for Education, IT, and Electronics Nara Lokesh delivered a spirited speech on Friday while launching the 'Mana Illu- Mana Lokesh' program in Mangalagiri. During the fourth day of the program, Minister Lokesh distributed permanent house titles to 1,030 beneficiaries from Ratnalacheruvu and Mahanadu areas of Tadepalli. Speaking to the people, Lokesh hit back at critics who previously mocked him for losing from Mangalagiri in 2019. "They insulted Chandrababu Naidu saying he couldn't get his son elected. But I worked for the people, not for politics, and today I stand victorious from the same

constituency," he said. Lokesh expressed gratitude to the people who elected him with a majority of 91,000 votes, saying they had increased his responsibility and trust. The Minister said the government is focused on delivering corruption-free governance and inclusive development. "We are distributing over ₹1,000 crore worth of assets in the form of house titles to the people of Mangalagiri," he announced.

**Lokesh also made a series of development promises for the constituency, including:**

- **The establishment of Andhra Pradesh's first government LEAP**

- **school (Learning Excellence in Andhra Pradesh) in Mangalagiri**
- **The laying of the foundation stone for a 100-bed government hospital on April 13**
- **Fulfillment of all election promises under the NDA alliance, which he said is delivering systematically**

He noted that even while in the opposition, 26 welfare programs were implemented in Mangalagiri at his personal expense. "If that was possible from opposition, imagine what we will do now," he declared. Minister Lokesh closed his speech by calling for collective efforts to make Mangalagiri a model constituency, especially in sectors like education, healthcare, and sanitation.

## TTD Condemns...

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The viral photos, which sparked outrage and concern, were said to be from an unknown location and not associated with the Tirumala cowshed. TTD suspects a deliberate attempt by certain individuals to discredit the temple administration and stir public emotion. However, the issue took a political turn when former TTD Chairman and YSRCP leader Bhumana Karunakar Reddy alleged that more than 100 cows had died due to negligence. He claimed that poor management in the cowshed led to this situation and demanded a thorough inquiry by the current TDP-led coalition government. He also accused the government of attempting to erase the welfare programs introduced by former CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. With the matter gaining traction, all eyes are now on whether the state government will respond with an official investigation or clarification to settle the growing controversy.



# Payakaraopet to Transform Like Vizag, Gajuwaka in 10 Years - Home Minister Anitha

- Bulk drug park and steel plant to drive massive industrial growth in the constituency
- ₹11,000 crore investment expected from bulk drug project alone
- Over ₹1500 crore worth development achieved between 2014–2019

TPN Correspondent | Anakapalli Dist

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha announced that Payakaraopet constituency is set to witness massive development in the coming decade, transforming on par with industrial hubs like Visakhapatnam and Gajuwaka. She said the upcoming bulk drug park and steel plant will serve as major growth engines for the region. Speaking to the media, Anitha stated that the proposed bulk drug park alone is expected to attract investments of up to ₹11,000 crore, creating thousands of direct and indirect job opportunities for the unemployed youth in the region. “This will be a game-changer for Payakaraopet. Along with the steel plant, the entire region will see robust industrial and infrastructure growth,” she asserted. The Home Minister highlighted the efforts made during the pre-

vious term, noting that ₹1,500 crore was spent from 2014 to 2019 on development works across the constituency. “We focused on roads, drinking water, healthcare, and education facilities. Now, with renewed momentum, we’re working towards a long-term vision,” she said. Anitha emphasized that under the leadership of Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and with the support of Industries Minister Nara Lokesh, the constituency is being positioned to become a key industrial corridor on the east coast. “Our youth will no longer have to migrate for jobs. Opportunities will be created right here,” she said. She added that preliminary work on both the bulk drug park and the steel plant is progressing swiftly, and land acquisition and clearance processes are already in motion. The state government is committed to providing all necessary infrastructure support,



including roads, power, and water connectivity to the industrial sites. Anitha reaffirmed her commitment to the people of Payakaraopet, assuring that the next ten years will usher in a new era of prosperity for the region.

## “Such Language from the One Who Made Him CM is Painful”: MP Kalisetti Fires at Jagan

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

TDP MP from Vizianagaram, Kalisetti Appala Naidu, strongly objected to the comments made by YSRCP president and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on TDP Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and the police. Speaking to the media at NTR Bhavan in Hyderabad on Friday, he said that such harsh language from a person who was made Chief Minister by Chandrababu himself is deeply painful and unacceptable. Kalisetti said that Jagan has failed to uphold his responsibility towards the people and the Telugu Desam Party, which once gave him the political foundation. He criticized Jagan for resorting to foul comments out of fear and jealousy, adding that while Chief Ministers of various states are describing Chandrababu as a symbol of trust and development, Jagan is busy spreading chaos. The MP remarked that Jagan’s latest statements are akin to demons chanting the Vedas. He said the people’s verdict in the recent elections is proof of their discontent with the YSRCP. Women and youth came out in huge num-



bers and gave the NDA a massive majority, he pointed out. Appala Naidu also expressed anguish that even senior officials like a former DGP had to bow down during the YSRCP regime. He emphasized that Jagan’s irresponsible politics are being noticed by the public and questioned how a former CM could belittle institutions like the police. He concluded that while the Center is supporting Andhra Pradesh’s progress, Jagan is creating unrest in the state and conveniently escaping to Bangalore, leaving behind political disorder.

## BJP Bhanuprakash Reddy Fires on YCP, Defends TTD Amidst Allegations

TPN Correspondent | Tirupati

TTD Governing Council Member Bhanuprakash Reddy came down heavily on the YSRCP at a media conference held in Tirupati, accusing the party of degrading political values and misusing temple administration during its regime. He alleged that the YSRCP’s politics revolve around false narratives and family dominance, pushing aside institutional integrity. Reacting strongly to recent statements by YSRCP leader Karunakar Reddy, Bhanuprakash challenged him to visit the TTD cowshed to verify facts. “If what you said is false, will you quit politics?” he asked, slamming the YSRCP for making baseless claims about cow deaths and mismanagement in the religious domain. He clarified that 1,768 cows are currently housed in the TTD cowshed and are being provided sufficient nutrition. He added that a few deaths occurred due to health reasons, not negligence, and noted that TTD Vigilance is probing a recent incident involving a cow’s death on the railway track. Bhanuprakash further accused the previous YSRCP government of misusing TTD funds, claiming ₹1,100 crore were diverted by converting them into state bonds. “YSRCP acted against temple regulations and tried to control the sys-



tem for political gains,” he said. He condemned the false propaganda surrounding laddu sales and rejected allegations against him personally. “When YSRCP was in power, they couldn’t act against me. Now they’re trying to defame me with daily press conferences,” he lashed out. Highlighting TTD’s spiritual initiatives, Bhanuprakash said it was the TDP government that initiated Go Puja and Go Tulabharam in 2015, projects which were sidelined by the YSRCP. “We will not hesitate to file cases against those spreading lies about TTD,” he warned. Taking a jibe at Karunakar Reddy, he added, “Do you even remember Pawan Kalyan? You should wear his garland now.” He concluded by urging political opponents to engage responsibly and not treat rivals as enemies.

## Neglect of Sacred Cows in TTD: Bhumana Slams Chandrababu-Pawan Govt



TPN Correspondent | Tirupati

Former TTD Chairman and YSRCP leader Bhumana Karunakar Reddy launched a scathing attack on the Andhra Pradesh government, accusing it of committing a grave sin by neglecting the well-being of cows in the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) cowshed. Addressing the media, he alleged that over 100 cows had died in the last three months alone due to government indifference and lack of monitoring. Bhumana criticized Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan for concealing the deaths and claimed that sacred cows are being treated like garbage. “Mother Cow, who once served Sri Venkateswara, is on Friday in distress under this regime. There is no proper supervision, and some TTD officials are busy doing Udigam for state

leaders,” he said. He revealed that during the previous YSRCP rule, the TTD cowshed had collected 1,500 liters of milk daily, while now it struggles to produce even 500 liters. He shared the shocking incident of a Sahiwal cow, said to be special and pregnant, escaping the cowshed due to overfeeding and later dying on a railway track. “Her ear tag was allegedly cut to hide that she belonged to TTD,” he alleged. Bhumana recounted the efforts made during the YSRCP regime to safeguard indigenous cows, establish a breeding center, and manufacture cow-based products. He questioned the moral standing of the current rulers and urged the public to protest against the neglect. “Can those who fail to protect the cow’s dharma protect Govinda’s dharma?” he asked.

## "They Are Trying to Intimidate Me": Jogi Ramesh After CID Inquiry

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Former Minister and YSRCP leader Jogi Ramesh on Friday responded strongly after appearing before the CID in connection with the case related to the attack on the residence of TDP chief N. Chandrababu Naidu. Speaking to the media after the inquiry, Jogi Ramesh alleged that attempts were being made to intimidate him politically. Jogi Ramesh, along with five others, was summoned by the CID in the ongoing investigation into the incident that took place during the peak of political tensions last year. Refuting all allegations, he stated, “I have never made any mistakes or blunders. I



am a disciple of YSR, and I will always stand for what is right.” He further claimed that the investigation is politically motivated and that he is being targeted for being a vocal critic. “Justice is on our side. What more can we do? I have complete faith in the legal system,” he added, asserting that he would fully cooperate with the law. Ramesh reiterated that he had no role in the incident and emphasized that he has always adhered to democratic values. “I’m not afraid. These kinds of inquiries won’t silence me. This is nothing but an attempt to create fear. But I’m here to say that I will not back down,” he declared. The CID is continuing its probe into the incident that led to damage at the former Chief Minister’s residence, and further inquiries are expected in the coming days.

## Former Minister Perni Nani Responds to Chandrababu’s Comments



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

Former Minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) hit back at Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu’s recent comments, stating that the CM behaved insensitively during Jagan Mohan Reddy’s visit to console the family of a victim. Speaking to the media on Friday, Nani alleged that Chandrababu “slammed the cans” — a colloquial expression implying that the CM went on a political tirade instead of showing empathy. “While Jagan went with a humane approach to offer courage to the grieving family, Chandrababu chose that moment to make political noise,” Nani criticized, accusing the Chief Minister of politicizing every situation for personal mileage.

He further claimed that YSRCP chief Jagan Mohan Reddy’s tour of Anantapur district, though intended to rally support and offer assurance to party cadres and citizens, ultimately failed to make an impact. “The people are not responding the way Jagan expected. The tour has not served its purpose,” Nani said. Perni Nani asserted that the public is watching everything closely and is well aware of who is genuinely working for their welfare. He also alleged that the ruling government is trying to suppress opposition voices through diversionary tactics. The political temperature in Andhra Pradesh continues to rise as leaders from both sides exchange sharp criticisms in the lead-up to the general elections.





# Minister Nara Lokesh Vows Rapid Development for Mangalagiri on War Footing

600 house pattas distributed under ‘Mana Illu–Mana Lokesh’; 3,200 families to benefit in Phase-1  
Foundation for 100-bed government hospital to be laid on April 13  
International-standard school to be developed under LEAP in 50 days

**TPN Correspondent | Amaravati**  
HRD and IT Minister Nara Lokesh reaffirmed his unwavering commitment to Mangalagiri’s rapid development, promising that every special assurance made will be fulfilled. Addressing a packed gathering at Don Bosco School as part of the Mana Illu–Mana Lokesh program, Lokesh handed over permanent house pattas to 600 beneficiaries from Ratnalacheruvu. He began the event by paying tributes to Mahatma Jyothirao Phule on his birth anniversary. Reflecting on his political journey, Lokesh recalled his 2019 defeat in Mangalagiri, which

he said deepened his bond with the people. “Even in opposition, I brought you NTR Sanjeevani clinics, distributed free medicines, sewing machines, and organized employment and sports initiatives,” he said. Lokesh proudly noted his 2024 victory with a record 91,000-vote majority, calling it his “mountain of strength.” Announcing major infrastructure projects, he declared that Mangalagiri will get its first 100-bed government hospital, with the foundation stone being laid on April 13 and completion targeted within a year. Major civic works including under-

ground drainage, water pipelines, gas, and power lines will commence in June and July. Lokesh also launched free bus services connecting Panakala Swamy Temple and AIIMS, easing transport for locals and pilgrims. On housing, he announced that 3,200 families are receiving permanent pattas in Phase-1, with patta values nearing ₹1,000 crore. These will become fully marketable in two years, fulfilling the long-awaited dream of residents living on government and endowment lands. As Education Minister, Lokesh introduced the LEAP (Learning Excellence



in Andhra Pradesh) initiative, under which Mangalagiri’s first international-standard school will be transformed within 50 days. Promising transparency and account-

ability, Lokesh said several Super Six guarantees would be fulfilled in May, adding, “I will never betray the trust you have placed in me.”

## AP Govt Leads Inclusive Education Drive with National Autism Workshop

Workshop held in Vijayawada to strengthen Autism Centres across AP  
Over 89,000 CWSN to benefit under Samagra Shiksha initiative  
National experts, educators, and NGOs participate for collaborative solutions

**TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada**  
The State Government, through Samagra Shiksha, organized a national-level workshop on autism at the SALT building in Vijayawada, reaffirming its commitment to inclusive education and the holistic development of Children with Special Needs (CWSN). B. Srinivasa Rao, IAS, State Project Director of Samagra Shiksha, addressed the gathering and emphasized the goal of developing Autism Centres that would benefit approximately 89,000 CWSN across Andhra Pradesh. He called for collaborative efforts among government bodies, medical experts, educators,

and NGOs to implement innovative practices effectively. A. Sreeja, Economic Adviser to the Ministry of Education, joined the workshop virtually and lauded the state’s successful integration of 679 Bhavita Centres into mainstream schools under the inclusive education component of Samagra Shiksha. She also highlighted the NEP 2020’s emphasis on equitable access to education and encouraged partnerships for teacher training with premier national institutions.

Special educators who completed Google-supported digital training were felicitated with certificates of appreciation,

including P. Sunil (Vizianagaram), B. Mahalaxmi Naidu (Anakapalli), and Dr. Y. Narasimham, IE Consultant for Samagra Shiksha.

Experts and dignitaries from renowned institutions like AIIMS Mangalagiri, NIMHANS Bengaluru, NCERT New Delhi, NIEPID Secunderabad, JIPMER Puducherry, and SCERT attended the event. Panel discussions focused on innovative strategies, digital tools, and awareness campaigns aimed at strengthening support systems for children with autism and promoting inclusive learning environments throughout the state.

## SRM University-AP Celebrates 9<sup>th</sup> Research Day with Innovation and Recognition

**TPN Correspondent | Amaravati**  
SRM University-AP hosted the ninth edition of its flagship Research Day, celebrating innovation, academic excellence, and interdisciplinary collaboration. The event was graced by Prof. Ashok K. Ganguli, Director of IISER Berhampur, Odisha, as chief guest, along with Vice Chancellor Prof. Manoj K. Arora, Registrar Dr. R. Premkumar, Dean-Research Prof. Ranjit Thapa, and other senior faculty and staff. In his address, Prof. Arora emphasized Research Day as a key platform to nurture innovative student ideas that can bring meaningful societal change. He also announced SRM AP’s proposed involvement in the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub to be established in Amaravati. Commending SRM AP’s research environment, Prof. Ganguli noted the faculty’s international academic exposure and urged the university to continue fostering creative, interdisciplinary



research in emerging domains like Artificial Intelligence. The event saw the release of an abstract book comprising 394 research works—263 from UG/PG students and 131 from PhD scholars, covering over 30 thematic areas. In recognition of academic excellence, 17 gold and 5 silver medals were awarded in the UG/PG category, while 10 gold and 5 silver medals were presented in the PhD category. The university also honoured top faculty researchers with Best Researcher Awards, each carrying a cash prize of ₹50,000. Awardees included Dr. Pardha Saradhi M (Experimental Research), Dr. Murali Krishna E (Theoretical Research), Dr. Dinesh Reddy V (Industrial Research), and Dr. Harish Puppala (Young Researcher). The event concluded with SRM AP reaffirming its commitment to globally connected, impactful research and its vision of transforming students into pioneers of innovation.

## Case Registered in Nandigama Over Dispute in Cash Transactions

**TPN Correspondent | Nandigama**  
The Nandigama Town Police registered a case following a complaint by a woman who alleged harassment and a dispute over financial transactions linked to her late father’s compensation. The complainant, Aparna of Rythu Peta in Nandigama town, stated that her father, who was working in the electrical department, had passed away recently. According to Aparna, following her father’s demise, a man named Siddaiah, an employee of the R&B department, received monetary compensation and handed it over to his followers instead of the rightful family. She claimed that only half of the amount was eventually returned to her. A conflict reportedly erupted over the remaining



balance, leading to an altercation at Aparna’s residence. She alleged that Siddaiah’s followers came to her house and created a ruckus, sparking fear and tension. Acting on her complaint, the police registered a case under Sections 329 (causing grievous hurt to extort property), 351 (assault), and 115 (abetment) of the Indian Penal Code. Town Circle Inspector Naidu confirmed that an investigation has been launched and assured that appropriate legal action will follow based on evidence gathered. The incident has raised concerns about the handling of departmental benefits after the death of government employees and has prompted calls for transparent procedures to ensure rightful heirs receive due compensation.

## Minister Satyakumar Assures Support for Journalists at APUWJ State Conference

**TPN Correspondent | Ongole**  
State Health Minister Satyakumar extended his best wishes for the Andhra Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ) state conferences scheduled to be held in Ongole. During his visit to the town on Friday, an APUWJ delegation met the minister and formally invited him to attend the upcoming conferences and deliver a message to the journalist community. In response, Minister Satyakumar expressed his respect and solidarity with journalists, affirming his participation in the conferences. He acknowledged that many journalists are facing challenges accessing medical services through their health cards and assured that he would personally speak to corporate hospitals to ensure that existing cards are honoured. He also pledged to facilitate the issuance of new health cards to eligible journalists across the state. Recalling the 50% railway concession that journalists enjoyed in the past, the minister said he would take up the issue with the Union Railway Minister to explore the possibility of its restoration. Satyakumar reaffirmed his ongoing involvement with APUWJ meetings and reiterated his intent to remain proactive in addressing jour-

nalists’ concerns. He noted that the government would work towards enabling quality medical services through corporate tie-ups and policy improvements. Later, Ongole MLA Damacherla Janardhan also



expressed his support for the successful conduct of the APUWJ state conferences and promised necessary assistance. Prominent media representatives who participated in the meeting included APUWJ District Secretary Dasari Kanakaiah, State Executive Member Alugulu Suresh, Council Member Betala Srinivasa Rao, AP Electronic Media District President Bandapalli Venkat Rao, Cameramen Association Union Vice President Bhasha, District Organizing Secretary Murali, and Photo Journalists Association Leader Sarveswara Rao.

## Gannavaram to Become No. 1 in State - MLA Yarlagadda Venkat Rao

**TPN Correspondent | Gannavaram**  
Government Whip and Gannavaram MLA Yarlagadda Venkat Rao has vowed to transform the Gannavaram constituency into the number one in Andhra Pradesh in terms of development, public welfare, and safety. Addressing the public after launching several development works in Gannavaram town on Friday evening, Venkat Rao said the constituency has finally found peace after the coalition government’s victory, ending years of what he termed “anarchy and irregularities.” Reaffirming his commitment to the people, the MLA said he is giving top

priority to public safety and focusing on the rapid implementation of the Super Six election promises. He added that industries would soon be set up in the Mallavalli Industrial Estate, creating local employment. “I have promised jobs to 15,000 people during the election campaign, and I am working diligently to fulfill that promise,” he stated. Venkat Rao also inaugurated several civic and religious infrastructure projects, built at a total cost of ₹1.80 crore, funded by the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme, Gram Panchayat, and Mandal Parishad. These included:



- Bazaar Road at Sri Lakshmi Tirupathamma Talli Temple, Old Gannavaram
- Roads in Chenchula Colony, Venus

- Road, and Srinagar Colony
- Prahari Wall at the Mandal Office
- Unveiling of NTR’s statue on NTR Road in Yarlagadda Rayanagar

The MLA also inaugurated the newly developed Reach Road and interacted with the public at his office, immediately calling concerned officials to resolve their grievances on the spot. The event was attended by TDP State Secretary Donthu Chinna, Mandal Parishad Vice President Kommaraaju Sudheer, MPTCs Maddineni Venkateswara Rao and Padamata Ranga Rao, Village Sarpanch Nidamarthi Soujanya, Krishna Milk Union Director Paladugu Nani, and local leaders including Jasti Sridhar, Jasti Phani, Devineni Sulochana, and officials from the Panchayat Raj department.



## Dy CM Pawan Kalyan welcomes BJP-AIADMK alliance in Tamil Nadu

**TPN Correspondent | Amaravati**  
Janasena Party President and Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has extended his congratulations to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) for forging an alliance to contest the upcoming general elections in Tamil Nadu. Describing the development as a positive and welcome step, Pawan Kalyan said the alliance would pave the way for strong governance and progress in the state. In a release on Friday, Pawan Kalyan also congratulated senior AIADMK leader and former Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami, whose name has been announced as the Chief Ministerial candidate of the alliance. “The BJP-AIADMK alliance has taken a wise decision by choosing a leader with vast administrative experience to lead the charge,” he said. Pawan Kalyan said that development in states like Tamil Nadu can be achieved ef-

fectively under the policies of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. “The people of Tamil Nadu will certainly benefit from the NDA’s vision and governance strategies,” he noted. Highlighting the significance of experienced leadership, the Janasena chief remarked that assigning responsibilities to proven administrators sends a strong message of confidence to the people. “I congratulate Edapadi K. Palaniswami and wish the alliance great success in the forthcoming elections,” he said. Pawan Kalyan, who played a crucial role in the NDA’s strong comeback in Andhra Pradesh, continues to be a key supporter of the BJP-led alliance in southern India. His latest remarks underline his commitment to regional cooperation and strengthening the NDA’s footprint across states. The BJP-AIADMK alliance is expected to present a formidable challenge in Tamil Nadu, where regional parties have histor-



ically dominated the political landscape. With the announcement of a joint campaign and a common candidate for the chief minister’s post, the alliance aims to consolidate votes and bring about a shift in the state’s political dynamics.

## Journalists Protest in Vizianagaram Over Attacks, Arrests, and Press Freedom Suppression

**TPN Correspondent | Vizianagaram**  
Journalist associations and newspaper editors across Vizianagaram district have strongly condemned the recent police cases filed against journalists, including Sakshi newspaper editor Dhananjay Reddy, calling it a deliberate attempt to suppress freedom of the press. The protest, held on Friday at Gandhibomma near the Collectorate, witnessed a significant turnout of journalists demanding the government stop the increasing attacks and harassment of media personnel. The protest was organized following the filing of criminal cases against those who reported on the murder of a YSRCP worker in Palnadu, allegedly by TDP supporters. Protesters claimed that journalists are being targeted after revealing facts, and such actions represent a growing threat to press freedom since the coalition government came to power. Raising slogans and holding placards, journalists demanded an immediate end to illegal arrests and intimidatory tactics,



warning that they would not remain silent if press freedom continues to be curtailed. A petition was submitted to Joint Collector Sethu Madhavan, requesting the issue be brought to the attention of the state government. The JC assured them that their concerns would be forwarded promptly.

**Several journalist leaders and editors expressed their outrage:**

- VSSV Prasad, State Secretary of APUWJ, warned that if the government doesn’t stop filing criminal cases in an attempt to silence the press, state-wide united protests would intensify.
  - Panchadi Apparao, Editor of Power Daily, said: “Condemnations are enough if any news is inaccurate. Filing criminal cases is a dangerous precedent.”
  - Kolluri Jagannadha Sharma, Editor of Akshara Keratam Telugu Daily, lamented that press freedom is shrinking, with cases being registered against one media house after another.
- The protest saw the participation of APUWJ President Allu Suribabu, General Secretary MSNJ, APWJF District President K. Ramesh Naidu, Sakshi TV District Bureau Chief Allu Yugandhar, and other local media representatives. They affirmed that the press cannot be silenced by coercion and that the media’s role in democracy must be safeguarded at all costs.

## Mahatma Jyothirao Phule Jayanti Celebrated with Grandeur in Nellore

**TPN Correspondent | Nellore**  
The birth anniversary of Mahatma Jyothirao Phule was celebrated in grand style on Friday in Nellore, with several dignitaries and community leaders participating in the commemorative events. The program was held at the Phule Bomma Center in Balajinagar, where a large gathering paid their respects to the social reformer and his wife. State Endowments Minister Anam Rama Narayana Reddy, Sarvepalli MLA Somireddy Chandramohan Reddy, District Collector Anand, and Joint Collector Karthik led the tributes by garlanding the statues of the Phule couple, honoring their contributions to the upliftment of marginalized communities. Addressing the gathering, Minister Anam praised Jyothirao Phule as a visionary leader who relentlessly worked for the rights and education of the weaker sections. He emphasized that Phule’s legacy



should continue to inspire efforts toward social justice and empowerment. MLA Somireddy echoed similar sentiments, describing Phule as a pioneer in social reform who stood firmly against social discrimination. He called upon youth and public representatives to walk in Phule’s footsteps and actively contribute to the upliftment of the backward classes. Prominent BC Sangha leaders, community members, and officials participated in the event, highlighting Phule’s unwavering fight for education, equality, and dignity for the oppressed. The program concluded with a call for unity and continued efforts to uphold Phule’s ideals in modern society.

## Golden Crowns Worth ₹6.60 Cr Offered to Sri Sitarama Lakshmana in Ontimitta

**TPN Correspondent | YSR Kadapa Dist**  
In a grand spiritual gesture, three golden crowns studded with diamonds and weighing 7 kilograms were donated to Sri Sitarama Lakshmana Swamy at the historic Ontimitta temple in YSR Kadapa district. The crowns, valued at a total of ₹6.60 crores, were offered by Penna Cements Chairman Sri P. Pratap Reddy and his family. The newly crafted crowns were formally handed over to TTD Chairman Sri B.R. Naidu and Executive Officer Sri J. Shyamala Rao at the temple premises. The presentation marked a significant moment for devotees and temple authorities, as the crowns enhance the spiritual and aesthetic aura of the ancient shrine dedicated to Lord Rama. Following the handover, special poojas and rituals were performed in the presence of temple priests and officials. The divine crowns were then

ceremoniously adorned on Sri Sitarama and Lakshmana Swamy, amid Vedic chants and devotional fervor. Devotees and temple staff witnessed the event with reverence, as the divine siblings were decorated with the exquisite ornaments, symbolizing the donors’ deep devotion and commitment to dharma. The gesture by the Penna Group is being widely appreciated by devotees and religious leaders alike. The Ontimitta temple, known for its architectural beauty and spiritual significance, continues to attract pilgrims from across the state and beyond. This latest contribution adds to the temple’s rich cultural and devotional heritage.



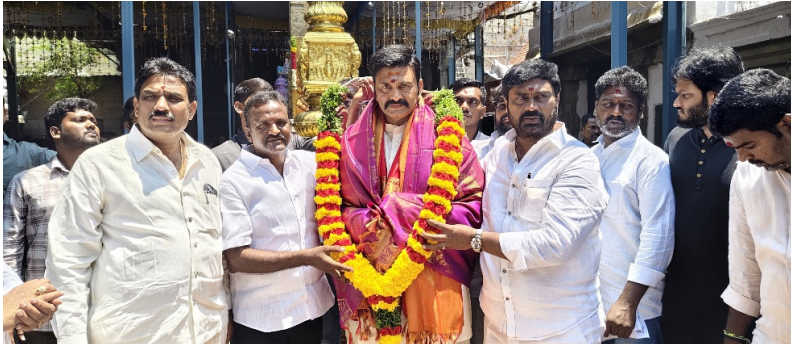
## Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar Appeals for Industrial Push in Constituency



**TPN Correspondent | Eluru**  
Eluru MP Putta Mahesh Kumar has urged Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu to support the industrial development of the Eluru Parliamentary constituency, citing the region’s vast potential and available resources. Speaking at a public meeting during the Zero Poverty-P4 program inauguration held in Agiripalli, Eluru district, the MP pointed out that the high cost of land is discouraging industrialists from investing in the area. He appealed to the Chief Minister to facilitate the allocation of affordable land for industrial development, emphasizing that such a move could provide significant employment opportunities for local youth. Mahesh Kumar also brought attention to the long-pending Chintalapudi lift irrigation scheme, requesting that it be completed swiftly to ensure a permanent solution to irriga-

tion and drinking water problems in the region. Lauding the leadership of Youth Leader Nara Lokesh, he remarked that the NDA government, under the guidance of CM Chandrababu Naidu, has succeeded in bringing industrial investments worth ₹4 lakh crore within just nine months of taking office. He praised the government’s twin focus on development and welfare, calling it a hallmark of the NDA leadership. The MP reiterated the NDA’s commitment to youth empowerment through job creation and cited a notable drop in palm oil prices, from ₹13,000 per ton previously to ₹21,000 per ton currently, as an example of effective governance. He emphasized that the government is delivering on its promises made during the elections and working diligently to ensure the prosperity of the people.

## Deputy Speaker Raghu Ramakrishnam Raju Visits Mukkantshwara Temple



**TPN Correspondent | Tirupati Dist**  
Deputy Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Sri Kanumuru Raghu Ramakrishnam Raju, visited the Mukkantshwara Temple on Friday morning along with his family to offer prayers to Sri Kalahastheeswara Swamy. Upon his arrival, he was accorded a grand ceremonial welcome by Temple EO Kola Anand and former Agricultural Market Committee Chairman Rangineni Chenchiah Naidu. As part of the rituals, the Deputy Speaker participated in the Rahu-Ketu pujas, a significant spiritual practice at the temple. Following the completion of the pooja, Vedic scholars bestowed their blessings on the Deputy Speaker and presented him with the temple’s sheshavastra and theertha prasadam

as a mark of divine grace and respect. Later, Kola Anand, who also serves as BJP State Secretary and Assembly Party Convener, was honored with the temple’s sheshavastra and felicitated with traditional floral offerings in recognition of his contributions. The event saw the participation of several key leaders from the Telugu Desam Party and Bharatiya Janata Party, including BJP District Secretary and Assembly Party Co-Convener Melagaram Subramaniam Reddy, Vinod Balaaji, Kumar, Giridhar Sai, Chaitanya, and other dignitaries. The temple visit was marked by spiritual fervor and camaraderie among leaders, highlighting the cultural and religious values upheld by the state’s leadership.



## MLA Bathula Balaramakrishna Pays Tribute to Mahatma Jyothirao Phule in Korukonda

**TPN Correspondent | East Godavari Dist**  
A grand celebration was held at the Korukonda Mandal Praja Parishad office on Friday to mark the birth anniversary of Mahatma Jyothirao Phule, a pioneering social reformer and advocate for equality. The event was led by Rajanagaram MLA Bathula Balaramakrish-

na, who paid floral tributes to Phule’s portrait and addressed the gathering. Speaking on the occasion, the MLA stated that Phule’s contribution to the upliftment of the weaker sections was immeasurable, and his life continues to be an inspiration for all. He emphasized that Phule was a relentless crusader against

untouchability and caste discrimination, and his advocacy for women’s education paved the way for societal transformation. The MLA noted that Mahatma Phule envisioned a society where all individuals could live with dignity and equality, and said that reinstating those values is the greatest tribute

that can be offered to him on Friday. The event witnessed active participation from leaders of Jana Sena, Telugu Desam Party, and Bharatiya Janata Party, along with government officials, activists, and Jana Sainiks, who collectively paid homage to the legacy of Mahatma Jyothirao Phule.



# Isi role in 26/11 under lens

The extradition of Tahawwur Hussain Rana to India has re-opened the dark chapter of the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks and brought renewed focus on Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Rana, a Canadian-Pakistani businessman, was brought to India from the United States on April 10 after a long legal battle. He is now in a high-security lock-up in New Delhi, facing fresh interrogation by Indian agencies. At the heart of the questioning are two shadowy ISI figures — Major Iqbal and Major Sameer Ali — whose names have surfaced repeatedly in investigations into the deadly three-day siege that left 166 people dead.

According to sources in the National Investigation Agency (NIA), Rana’s interrogation will focus on his communication and collaboration with these two ISI-linked individuals. Investigators believe Rana acted as a conduit and facilitator in the larger Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) network that planned and executed the attacks. His connections to David Coleman Headley, the Pakistani-American who carried out the reconnaissance missions in Mumbai, are well-documented. Now, authorities are seeking more details about how much coordination took place between Rana, Headley, and their alleged ISI handlers.

One of those handlers, Major Iqbal, is believed to have played a central role in planning and



financing the operation. Identified in a 2010 US indictment as an ISI officer, Iqbal is accused of directing Headley’s every move. Headley, who pleaded guilty in a US court, testified that Iqbal — known by the alias “Chaudhery Khan” — was his main handler. Their email exchanges included details about targets, surveillance equipment, and cover identities. One notable message involved the attempted use of a Shiv Sena functionary, Rajaram Rege, to gain access to party offices. Rege later confirmed a brief encounter with Headley but said he re-

jected the request outright. While Major Iqbal is portrayed as the architect of the planning phase, Major Sameer Ali is described as the operational commander. According to Zabiuddin Ansari alias Abu Jundal, a 26/11 handler arrested in 2012, Sameer Ali was inside a LeT control room in Karachi’s Malir Cantonment, directing the attacks in real time. He allegedly issued orders to senior Lashkar figures, including Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, during the carnage. Interpol has issued a Red Notice against Sameer Ali, who was reportedly born in Lahore in 1966.

Despite mounting evidence, Pakistan has repeatedly denied his existence, calling him a “fictitious character.”

Jundal also claimed that Pakistan’s own Federal Investigation Agency raided and dismantled the Karachi control room weeks after the attacks, potentially to destroy evidence. While Lakhvi was later arrested, others, including Jundal and trainer Abu Qahafa, escaped. With Rana now in Indian custody, investigators hope to finally expose the depth of ISI’s involvement in the 26/11 plot.



## Don’t Fear AI—Democratise It Instead

A few days ago, in a moment of curiosity and digital experimentation, I uploaded a Ghibli-style AI-generated image of myself to Instagram. Most reactions were encouraging, but a particular comment stuck with me. Someone wrote, “It is an insult to Miyazaki and the lifetime he spent on this,” referencing legendary animator Hayao Miyazaki. The remark was a nod to a now-viral statement Miyazaki made in 2016, calling AI-generated art “an insult to life itself.”

This criticism mirrors a larger, ongoing debate about artificial intelligence and its impact on creativity, originality, and intellectual property. As AI tools like ChatGPT and other natural language processing (NLP)-based algorithms become more mainstream, concerns about their reliance on open-source data and the lack of credit to original creators have grown. Copyright infringement fears are no longer confined to academia or tech circles—they’re now being discussed on social media platforms and in creative communities.

Yet, while the concerns are valid, the broader perspective reveals something more important: AI is not a threat to humanity or the death knell for creativity. Rather, it is a tool—powerful, yes, but still just a tool. Its capacity to assist with mundane tasks like summarising long documents, generating code, or drafting letters, has saved time and opened up creative possibilities for millions.

Instead of panicking about the rise of AI, we should direct our energy toward democratising it. India, in particular, has a chance to lead this movement. By investing in research and development—especially through educational and public research institutions—the country can ensure that AI technologies remain accessible and beneficial to all, not just a privileged few.

AI-driven innovations should not be monopolised by large corporations or confined to elite institutions. If India commits to building open-source frameworks, training diverse AI talent, and embedding ethical AI education in its academic curricula, it could set a global example of how to balance progress with responsibility.

It’s also crucial to build public awareness about how AI works—its limitations, its data dependencies, and the biases it can carry. This knowledge empowers users and helps shift the narrative away from fear and toward informed engagement. Transparency, inclusivity, and accountability must be the pillars of this effort.

## Congress, CPI(M) Struggle as BJP Gains

Nearly a year after the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the political landscape in India reflects a curious imbalance. Despite the BJP falling short of an absolute majority and relying on allies to form the government, the party remains comfortably in control. The recent passage of the Waqf amendment bill underlines the strength of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), even as the opposition INDIA bloc attempted to put up a united front.



Ahmedabad was seen as a symbolic move to challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah on their home turf. But the gamble didn’t pay off. Despite fiery speeches targeting Modi and the BJP, the event lacked a forward-looking vision. Critics noted that the Congress failed to articulate a clear and compelling alternative for India’s future.

While most speakers echoed aggressive anti-BJP sentiments, a few voices urged introspection and a more constructive approach. Shashi Tharoor, MP from Thiruvananthapuram and runner-up in the last Congress presidential race, seconded the political resolution moved by Sachin Pilot. Tharoor emphasized the need for Congress to become “a party of hope, not resentment,” advocating for positivity and a future-oriented agenda.

Last week, two key INDIA bloc constituents—the Congress and the Communist Party of India (Marxist)—held their respective national conclaves. The CPI(M) gathered in Madurai for its 24th party congress, while the Congress held its All India Congress Committee (AICC) meeting in Ahmedabad, returning to Gujarat for such a session after 64 years.

However, both events barely stirred the national political discourse. Lacking in headline-making resolutions or innovative political messaging, the conclaves failed to capture media attention. Television debates remained unaffected, and print coverage was largely limited to inner pages. In contrast, the BJP continued with business as usual, unfazed by the opposition’s activities.

The timing of these conclaves coincided with the BJP’s foundation day on April 6. Now 45 years old, the party appears to have overtaken its older rivals—Congress, with a 140-year legacy, and CPI(M), tracing roots back to 1925—not just in organization but in narrative dominance. The momentum clearly rests with the BJP. The Congress’ decision to host its AICC meet in

# India’s Space Power Needs Strategic Boost

India has long been recognised as a formidable player in the global space arena. However, recent developments and geopolitical dynamics highlight the urgent need for New Delhi to ramp up its military space capabilities—particularly in light of the widening technological gap with China.

Speaking at the third edition of the Indian DefSpace Symposium on April 7, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan emphasised the evolving nature of warfare, asserting that “primary elements of warfare will depend on space.” He stressed the importance of defining military space doctrine, fostering a “space culture” within defence circles, and addressing vulnerabilities in India’s space infrastructure.

Space has not recently become a domain of strategic interest—it has been central to defence since World War II. In the war’s final stages, Nazi Germany became the first to launch an unmanned rocket beyond the Kármán Line (~100 km above sea level). What followed was a decades-long race for supremacy in

space between the USA and the USSR, masked as peaceful exploration but driven by military and economic objectives.

The 1957 launch of Sputnik-1 by the Soviet Union and the United States’ swift response marked the beginning of this intense competition. This space race intensified with Yuri Gagarin’s historic manned mission in 1961, followed by President John F. Kennedy’s vision of landing a man on the Moon, achieved with Apollo 11 in 1969. As these milestones were crossed, the militarisation—and eventual weaponisation—of space also gained momentum.

In an attempt to rein in space militarisation, the UN General Assembly adopted the “Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space” in 1963. The Outer Space Treaty of 1967, signed by the USSR, UK, and USA, sought to prohibit the placement of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction in orbit or on celestial bodies. Yet, these legal instruments did little to curb ac-



tual military ambitions. By the 1980s, both superpowers had developed anti-satellite (ASAT) capabilities. The USSR equipped its MiG-31 with a miniature ASAT missile, while the US destroyed its own satellite in 1985 using the ASM-135 missile. After a pause in such tests, Chi-

na reignited concerns in 2007 with a direct-ascent ASAT demonstration.

India, while having demonstrated ASAT capability in 2019 (Mission Shakti), still lags behind China in the scale and integration of space assets for defence. With

space now firmly established as the next frontier of military power, India must accelerate its investments in satellite networks, space surveillance, and counter-space technologies to ensure its strategic interests are protected in the decades to come.



# India Prioritises Interests in US Trade Talks

India is actively engaging with the United States on a bilateral trade agreement (BTA), but the government is firm in its stance that any such deal will be shaped by national interests, not by pressure or haste. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal asserted on Friday that the dialogue with the US is progressing steadily, underpinned by an "India First" approach that aims to secure long-term benefits for the country.

Speaking at an event in New Delhi, Goyal highlighted that while the discussions are constructive and forward-looking, India will not enter into any trade agreement at gunpoint. He emphasized that the government is committed to safeguarding public and economic interests, and will avoid any decision that could compromise the nation's future.

"We are in a continuous and evolving dialogue with the US. But we're very clear — no deal under pressure. We will protect India's interests, and every step will be taken with due diligence," Goyal said. The broader goal of the discussions is to double bilateral trade between India and the US to USD 500 billion by 2030. Currently, trade between the two nations stands at approximately USD 200 billion. Goyal noted that the partnership with the US is crucial for India's growth trajectory, especially as the country works toward the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, a



roadmap to becoming a fully developed economy. Reaffirming the government's long-term strategic focus, Goyal said India's approach in all global trade negotiations—be it with the US, EU, or other partners—will be guided by transparency, mutual respect, and a commitment to national welfare.

"Our engagements are aimed at enhancing trust and ensuring that India's economy and people benefit the most. We do not rush into decisions that could have long-term consequences. That's not how Atmanirbhar Bharat operates," he added.

The minister also acknowledged that while there is global enthusiasm about India's economic potential, especially in sectors like manufacturing, digital trade, and green technology, India will tread carefully and negotiate from a position of strength.

With the global landscape evolving rapidly, India remains focused on building sustainable trade relationships while ensuring domestic industries are supported and protected. Goyal's statement makes it clear that India is open to collaboration, but on its own terms.



## PM Modi Offers Prayers at Anandpur Dham

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Anandpur Dham in Madhya Pradesh's Ashoknagar district on Friday, where he performed a puja at the revered Guru Ji Maharaj Temple and took part in spiritual and public engagements. This marks his second visit to the state in 2025, underscoring his continued focus on both religious heritage and public outreach.

Located in Anandpur village of Isagarh tehsil, Anandpur Dham lies about 30 km from Ashoknagar district headquarters and approximately 215 km from Bhopal. The Prime Minister arrived in the afternoon and began his visit by performing rituals at the temple, a significant religious center for devotees from across the region.

Following the puja, PM Modi was scheduled to participate in a public programme and address a large gathering of citizens and spiritual followers. A state government official confirmed that the visit aimed to connect with both the spiritual community and the broader public. Anandpur Dham, established by the Shri Anandpur Trust, is known not only as a religious destination but also as a hub for philanthropic and social work. Spread across 315 hectares, the site is home to a modern gaushala that shelters more than 500 cows. The Trust also carries out agricultural activities, promoting sustainability and rural development.

In addition to its spiritual significance, Anandpur Dham contributes actively to public welfare. According to an official release, the Trust runs a charitable hospital in Sukhpur village and manages schools in both Sukhpur and Anandpur. It also operates 'Satsang' centers across India, facilitating community gatherings and spiritual teachings. PM Modi's itinerary reflects a blend of spiritual outreach and governance, reaffirming his government's efforts to support religious institutions that are engaged in charitable, educational, and rural upliftment activities. The visit is expected to further strengthen the relationship between spiritual organizations and developmental initiatives under the banner of inclusive growth.

The Prime Minister's engagements at Anandpur Dham are seen as part of a broader effort to combine cultural heritage with social empowerment, aligning with the government's "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" vision.

## Kerala CM Defends Vellappally Natesan



In the wake of a controversy surrounding Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalayanogam (SNDP) general secretary Vellappally Natesan, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan came out in his defense during a public event on Friday. The backlash was triggered by Natesan's recent remarks about the Muslim-majority district of Malappuram, which many interpreted as communal in nature.

Speaking at a function organized to honor Natesan, the Chief Minister clarified that the veteran SNDP leader had not made any statements against any religion. Instead, Vijayan insisted that Natesan's comments were aimed at a particular political party, and not the Muslim community or any religious group. He accused certain political elements of deliberately misrepresenting the statement for their own gain.

Vijayan emphasized that Natesan had always stood for secular values and that the SNDP leader's track record spoke for itself. According to him, it was regrettable that a section of the public had taken the remarks out of context and used them to create communal disharmony. The Chief Minister warned against such attempts to sow division, stating that Kerala's social fabric must not be disturbed for political mileage.

The controversial remark reportedly likened Malappuram to a "separate nation," a comment that sparked criticism from several quarters, especially the Indian Union Muslim League (IUML). However, Vijayan's strong support suggests the ruling CPI(M) does not want to alienate the SNDP or its Ezhava base ahead of the elections. With political narratives heating up, the CM's defense signals an attempt to balance community sentiment and electoral strategy.

# India Defends EVM Security After Gabbard Remarks



Amid rising concerns over the integrity of electronic voting systems, India's Election Commission has firmly reiterated that the country's Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) are secure, tamper-proof, and immune to hacking. This comes in response to recent remarks by Tulsi Gabbard, former US Congresswoman and current US intelligence chief, who voiced concerns about the vulnerability of voting technologies worldwide.

In her statement, Gabbard highlighted growing evidence of hacking threats to voting systems, urging democratic nations to ensure transparent and secure electoral processes. While she did not single out India, her general comments about EVMs prompted Indian officials to issue a detailed clarification.

Sources within the Election Commission emphasized that India's EVMs are fundamentally different from the complex systems used in many Western nations. "Our machines are built like simple calculators. They are not connected to the internet, WiFi, Bluetooth, or even infrared, making them completely insulated from remote tampering," said an EC official.

The Commission explained that India does not rely on networked electronic voting systems, which are often a combination of hardware, software, and digital processes. Instead, Indian EVMs are standalone, one-way programmable devices with no wireless connectivity. "They are not open to manipulation through

malware or hacking," the official added.

India's EVMs have been in use since 1999 and have withstood numerous challenges in courts, political arenas, and public forums. In several instances, parties have questioned the authenticity of EVMs following election losses, but repeated technical reviews, expert demonstrations, and mock polls have affirmed their reliability.

The EC also noted that each machine is rigorously tested, sealed, and monitored during every phase of the election process—from manufacturing to storage, and through deployment and counting. Security protocols, including randomization of machine allocation, further minimize the risk of manipulation.

The controversy comes at a time when India is preparing for a massive electoral exercise involving millions of voters across thousands of polling stations. The Election Commission reassured voters that the integrity of the election process remains uncompromised, and there is no cause for concern regarding the technology used.

While concerns about election security are valid globally, India's unique approach—low-tech by design but high in transparency and security—continues to set a robust example. The EC's swift response aims to restore public confidence and reaffirm India's commitment to free and fair democratic practices.

# India Pushes for Swift US Trade Deal

India is prepared to move with urgency on securing a bilateral trade agreement with the United States, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Friday, marking a significant shift in India's approach to global trade negotiations.

Speaking at the Global Technology Summit in New Delhi, Jaishankar emphasized that it is now India, not the US, driving the urgency behind the deal. "Normally, a complaint in the past was that we were slowing it down. Today, it's the other way around — we are the ones pressing forward," he said. His remarks come just two days after US President Donald Trump announced a 90-day breather on imposing reciprocal tariffs, which has opened a new window for trade diplomacy between the two nations.

Jaishankar underlined that India is navigating a complex global environment, marked by rising tensions between the US and China over tariffs. "The world is barreling towards deep turmoil and economic upheaval. In this scenario, India must be agile and prepared to protect its



interests," he cautioned. He acknowledged that the US remains a highly ambitious trade partner, which makes the negotiations challenging. However, both countries are now aligned in their desire to close a meaningful trade deal. India and the US have conceptually agreed to finalize the agreement by September–October 2025.

"We will find a fix that works for both sides," Jaishankar asserted, signaling optimism that the long-standing nego-

tiations will reach a mutually beneficial outcome. The current momentum follows a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Trump in Washington earlier this year, during which both leaders committed to concluding the first tranche of the bilateral trade agreement. This was followed by a significant visit from a US delegation led by Assistant Trade Representative Brendan Lynch to New Delhi from March 26 to 29 to iron out the details.



# "Stealing Water From Texas Farmers": Trump Threatens Mexico With Tariffs

**Accuses Mexico of hurting Texas farmers. Sheinbaum cites drought, promises solution. Past water disputes sparked unrest in Mexico.**

TPN Correspondent | US

US President Donald Trump threatened Mexico on Thursday with escalating trade consequences, including tariffs and potentially sanctions, unless the country provides more water to Texas under a longstanding treaty. Trump accused Mexico of "stealing" water from Texas farmers and criticized the country for its failure to supply enough water, which he claimed had led to the closure of the only sugar mill in Texas last year.

The dispute stems from a 1944 water-sharing agreement between the United States and Mexico, under which the two countries share water from the Colorado River in exchange for flows from the Rio Grande, which forms part of the border. According

to the U.S. government's Boundary and Water Commission, Mexico owes the United States over 1.55 billion cubic meters of water, with the current cycle set to expire in October.

Trump's post on his Truth Social platform stated, "We will keep escalating consequences, including TARIFFS and, maybe even SANCTIONS, until Mexico honors the Treaty." His remarks highlight the ongoing tensions between the two nations over water rights, with U.S. farmers and lawmakers growing frustrated over Mexico's delayed deliveries in recent years.

In response, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum defended her government's actions, stating that Mexico has been adhering to the treaty despite ongoing drought con-



ditions. She noted that Mexico had sent a "comprehensive proposal" to the U.S. State Department, assuring that an agreement would likely be reached.

Mexico's delayed water deliveries have been linked to two decades of severe drought in the Rio Grande basin. However, the United States has expressed dissatisfaction with Mex-

ico's tendency to wait until the end of each five-year cycle to meet its obligations, leading to complaints from U.S. farmers. In previous years, tensions over water deliveries have resulted in civil unrest in Mexico. In 2020, farmers in the northern state of Chihuahua seized a dam to prevent water from being sent to the U.S., leading to violent clashes with the Mexican National Guard.



## Imran Khan Open to Dialogue, Not Submission: PTI Leader Junaid Akbar

TPN Correspondent | Peshawar

Former Prime Minister Imran Khan is open to holding reconciliatory talks with Pakistan's government and institutions, but he refuses to be coerced into submission, said Junaid Akbar, President of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) unit in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking at a media interaction on Thursday, Akbar emphasized that Khan is willing to engage in dialogue for the supremacy of the Constitution and rule of law, but not under duress.

Khan, who has been incarcerated in Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, since August 2023, faces numerous legal cases that emerged after his government was ousted in April 2022. Despite his detention, Akbar insisted that PTI remains open to constructive engagement.

"Our doors are open," Akbar stated, "but if someone thinks they can force their will upon us by keeping Khan Sahib and our workers in jail and lodging false FIRs, they are mistaken."

He called on state institutions and political entities to operate within the legal and constitutional framework, noting that while the PTI has grievances with the leadership of certain institutions, the party still respects and acknowledges them as vital national pillars.

Akbar criticized the ongoing legal and procedural barriers that have limited access to Khan in prison. "We are not asking for special treatment—just the rights that are granted under the jail manual," he said. He described repeated attempts to meet Khan being thwarted by long delays and eventual denials.

Highlighting the growing discontent among the public, Akbar warned that the continued suppression of democratic rights and silencing of political voices could provoke unrest. "This is not just about Imran Khan. It's a national issue. The gap between institutions and the people has widened drastically," he said.

He concluded by urging for dialogue and constitutional adherence to avoid a scenario where the public, feeling unheard, takes to the streets. "We don't want that kind of confrontation. We want stability through law, justice, and public trust," he added.



## South Africa Considers Policy Shift to Welcome Starlink Amid Musk-Government Tensions

TPN Correspondent | London

South Africa may soon revise its satellite internet licensing requirements to accommodate companies like Elon Musk's Starlink, in a move that seeks to balance investment with equity policy reforms. The effort comes amid tensions between Musk and the South African government, with the Tesla and SpaceX CEO publicly criticizing laws requiring foreign companies to sell ownership stakes to Black South Africans as discriminatory.

Musk, born in South Africa, has argued that the legislation — part of the country's Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) initiative — restricts the operation of his satellite internet service, Starlink. His comments have drawn sharp criticism, with some accusing him of dismissing the historical injustices of apartheid.

Now, South African Telecommunications Minister Solly Malatsi is proposing an alternative route for companies like Starlink to gain access to the country's market. Instead of mandating equity sales, the new directive under development would allow satellite providers to fulfill licensing requirements by investing in underserved and disadvantaged communities.

Malatsi said he is finalizing the directive, which will then undergo a public consultation process through the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA), the country's telecom regulator. "We want to ensure global technological advancements reach rural and marginalized parts of our country," he said.

However, the proposal has sparked backlash from political opponents who argue it could weaken South Africa's transformation agenda. Critics say the move prioritizes the interests of Musk — who left the country in his youth and rarely returns — over longstanding goals to rectify racial inequalities entrenched by apartheid.

"The minister is seeking to cut corners and erode hard-won transformation goals," said Khusela Sangoni Diko, chair of the parliamentary committee on telecommunications. She emphasized that other satellite internet firms are interested in South Africa and are willing to comply with existing BEE regulations.

# China Raises Tariffs On US Goods To 125% As Trade War Worsens

TPN Correspondent | China

China announced on Friday that it would raise tariffs on US goods to 125% from 84%, a move that comes in response to President Trump's recent tariff hike on Chinese imports to 145%. This escalation of the trade war between the two largest global economies marks a significant intensification of the ongoing economic standoff.

The new Chinese tariffs, set to take effect on Saturday, were declared hours after President Xi Jinping urged the European Union to collaborate with China in resisting what he referred to as "unilateral bullying" by the US, a clear reference to the high tariffs imposed by President Trump under his administration. In his statement, Xi emphasized that tariffs had become more of a "numbers game" with no practical economic value, and that China would ignore further tariff increases by the US at this stage.



The Chinese Ministry of Finance issued a statement declaring that the US's continuous imposition of abnormally high tariffs on China was damaging to the global economy. It further claimed that the US should take full responsibility for the global economic "turbulence" caused by Trump's trade policies. Beijing also pointed out that the US's decision to freeze tariffs on other countries was partly due to pressure from China.

In response to the US's previous tariff round, which saw duties

on Chinese imports raised to 104%, China had already increased its tariffs on US goods from 34% to 84%. The latest tariff hike further compounds the tension between the two nations and continues to hurt global markets.

Xi Jinping also took the opportunity to address the European Union, urging the bloc to fulfill its international responsibilities and stand with China against what he described as "unilateral bullying practices." He stressed that this cooperation between China and Europe would protect international fairness and justice. The trade war, which has already caused severe disruptions to global markets, shows no signs of easing as both nations continue to escalate their tariffs, with no clear resolution in sight.

# Key Accused In Nepal Pro-Monarchy Protests Arrested From Assam

TPN Correspondent | Assam

Durga Prasai, a key figure behind the deadly pro-monarchy protests in Kathmandu on March 28, has been arrested in Assam, India, and handed over to Nepalese authorities. The violent protests, which took place in the Tinkune area of Kathmandu, led to the deaths of two individuals, including a photo-journalist, and left over 110 others injured.

According to Nepal Police, Prasai, who was charged with state offenses and organized crime, was arrested in Jhapa district, which borders India. It is reported that Prasai was initially apprehended by Assam police and subsequently transferred to Nepalese authorities. However, there was no official extradition treaty in effect between Nepal and India, so the details of the arrest were not disclosed by officials.

The March protests, organized by pro-monarchy groups including the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), called for the reinstatement of Nepal's monarchy and the establish-



ment of the country as a Hindu state. The unrest in Kathmandu and other regions of Nepal has been fueled by a desire to return to the monarchy, which was abolished in 2008 when Nepal transitioned from a Hindu monarchy to a secular, democratic republic.

In connection with the protests, more than 60 individuals, includ-

ing prominent members of the RPP such as General Secretary Dhawal Shumsher Rana and Vice President Rabindra Mishra, have been arrested. These arrests were made under charges related to state offenses and organized crime, and the suspects are currently in judicial remand, following an order from the Kathmandu District Court.

The RPP has called for the immediate release of its leaders and supporters, demanding justice for those arrested in connection with the pro-monarchy protests. The political tension surrounding the protests highlights the ongoing debate over Nepal's identity as a secular republic versus the desire among some factions to restore the monarchy and its Hindu state status.





The domestic stock market indices witnessed a significant rally on Friday, closing higher with substantial gains. As expected, the market surged, buoyed by US President Donald Trump's decision to suspend tariffs on all countries, except China, for 90 days. This move generated positive sentiment across global markets, leading to heightened optimism that global supply chains would remain intact and that an

economic recession might be averted. Moreover, expectations that India could benefit directly and indirectly from this tariff war further fueled the market rally.

The announcement encouraged investors to buy shares in large numbers, particularly benefiting sectors like metals, consumption, government companies, commodities, and energy. These sectors saw in-

## Indices Surge on Positive Sentiment Amid US-China Trade Truce

creased demand, propelling the markets higher. The BSE Sensex rose by 1,310 points, while the NSE Nifty gained 429 points by the close of trading.

The BSE Sensex, which ended the previous session at 73,845, opened at 74,835 on Friday. During the day, it touched an intraday low of 74,762 and a high of 75,467 before closing at 75,157, marking a gain of 1,310 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 22,695, saw fluctuations between a low of 22,695 and a high of 22,923, eventually closing at 22,828 with a total gain of 429 points. Additionally, the Nifty Bank surged by 762 points, closing at 51,002.



In the Nifty50, 47 stocks recorded gains, while just 3 stocks ended in the red. Hindalco, JSW Steel, Tata Steel, Coal India, and Geofinance were among the top gainers. On the flip side, Asian Paints, Apollo Hospitals, and TCS were the major losers of the day. The India VIX, or Fear Index, dropped by 6.17% to 20.11, indicating reduced volatility and growing investor confidence. Sectors such as metals, consumption, CPSE, commodities, energy, PSE, pharma, oil, infrastructure, auto, and finance all made significant gains during the session.

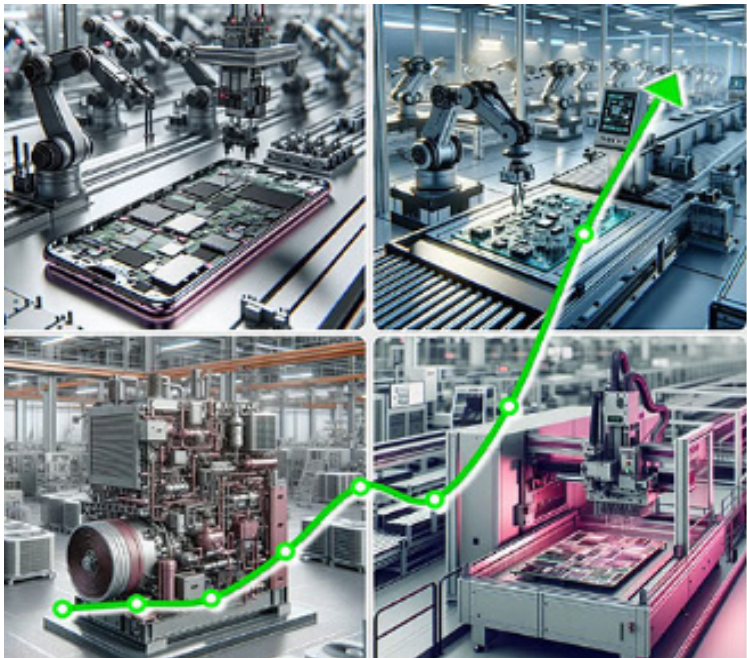
Market breadth was heavily in favor of buyers, with 2,381 shares advancing compared to 492 shares that declined out of 2,959 traded stocks. Notably, 35 stocks hit their 52-week highs, while 18 stocks hit their 52-week lows. Additionally, 160 shares touched their upper circuit limit, while 23 stocks reached the lower circuit.

The Indian Rupee strengthened by 64 paise, closing at 86.05 against the US Dollar. Retail participation in the market surged, with investor accounts on the NSE crossing Rs 22 crore. HSBC recommended a "buy" on Eternal with a target price of Rs 218, while CLSA gave CEAT an "Outperform" rating with a target price of Rs 3,494.

Despite the ongoing tariff war between China and the US, monthly SIP (Systematic Investment Plans) remained stable in March, indicating confidence among retail investors. In corporate news, the Bazel Project Company secured orders worth Rs 50-100 crore for power transmission and substations. Aurobindo Pharma acquired Hyderabad-based Fintra Software, and RBNL emerged as the lowest bidder for a Rs 143 crore project with Southern Railway.

Overall, the market closed on a positive note, reflecting investor optimism spurred by the global trade truce and favorable domestic market conditions.

## India Emerges as Global Electronics Manufacturing Powerhouse



India is rapidly establishing itself as a global hub for electronics manufacturing, driven by supportive government policies and a strategic focus on value addition. According to a recent report by Axis Capital, value addition in electronics manufacturing has surged from 30% to approximately 70%, and is projected to reach 90% by FY27. This shift is significantly improving India's competitiveness in the global supply chain.

A new components policy is playing a critical role in this transformation. The policy aims to increase value addition in the electronics sector from the current 15-16% to a robust 40-50%, reducing reliance on imports and fostering self-reliance in critical components.

Mobile phone exports have been a key success story, growing 77-fold over the past decade. Simultaneously, India has drastically reduced its dependence on imports of completely built air conditioners (CBUs)—from 35% in FY19 to just 5% in FY25. Many essential AC parts like compressors, copper tubes, and aluminum coils are now being manufactured domestically. Although around 8.5 million room air conditioner (RAC) compressors were still imported in FY24, full local manufacturing is expected within the next two to three years.

The demand for Printed Circuit Board Assembly (PCBA) is also witnessing a steep rise across both consumer and business electronics sectors. This surge is bolstered by increased import duties that have encouraged domestic production. Notably, PCBA imports—valued at ₹300 billion in FY18—have fallen to nearly zero in FY24.

This dramatic shift is a result of the government's "Make in India" initiative, which has reversed the trade imbalance in electronics. Until 2016, India imported more electronics than it produced. By FY24, however, domestic production exceeded imports by 24%.

India's electronics exports have been growing at a CAGR of about 26% between FY16 and FY25, reflecting its rising stature on the global stage. Key schemes such as the Production Linked Incentive (PLI), Phased Manufacturing Program (PMP), and the SPECS initiative, coupled with a skilled workforce and better infrastructure, have all contributed to this success.

With corporate tax for new manufacturing units reduced to 15% and the global "China+" sentiment gaining traction, India is now the world's second-largest mobile phone producer—with 99% of phones sold in India manufactured locally.

## India's Industrial Output Slows to 2.9% in February 2025 Amid Broad Sectoral Weakness

India's factory output growth, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), slowed significantly to 2.9% in February 2025, down from the 5.2% expansion recorded in January. The data, released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, highlights a broad-based moderation across key sectors such as manufacturing, mining, and electricity, reflecting subdued industrial activity.

The sharp deceleration comes amid lingering concerns over global demand uncertainties, supply chain disruptions, and weaker consumer spending domestically, which have collectively impacted industrial production.

According to the official data, the manufacturing sector, which holds the largest weight in the IIP, grew just 3.1% in February compared to 5.7% in January. The sector has seen inconsistent performance in recent months, indicating caution among producers amid fluctuating demand and rising input costs.

Mining output also witnessed a slowdown, rising 2.1% year-on-year in February, lower than the 3.3% recorded in the previous month. Similarly, electricity generation, a critical indicator of industrial and residential demand, grew by a modest 1.8%, sharply down from 5.6% in January.



In terms of use-based classification, capital goods production — a proxy for investment — showed only a marginal rise, reflecting subdued business confidence. Consumer durables continued to underperform, contracting slightly, which points to weaker demand in the economy. Non-durable goods, which include everyday items, registered modest growth, indicating some resilience in rural and low-income segments.

Economists believe the slowdown in IIP growth may impact overall GDP expansion in the fourth quarter of FY2024-25, especially as global trade continues to remain volatile and domestic consumption sees uneven recovery.

While the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has maintained a pause on interest rate hikes, citing inflationary concerns and the need to support growth, the latest IIP data may add pressure on policymakers to consider measures that stimulate industrial demand.

As India approaches a new financial year, industry bodies have called for targeted fiscal support, improved ease of doing business, and supply-side interventions to revive industrial momentum and ensure a more balanced economic recovery.

## India Proposes EV Import-Export Swap to Break Deadlock in UK Free Trade Talks

In a strategic move to accelerate the finalisation of its long-pending Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United Kingdom, India has proposed allowing unlimited imports of high-end electric vehicles (EVs) from the UK, priced above GBP 80,000 (approximately ₹89 lakh). In exchange, New Delhi is seeking a larger export quota for more affordable, mass-market EVs priced below GBP 40,000 (₹44 lakh) to the UK.

This proposed quid pro quo is aimed at resolving key differences between the two countries that have delayed the conclusion of the FTA, which has been under negotiation for several years. If accepted, the deal could significantly benefit Indian automakers such as Maruti Suzuki and Mahindra & Mahindra, both of which have ramped up plans to enter and expand in international EV markets.

India's pitch focuses on leveraging its growing strength in the production of cost-effective electric vehicles, which are becoming



increasingly competitive in terms of price, range, and performance. By gaining preferential access to the UK market for these models, Indian manufacturers could tap into a broader customer base seeking affordable green mobility options, particularly as the UK moves closer to its 2035 ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars.

On the other hand, the offer to allow unlimited imports of luxury EVs from the UK would benefit premium British carmakers like Jaguar Land Rover, which is owned by India's Tata Motors. These companies are looking to increase their footprint in the Indian luxury auto segment, particularly with the rising demand for electric SUVs and sedans among affluent buyers.

The arrangement would strike a balance between the UK's push for greater access to India's luxury goods market and India's ambition to boost EV exports. It also aligns with India's broader climate goals and its push to become a global EV manufacturing hub.

If both sides agree, the EV proposal could become a turning point in the FTA talks, clearing the path for a comprehensive agreement that boosts trade, enhances co-operation in green technology, and deepens economic ties between the two nations.





In a breakthrough that deepens our understanding of the moon, Chinese scientists have discovered that soil from the moon's far side is significantly drier than that of the side facing Earth. The research, published in Nature, is based on samples brought back by China's Chang'e 6 mission, which landed in the South Pole-Aitken Basin—one of the oldest and deepest craters in the solar system. Scientists examined five grams of lunar soil, selecting 578 individual particles for detailed study using advanced electron microscopy. They found that these particles contain less than 1.5 micrograms of water per gram of soil—remarkably lower than the 1 to 200 micrograms typically found in samples from the near side of the moon. While the quantity may seem minuscule, even trace amounts of water on the moon have massive implications for planetary science and future lunar exploration. The presence of water, or lack thereof, can reveal important details about the moon's geological

evolution, the effects of solar wind, and the potential for sustaining human activity on its surface. However, researchers caution that more data is needed to draw definitive conclusions. The current analysis is limited by the small sample size, and the possibility remains that other parts of the far side may have varying moisture levels. Still, the discovery adds a crucial piece to the ongoing effort to map out lunar resources and understand the satellite's complex history. Sen Hu of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, who led the study, emphasized that the findings open up new questions about the moon's formation and environmental conditions. With multiple countries, including India through its Chandrayaan missions, working to unlock the secrets of the moon, such international efforts are proving invaluable. As scientists push further into lunar research, even tiny grains of soil are revealing enormous insights about our closest celestial neighbor.

## Title: Law Student's Weekly 3,200 km Commute

Most students move closer to their campus to ease academic life, but 30-year-old Nat Cedillo has taken a dramatically different route. A law student in her final semester at a prestigious New York City school, Cedillo travels over 3,200 kilometers every week — flying from Mexico City to New York and back — to attend her classes in person. Her routine is intense: she boards a flight from Mexico City early Monday morning, attends classes in Manhattan, and returns home by Tuesday night. While the commute sounds exhausting, Cedillo insists it's worth it to complete her law degree. Cedillo and her husband, Santiago, moved from Brooklyn to Mexico City last year. The decision was based on a combination of factors — better weather and a more affordable lifestyle being key. However, instead of transferring or deferring her stud-



ies, Cedillo committed to super-commuting, a term for individuals who regularly travel long distances for work or education. Since January, she's made the round-trip journey more than a dozen times, covering over 4,000 miles per week. In total, she has already spent over \$2,000 (around ₹1.7 lakh) on travel, food, and short hotel stays during her 13-week semester. Her commitment puts her among a growing group of Americans embracing the

super-commuting lifestyle. According to a study cited by The New York Post from Stanford University, post-pandemic work and education trends have led to a 32% rise in people traveling more than 75 miles for work or studies. In New York City alone, that figure has surged by 89%. While many would find such a schedule unsustainable, Cedillo views it as a small price for academic success and personal happiness. "It's exhausting," she admits, "but worth it."

## Thai Restaurant Slammed Over 'Body Size' Discounts



A restaurant in Chiang Mai, Thailand, is facing severe backlash after a video revealed its controversial discount strategy—offering lower prices to customers based on how “skinny” they are. Chiang Mai Breakfast World installed a series of five metal frames at the entrance, each decreasing in width. The gimmick? Customers are invited to pass through the bars, with slimmer gaps offering higher discounts. If you squeeze through the narrowest frame, you get 20% off your meal. Wider frames give 15%, 10%, or 5% discounts, and if you can't fit through any of them, the sign reads: “Full price, sorry.” The now-viral video of the setup, shared by travel influencers Alex and Amina on Instagram, garnered nearly 12 million views. The post captioned “Better than nothing. Which one would you go through?” shows the couple laughing as they attempt the challenge. But what

started as a seemingly light-hearted gimmick has drawn major criticism online. One clip showed a diner jokingly being pushed through a narrow gap by a friend who yelled, “You need some butter!” Though they laughed it off and accepted a 5% discount, many viewers didn't find it funny. The video's comment section exploded with criticism. “This is fat-phobic nonsense. What kind of message are they trying to send?” one user asked. Another pointed out, “So if I don't fit, I have to pay more? That's insulting.” While some defended the idea as harmless fun, others slammed the restaurant for promoting body shaming under the guise of humor. “Imagine the embarrassment some people might feel just trying to eat breakfast,” one user commented, highlighting the discomfort such a system could cause.

## British Vlogger Amazed by Indian Train Food Delivery

During a train journey to Varanasi, British YouTuber George Buckley was left astonished after experiencing food delivery right to his train coach—a feature that's still uncommon in the UK. Sharing the moment on Instagram, George posted a video that quickly went viral, garnering nearly 8 lakh views. In the clip, recorded aboard his AC first-class coach, George narrates his experience as his train makes a brief five-minute stop at Kanpur Central. “I am getting food delivered on a train in India. If you don't believe me, just hold on,” he says excitedly. George had placed his order—consisting of a sandwich and a milkshake—two hours earlier through the Zomato app. As the train pulled into Kanpur, he waited near the coach door for his delivery. Much to his amazement, the food was handed directly to him by a Zomato delivery agent,

who even snapped a selfie with him before leaving. He later enjoyed his meal with an Indian co-passenger who had helped him navigate the ordering process. In the post's caption, George wrote, “The UK needs to take notes,” applauding the convenience and customer service available in India. The video sparked admiration and humor online. Viewers expressed surprise at the convenience of Indian train travel, with one commenter sharing, “Mad isn't it? I got a Dominos delivered to my bed on a train there.” Another joked, “He will be shocked when he gets groceries delivered in 10 minutes.” Many appreciated George's positivity and openness to Indian culture. Comments praised his cheerful attitude and the impressive logistics behind India's evolving travel amenities.



## Purple: Not a Color, Just an Illusion?

In a surprising twist to how we understand color, scientists now say purple might not be a “real” color at all—but an illusion created by the human brain. Unlike red, green, or blue, which have specific wavelengths on the visible light spectrum, purple doesn't exist as a single wavelength. Instead, what we perceive as purple is the brain's clever blend of signals from both red and blue light. This perceptual trick highlights how color isn't just about the light that hits our eyes, but also how our brains process that light. Flowers appear vivid because of pigments reflecting particular wavelengths. The sky shifts colors as sunlight scatters through the atmo-

sphere. But purple? It's different. There's no wavelength for it—no place for it on the rainbow. Our eyes don't even have a receptor dedicated to purple. The brain simply fills in the gap. This discovery is more than a curious fact about color—it's a reminder of how much of our “reality” is constructed in our minds. Purple feels just as real as any color, yet it's a creation of perception, not physics. So the next time you admire a violet flower or a lavender evening sky, take a moment to appreciate the illusion. You're not just seeing a color—you're witnessing your brain doing a bit of visual magic.





## Supratim Das Dreams of Scoring Against MBSG

In a heartfelt moment ahead of the Indian Super League (ISL) Cup final, 19-year-old midfielder Supratim Das from Mumbai City FC revealed a personal dream that blends childhood admiration with professional ambition—scoring against Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG), the club he grew up idolizing. Born in Kolkata, Supratim was immersed in the city's rich football culture from a very young age. His early exposure to the game began at just two years old, guided by his father, and by four, he had joined a local football academy. His talent quickly stood out, leading to a pivotal moment at age

11 when he was selected by the Reliance Foundation Young Champs (RFYC). With RFYC, Supratim helped his team clinch the Sub-Junior I-League title in 2018-19, contributed to a runner-up finish in the 2022-23 MFA Super Division League, and represented India in the Premier League Next Gen Cup in 2023. Now contracted with Mumbai City FC until 2027, Supratim made his ISL debut this season against Odisha FC and is eager to leave his mark. In an interview with ANI, he spoke passionately about his connection to Mohun Bagan, calling them his childhood favorite and expressing how significant it

would be to score against them. "There's no doubt they have been incredible this season... scoring against them would be a huge moment for me," he said, adding that the child in him would be "absolutely thrilled." While MBSG prepares for a high-stakes clash with Bengaluru FC this weekend, Supratim's story underscores the emotional narratives that often run parallel to competitive football. His journey from a Mohun Bagan supporter in Kolkata to a rising star at Mumbai City FC reflects the evolving dreams of young Indian footballers and the deep-rooted passion that drives them forward.

## Norwich, Chennaiyin FC Launch Talent Program

In a major push for youth development in Indian football, Norwich City FC and Chennaiyin FC have joined hands for a strategic partnership that includes an exclusive six-week training programme in the UK. Sam Jeffery, Commercial Director of Norwich City FC, along with Chennaiyin FC COO Akhil Prakash, spoke to ANI about the vision behind this collaboration, its structure, and long-term goals. The initiative is focused on nurturing Chennaiyin FC's most promising U-23 players by immersing them in a high-performance European footballing environment. These players will travel to Norwich to train under elite coaches at Norwich's Category One academy, one of the top-rated youth development centres in England. Jeffery shared that the idea for this partnership took shape during a sports conference in late 2023, where both clubs recognized shared goals around

academy development. Over the next few months, teams from both sides worked closely to align their resources, setting up a program that focuses on academy frameworks, performance analytics, nutrition, and player pathway development. Jeffery highlighted how Norwich's infrastructure and know-how in running a top-tier academy could significantly benefit Chennaiyin FC in building sustainable talent pipelines. Prakash added that they are currently in the process of identifying top U-23 talents to be part of the inaugural batch heading to Norwich. With Indian football increasingly turning to international expertise, this collaboration marks a significant step in Chennaiyin FC's ambition to not only develop future ISL stars but also players capable of succeeding at global levels. The training program is seen as an investment into the long-term growth of the



sport in India, blending global practices with local ambition. The Norwich-Chennaiyin partnership sets a strong example of how clubs across continents can unite to raise footballing standards, nurture young talent, and shape the future of the game.

## Stokes Unlikely in White-Ball Return Soon

England Cricket's Managing Director Rob Key has cast doubt over Ben Stokes' immediate return to white-ball cricket, emphasizing that the all-rounder's current focus is on red-ball cricket and regaining full fitness. Speaking on the Sky Sports Cricket Podcast, Key shared that Stokes is gradually building up his bowling workload under the supervision of elite pace bowling coach Neil Killeen, recently operating at around 75 percent intensity. With his last appearance in white-ball cricket being during the 2023 World Cup—after briefly coming out of retirement—Stokes has not played any format since. Key stated that while



newly-appointed white-ball skipper Harry Brook would undoubtedly benefit from having a player of Stokes' caliber, such a

return depends heavily on the all-rounder's physical condition and readiness to perform in all departments. The immediate goal for Stokes, according to Key, is to prepare for England's upcoming Test match against Zimbabwe, scheduled to begin on May 22 at Trent Bridge. The management wants to ensure that Stokes can resume his vital role as a pace-bowling all-rounder—a role critical not only for balance but also for his leadership on the field. Key praised Stokes' dual contribution as a captain and batsman and underlined the importance of his fitness to contribute as a fourth bowling option in the Test setup.



## KKR Demolish CSK in 8-Wicket Win

In a thoroughly one-sided contest at Chepauk, Kolkata Knight Riders delivered a clinical all-round performance to decimate a lacklustre Chennai Super Kings by eight wickets in their IPL 2025 clash on Friday. CSK, sent in to bat first, crumbled to their lowest-ever total at home—managing just 103 for 9 on a surface that offered grip and turn. Barring Shivam Dube's unbeaten 31 and brief resistance from Vijay Shankar (29) and Rahul Tripathi (16), the rest of the CSK batting order faltered miserably against KKR's disciplined bowling unit. Sunil Narine once again proved his worth as a match-winner, claiming three wickets for just 13 runs in his four overs. He was well-supported by Harshit Rana

(2/16) and Varun Chakravarthy (2/22), who choked the middle overs and dismantled CSK's batting rhythm. The Knight Riders' bowlers showed excellent control and tactical awareness, not allowing CSK any momentum throughout the innings. The chase was a walk in the park for Kolkata. They cruised to 107 for 2 in just 10.1 overs, making a mockery of the modest target. The KKR top order, brimming with confidence, made light work of the CSK attack, which looked ineffective and demoralised after a dismal show with the bat. The eight-wicket win not only boosted KKR's net run rate but also exposed the glaring gaps in CSK's current form and strategy.



## India's Asia Badminton Hopes End

India's campaign at the Badminton Asia Championships 2025 came to a close on Friday, following the exit of the country's last remaining contenders—Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto—in the Mixed Doubles Quarterfinals. The duo fell short against Hong Kong's fifth-seeded pair, Tang Chun Man and Tse Ying Suet, with a straight-games loss of 22-20, 21-13. The match, although competitive in the opening game, saw the Indian pair lose momentum in the second, bringing the nation's run at the continental tournament to an end.

The tournament, being held in Ningbo, China, witnessed early exits for the rest of the Indian contingent as well. In singles action, Olympic medalist PV Sindhu advanced to the Round of 16 but was edged out in a tough battle against Japan's Akane Yamaguchi, a two-time world champion and currently ranked fourth in the world. Sindhu, seeded 17th, fought hard in the three-game

thriller but eventually lost 12-21, 21-16, 16-21 in just over an hour.

India's men's singles hopefuls, Kiran George and Priyanshu Rajawat, also exited in the Round of 16, while the men's doubles pair of Hariharan Amsakarunan and Ruban Kumar Rethinasabapathi couldn't progress beyond the same stage. Despite moments of promise throughout the tournament, the results highlighted the growing competitiveness of Asian badminton and the challenges faced by the Indian squad in navigating through high-caliber opponents.

With the tournament set to conclude on Sunday, India will now look ahead to regroup and refine strategies for upcoming international events. The early exits also put the spotlight back on team preparation and performance consistency as India builds towards more critical events in the 2025 calendar, including Olympic qualification races.

## India Shine with 8 Medals in ISSF



India wrapped up their campaign at the ISSF World Cup in Buenos Aires on a high note, securing a total of eight medals—four gold, two silver, and two bronze—to finish second in the overall standings. While China topped the table with 11 medals, including five gold, India's strong performances across events showcased the depth and emerging talent in the country's shooting circuit. Among the standout performances was the gold medal haul by Sift Kaur Samra in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions, Rudranksh Patil in the men's 10m air rifle, Suruchi Singh in the women's 10m air pistol, and Vijayveer Sidhu in the men's 25m rapid fire pistol. These victories reinforced India's position as a rising power in shooting sports globally. The bronze medal match in the 10m air pistol mixed team event saw Tokyo Olympian Saurabh Chaudhary and Suruchi

Singh defeat the experienced duo of Manu Bhaker and Ravinder Singh with a scoreline of 16-8. Notably, Chaudhary and Suruchi had posted a strong qualifying score of 581-26x to reach the medal round, finishing third among the qualifiers. Bhaker, despite being a medalist at the Paris 2024 Olympics, had a subdued tournament. She placed 13th in the women's 10m air pistol qualifiers and finished sixth in the 25m pistol event after making it to the medal round. Her bronze-winning partner from Paris, Sarabjot Singh, was absent from the competition. China dominated the gold medal match in the 10m air pistol mixed team event, with Ma Qianke and Zhang Yifan defeating compatriots Yao Qianxun and Hu Kai 16-10. The Chinese pair had topped the qualifiers with identical scores of 582, underscoring their consistency and firepower.





## Hari Hara Veera Mallu On Track



Despite ongoing speculation about another delay, the team behind Hari Hara Veera Mallu has confirmed that the film will release on schedule. Starring Powerstar Pawan Kalyan, the much-anticipated period action drama is now locked for a theatrical release on May 9th, 2025. Rumors had circulated online suggesting pressure from the OTT partner was causing uncertainty about the release date. However, the makers have put those talks to rest with a fresh update on the

film's progress. Currently, re-recording, dubbing, and VFX works are being carried out at a rapid pace. The team promises a grand cinematic experience, emphasizing that they are sparing no effort to deliver a summer blockbuster. The PR team tweeted, "Re-recording, Dubbing, and VFX are in full swing—pushing boundaries at lightning speed. #HariHaraVeeraMallu hits the big screens on May 9th!"

## Kalyan Ram's Full-Throttle ASOV Push

Nandamuri Kalyan Ram, usually low-key in promotions, is going all out for his upcoming film Arjun S/O Vyjayanthi, releasing on April 18th, 2025. Known for being reserved during pre-release campaigns, Kalyan Ram is now actively engaging in promotions, surprising fans and industry watchers alike. This shift stems from the actor's deep connection to the project. He has reportedly given one of the most intense performances of his career, and he's equally invested in

ensuring the film reaches a wide audience. The film's team has rolled out a strategic series of promotional events, including teaser and song launches in multiple cities, generating solid buzz. At each event, Kalyan Ram has been speaking with heartfelt sincerity about the film, impressing audiences with his grounded and passionate presence. His hands-on approach is setting a fresh tone for his image and boosting expectations for ASOV ahead of its release.



## Good Bad Ugly: Ajith's Biggest TN Opener



Ajith Kumar's latest film Good Bad Ugly has Astormed the Tamil Nadu box office, registering the highest day-one gross of his career in the state. Directed by Adhik Ravichandran, the gangster action drama opened to packed houses and positive reviews for its Tamil version, earning a massive Rs. 31 crore gross on its first day in the home market. Despite the strong start, the film fell short of becoming Tamil Nadu's all-time top opener. It now

ranks as the fourth biggest opener in the state, behind Beast, Leo, and Sarkaar. While expectations were sky-high for Ajith to break existing records, the film settled for a strong but not record-breaking debut. Good Bad Ugly is produced by Mythri Movie Makers, with music by GV Prakash Kumar. The ensemble cast includes Trisha, Prabhu, Prasanna, Arjun Das, Sunil, Simran, Rahul Dev, and Yogi Babu, contributing to the film's mass appeal.

## Rama Rama Promo Radiates Devotion

Ahead of Hanuman Jayanthi, the team behind Vishwambhara has unveiled the promo for its first single, Rama Rama — a spiritually rich offering that blends devotion with cinematic grandeur. Featuring Megastar Chiranjeevi and composed by MM Keeravaani, the track is set for full release tomorrow and

is already capturing hearts with its divine aura. The promo teases a soul-stirring composition layered with sacred chants, a powerful melodic base, and emotional depth. Shankar Mahadevan's commanding vocals, paired with Lipsika's soulful touch, bring Ramajogayya Sastry's devotional lyrics to life, creating a ce-

lestial musical experience. Chiranjeevi's majestic appearance amid children dressed as Lord Hanuman adds visual grace and spiritual symbolism, beautifully reinforcing the track's reverent theme. The imagery exudes purity, innocence, and a deep sense of devotion, making it a perfect tribute to Lord Rama and Hanuman.

