





Values-Based Education Will Shape India’s Future: CM at Sri Sathya Sai Institute Convocation



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PUTTAPARTHI: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu participated in the 44th Convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and delivered an inspiring address highlighting the institution's values-driven education model and India's promising future.

uating students, he said they were reflections of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba's unique educational philosophy. "This system has shaped students into professionally capable, socially responsible and spiritually aware individuals," he noted.  
The CM said Bhagawan Baba lived with a divine purpose and gifted the world the eternal Sai philosophy, which stresses discipline, love and service as fundamental languages of true learning. He urged the new graduates to uphold values of selfless service, compassion and integrity throughout their lives.

Highlighting India's spiritual legacy, the Chief Minister said the country had shared its wisdom for thousands of years with the message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'—the world is one family. He praised the Institute for integrating morality and ethics with academics, and for promoting research that benefits society in fields such as science, technology and arts.  
Chandrababu Naidu said India's rise began with the 1991 economic reforms, followed by technological advancement in the mid-1990s

that transformed cities like Hyderabad into global IT hubs. With a large youth population and strong leadership under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India is now poised to climb from being the 10th largest economy to the 4th, he said. "By 2047, India will emerge as the world's number one nation," he declared.  
The Chief Minister said Andhra Pradesh is focusing on future industries such as AI, data centres, quantum technologies, aerospace, drones, space technology, semiconductors and defence, along with re-

newable energy. He noted that 13.25 lakh crore worth of investments were committed at the recent CII summit, creating 1.6 million jobs, and added that Google is set to invest \$15 billion for a major data centre project.  
He said initiatives like One Family-One Entrepreneur and One Family-One AI Technician aim to empower every household. He encouraged students to uphold Sai philosophy while embracing innovation, and to work toward building a wealthy, healthy and happy society inspired by Baba's teachings.

Sri Sathya Sai Institute Has Set a Benchmark for Discipline and Service: Vice President Radhakrishnan

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PUTTAPARTHI: Vice President of India CP Radhakrishnan conferred degrees upon the graduating students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning and delivered an inspiring convocation address, praising the institution's discipline, values-based education, and its contribution to nation-building.  
The Vice President lauded the institute as an exceptional model of holistic education. He expressed confidence that India will emerge as the world's No. 1 nation by 2047, and said the graduates receiving their degrees today would play an active role in shaping that future.  
Radhakrishnan noted that the presence of top national dignitaries over the past three days during the birth anniversary celebrations of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba demonstrated Baba's profound global influence. He recalled the enthusiastic response students gave

when Minister Nara Lokesh encouraged them to join public life. "It is clear that these students have the potential to become future leaders," he observed.  
He praised the extraordinary discipline visible across the campus, noting that he had never seen students maintain such decorum—sitting on the floor during the convocation with dignity and respect. Offering his congratulations to the graduates and the institution, he highlighted the uniqueness of providing high-quality education completely free of cost.  
Speaking about India's rise, Radhakrishnan said the world had moved from "India listens to the world" to "the world listens to India." He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for transforming India into a hub of innovation and sustainable development. He stressed that producing good human beings is more important than produc-

ing large numbers of graduates—a principle that the Sai Institute exemplifies.  
The Vice President urged greater investment in research, recalling India's achievement in developing COVID-19 vaccines and sharing them free of cost with over 100 countries—an act that earned global admiration and even a symbolic gesture of respect when a foreign President touched PM Modi's feet in gratitude.  
He stressed India's dual identity as a powerful and compassionate nation, and encouraged students to follow both modern methods and traditional values. Calling drugs a major global threat, he urged widespread campaigns promoting "No to Drugs."  
Radhakrishnan concluded by saying that Sai Baba's principles and teachings represent true education, and the graduates must take these values across India and the world.



CM Expresses Anger Over Medical Negligence in Government Hospitals

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VIJAYAWADA: Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has expressed anger over two consecutive incidents of alleged medical negligence in government hospitals at Kakinada and Rajamahendravaram. Taking serious note of both cases, the Chief Minister directed senior officials to initiate strict action against the doctors and staff responsible.  
In the first incident at Kakinada Government General Hospital (GGH), an eight-month pregnant woman, Malleswari from Gadimogavillage of Thallarevu Mandal, lost her life due to alleged negligence. According to preliminary inquiry re-

ports, her case sheet clearly mentioned that she had an allergy to Pantoprazole and was also suffering from hypertension and diabetes. Despite these warnings, a PG medical student administered a Pantop injection on the afternoon of November 20. This triggered seizures, followed by a cardiac arrest, leading to her death around 10 p.m. The inquiry further revealed that lack of supervision by the Assistant Professor contributed to the tragedy.  
In the second incident, a 55-year-old patient at Rajamahendravaram Government Hospital was reportedly given medicines that had expired in October 2025. The patient

was administered these expired drugs on November 8, resulting in a deterioration of his health condition.  
Expressing outrage at both cases, the Chief Minister instructed officials to conduct a thorough investigation and take stringent action against the negligent medical staff. He also directed authorities to extend assistance to the family of the deceased pregnant woman at Kakinada GGH.  
CM Chandrababu stressed that such incidents must never recur and asked health authorities to ensure strict monitoring and accountability in government hospitals across the state.

BirlaNu To Set Up Rs 127 cr Fibre Cement Board Plant in AP

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NELLORE: BirlaNu, a part of CKA Birla Group on Saturday announced the establishment of a new Fibre Cement Board Plant in the Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh. The greenfield project is a key milestone in BirlaNu's long-term expansion strategy and reflects the company's confidence in Andhra Pradesh's strong industrial ecosystem and infrastructure-led growth outlook. Designed as a state-of-the-art facility built on advanced manufacturing technologies and sustainable production practices, the unit will play a pivotal role in accelerating regional eco-

nom ic developme nt. Akshat Seth, Managing Director and CE O, BirlaNu, said: "Our new Fibre Cement Board Plant in Nellore marks an important milestone in BirlaNu's expansion journey. Andhra Pradesh offers a compelling environment for industrial growth, supported by robust infrastructure and a progressive development approach. This facility will enhance our manufacturing footprint; address rising domestic and global demand for high-quality building materials and create meaningful employment opportunities. It underscores our commitment to responsible, innovation-driven growth."

In Phase 1, BirlaNu will invest approximately 127 crore to set up a large-scale Fibre Cement Board unit, the first of its kind in Andhra Pradesh, creating nearly 600 direct and indirect employment opportunities for skilled and semi-skilled talent in the region. The plant will meet increasing demand within the state and serve as a strategic base for regional and export markets.  
In Phase 2, BirlaNu plans to expand the site with additional units for PVC Pipes & Fittings and Construction Chemicals, deepening the company's integrated manufacturing capabilities in Andhra Pradesh.

Naidu Hails New Labour Codes as Landmark Reform Aligned with Global Standards

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Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu praised India's newly implemented labour codes as a transformative step that strengthens worker rights, ensures fair wages, and aligns workforce policies with international standards. He described the reform package as one of the most significant policy changes in India since the 1991 economic liberalization. Naidu's remarks came in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement on social media confirming that the four labour codes on wages, industrial relations, social security, and occupational safety came into effect on Friday.  
The CM said the reform modernizes the country's labour laws to

reflect the evolving dynamics of the global job market. According to Naidu, the new framework marks a decisive step towards creating a "world-class, future-ready economy." He noted that the codes aim to protect workers' welfare while offering industries greater flexibility, balancing economic growth with social justice.  
"By aligning our workforce standards with global best practices, these measures strengthen worker security, ensure fair wages, uphold dignity, and support the evolving nature of work including protections for gig workers and greater parity for women," Naidu said in a post on X. The Chief Minister commended the Union government's efforts to streamline and simplify decades-old labour regulations.



He said the simplification of more than 40 central laws into four codes is a critical structural reform that will make business operations more transparent and efficient, while also providing clarity and consistency in compliance. The four codes consolidate existing labour laws into a unified system that aims to improve employer-employee relations and foster a conducive environment for both industrial growth and welfare protection.

The Code on Wages ensures uniformity in wage structures and payments across sectors.  
The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code sets stronger safeguards for workers' health and safety in all industries. The Code on Social Security extends welfare benefits to gig and platform workers for the first time. Meanwhile, the Industrial Relations Code focuses on strengthening collective bargaining and easing dispute resolution mechanisms.  
Naidu highlighted that these reforms will particularly benefit unorganised and gig economy workers, who were previously excluded from formal protections. "The world of work is changing rapidly, and laws must evolve accordingly. These codes recognise and respond to that

transformation," he added. He further said that Andhra Pradesh would work closely with the Centre to ensure effective implementation of the codes and to support industries and workers in adapting to the new regulatory environment.  
The state government, he said, remains committed to promoting inclusive economic growth through labour empowerment and skill development. Calling the reform a "landmark achievement", Naidu lauded Prime Minister Modi's leadership in implementing one of the most awaited components of India's economic reform agenda. "This move reflects India's readiness to match global standards and attract investment while ensuring dignity and equity for every worker," he said.

AP Orders Probe Against Jail Officials for Allowing Unauthorized Entry and Threats to Approver Dastagiri



TPN Bureau | November 22  
Amaravati: In a significant development linked to the murder case of former Andhra Pradesh minister Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy, the state government has initiated disciplinary proceedings against three then-Cuddapah Central Prison officials over allegations of serious misconduct and negligence.  
The action follows reports that approver Sheikh Dastagiri, a key witness in the sensational case, was threatened inside the prison under suspicious cir-

that on November 28, 2023, a medical camp was organized inside the prison supposedly for inmate health services. However, investigating agencies later found that this event was used as a cover to allow unauthorized access to Dr. Chaitanya Reddy, the son of murdered accused Devireddy Shivashankar Reddy.  
During his visit, Chaitanya Reddy allegedly intimidated and issued threats to approver Dastagiri, warning him against cooperating with investigators. The matter came to light when a complaint was lodged and a criminal case was registered in February 2024. Home Department Principal Secretary Kumar Vishwajit issued the disciplinary order on Friday, instructing the setting up of a formal inquiry. Coastal Andhra Region DIG (Prisons) M.R. Ravikiran has been appointed as the Inquiry

Officer, while Rajamahendravaram Jail Superintendent Rahul will serve as the Presenting Officer on behalf of the government.  
The inquiry panel has been directed to complete the probe within three months and submit a detailed report with its findings and recommendations. The government cited gross lapse in prison administration and potential collusion between officials and external parties as reasons for the disciplinary proceedings. The inquiry will determine the extent of responsibility and the level of involvement of the accused jail staff in facilitating the breach of security.  
At present, Superintendent Prakash is posted in the Andhra Pradesh Stars facility in Nellore, Deputy Superintendent Jawahar Babu serves at Visakhapatnam Central Prison,

and Dr. Pushpalatha is on duty at the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Kadapa. The incident has reignited scrutiny over prison management practices and the influence wielded by powerful accused persons in high-profile cases. Officials believe that strong disciplinary measures are necessary to restore integrity and transparency in the prison administration system.  
The Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy murder case continues to attract high public attention, as testimonies by approvers such as Sheikh Dastagiri have played a crucial role in advancing the investigation. The state government's swift action in this matter underscores its resolve to ensure accountability within the prison department and maintain fairness in the ongoing judicial process.





## AP at the bottom in Centre’s report on law and order

TPN Bureau | November 22

VISAKHAPATNA M: Reiterating that law and order in the State has been deteriorating, YSRCP has said Andhra Pradesh has slipped to the rock bottom in the recent report released by the Union Government.

Speaking to the media here on Saturday, Party MLC Varudu Kalyani said the State scored nearly 16.7 points and stood last, which shows the inefficiency of the coalition government. Even a State like Bihar stood in 15th place, while we are at the rock bottom, which mirrors the failure of the Home Minister and the Chief Minister. Police have lost credibility under the coalition government, which is using them to settle political scores, she said. During YS Jagan Mohan Reddy’s

term, the same police received 85 awards, which shows the contrast. Chandrababu is responsible for the decline of policing standards, she said, adding that our police stood as a role model during YS Jagan Mohan Reddy’s term.

Atrocities against women and minors are on the rise, while spurious liquor has been flowing across the State, and there is no control over ganja. This was also the case during the previous government. TDP social media has been showing our leader attending the court on loop. It was Chandrababu who had foisted false cases against YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. The failure of the Home Minister and the Chief Minister has been clearly reflected in the Centre’s law and order report on the States.

## Coalition Government Focuses on Sports Development: Home Minister



TPN Bureau | November 22

NAKKAPALLI: Home Minister Vangala Anitha inaugurated the 69th Andhra Pradesh Inter-District School Games at Nakkapalli, marking a significant push by the coalition government toward strengthening sports culture in the State. The Under-19 boys’ and girls’ state-level hockey championship began with the participation of students from all districts. Organizers announced that exciting matches between boys’ and girls’ teams will be held over the next three days.

The event commenced with Minister Anitha offering floral tributes to hockey legend Dhyan Chand. She then interacted with the young players and received their guard of honour. Colourful dance performances by students added vibrancy to the inaugural ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Anitha said that sports play an essential role in shaping life. She expressed concern that some parents put un-

due pressure on children in the competitive world, stressing that academic marks are not everything and that sports should be equally valued. Appreciating the growing recognition of women’s cricket, she said Nallapureddy Shree Charani has become a role model for many girls.

Highlighting that 40-50 hockey players from Nakkapalli alone have excelled at the national level, she called it a matter of pride for the region. The Minister praised initiatives taken by Minister Nara Lokesh to promote sports at the school level. She stressed that victories and defeats are part of the game, and every participant is a winner. Anitha said the government will give importance to NCC and NSS activities. Noting the rise in suicides due to mental stress, she urged students to participate in sports for better well-being. She also announced that the government will soon establish a hockey academy in Nakkapalli.

# Jana Sena Commences Final Push to Restructure Committees Before Local Polls



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AMARAVATHI: The Jana Sena Party (JSP) has begun the final phase of its organizational restructuring exercise, focusing on the formation of district, constituency, man-

dal, and village-level committees across Andhra Pradesh. Party sources indicate that the “final draft” of these committees is under active review, with a clear deadline set for completion before the upcoming

local body elections.

The leadership, according to insiders, has prioritized organisational readiness as a key pillar of its grassroots strategy. Despite being part of the ruling alli-

ance, Jana Sena has so far lagged behind in consolidating its internal structure, leading to some visible dissatisfaction among local cadres. Many leaders and activists at the Mandal and village levels have been reportedly waiting for fresh appointments and clarity on their roles since the general elections.

Party president Pawan Kalyan, who recently resumed his review meetings at the state headquarters, is said to be closely monitoring the progress of the team responsible for committee formation. The plan is to complete and officially

announce all key committees—at the district, constituency, and mandal levels by January 15. This move is expected to infuse new energy into the rank and file and improve coordination between leadership tiers.

Sources close to the party suggest that the restructuring will also aim at balancing seniority with field activity, giving preference to leaders who actively contributed during the 2024 elections. The committees are expected to play a critical role in the local body polls, which the party sees as an important testing ground for its governance and alliance

performance. Party insiders add that the leadership wants these organizational units to become the backbone of its long-term strategy in rural areas, strengthening the flow of communication from the grassroots to the state leadership.

Discussions are underway to introduce digital monitoring systems for district and constituency units, ensuring transparency and accountability in daily functioning. While the Jana Sena ranks await official announcements, enthusiasm appears to be slowly building up again, especially among youth wings and local organizers. With clear deadlines and renewed attention from the top leadership, party cadres expect this organizational overhaul to mark a turning point in shaping Jana Sena’s political consolidation across Andhra Pradesh.



## Nimmala Fires Back at Jagan: “Where Were You Sleeping for Five Years?”



TPN Bureau | November 22

PALAKOLLU: Andhra Pradesh Water Resources Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu launched a sharp counterattack on former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Saturday, following Jagan’s letter accusing the coalition government of failing to effectively present arguments before the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal (KWDT)-2.

Addressing a press conference in Palakollu, the minister said Jagan had no moral right to comment on water resources after “destroying” the sector during his five-year tenure. He described Jagan’s accusations as “strange, baseless and akin to a thief shouting ‘thief’.”

“Where were you sleeping for five years when you held absolute

power? The sudden love you’re showing for water resources now—where was it then?” Nimmala asked. He alleged that the previous YSRCP government had crippled crucial irrigation projects, including Polavaram, Rayalaseema projects and those in North Andhra, pushing them back by decades through inefficiency and corruption.

Nimmala asserted that the very creation of KWDT-2 was a direct consequence of Jagan’s failure to counter Telangana’s arguments in the 2020 Apex Council meeting. “KCR openly violated the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act and spoke against Andhra Pradesh’s interests. Did you object? Or were you asleep at the meeting?” he questioned.

He further alleged that when Telangana argued

that Krishna water allocations should be based on future and ongoing projects—rather than long-standing ones—Jagan remained silent. This silence, he said, paved the way for the Centre to constitute KWDT-2. Even in 2023, when the Union Cabinet approved the Gazette notification, Jagan did not register a protest, he added.

The minister said that Jagan neither demanded that the Centre uphold the allocations under the Reorganisation Act nor approached the Supreme Court in time. “You wasted three years doing nothing and filed a petition only during elections for political mileage,” he charged.

Highlighting Chandrababu Naidu’s efforts during the 2014 bifurcation process, Nimmala said AP secured 512 TMC of Krishna water while

Telangana got 299 TMC, protecting AP’s rightful share. He also criticised Jagan for not opposing Telangana’s claim over the 45 TMC of Godavari floodwaters allocated to Andhra Pradesh.

Ridiculing Jagan’s “crocodile tears” over Rayalaseema projects, Nimmala said the YSRCP government had pre-closed 198 projects, including 102 in Rayalaseema, and allocated only 2,000 crore for irrigation works in the region compared to 12,000 crore under the previous TDP government.

Calling Jagan’s recent letters “cheap political drama,” the minister said the people of Andhra Pradesh clearly understood his “escapist politics.” He demanded that Jagan apologise to the public for “damaging the state’s water interests.”



## BJP State President Madhav Calls for Collective Effort to Uphold Constitutional Spirit

TPN Bureau | November 22

EAST GODAVARI: BJP State President P.V.N. Madhav emphasized the need for collective efforts from all stakeholders governments, political parties, and citizens to uphold the federal and inclusive spirit enshrined in the Indian Constitution. He made these remarks while addressing a seminar organized on the occasion of Constitution Day at the Andhra Kesari Centenary Rotary Hall on Saturday.

The event was jointly organized by the Prakasam Development and Study Organization and the Andhra Kesari Youth Association. Andhra Kesari Youth Association President V. Bhaskar Ram presided over the meeting, which was attended by prominent personalities, including Telangana BJP President N. Ramachandra Rao, former MP Undavalli Arun Kumar, and Rajahmundry Rural MLA Gorantla Buchaiah Chowdary.

In his address, Madhav described Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as a visionary leader whose intellectual depth shaped the Indian Constitution. He said Ambedkar designed the Constitution to ensure both rights and duties for citizens while allowing for adaptability over time. Madhav urged citizens to work toward unity despite differences in religion, caste, and region. “If we fail to understand the essence of unity, divisions will weaken the nation,” he warned, stressing the need to strengthen nationalism, cooperative federalism, and India’s cultural traditions as

pillars of progress.

Telangana BJP President N. Ramachandra Rao highlighted the importance of coordination among states, noting that India’s Constitution gives citizens the proud identity of being Indians. Former MP Undavalli Arun Kumar recalled how leaders like Tanguturi Prakasam entered politics driven by selfless ideals rather than personal gain. MLA Buchaiah Chowdary expressed concern that over-dependence on welfare schemes such as ration cards and pensions, even after 75 years of independence, undermines the Constitution’s spirit of empowerment and self-reliance.

Prakasam Development organization chairman Prof. P. Mohan Rao stated that the institute was established in 1972 by late Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to promote Prakasam Panthulu’s ideals. He said the Constitution offers all Indians a safeguard of equality and urged respect for diverse regional aspirations within its federal framework.

## YV Subba Reddy questions political propaganda over ghee controversy, demands clarity and evidence

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VIJAYAWADA: Former Chairman YV Subba Reddy strongly condemned the news item that claimed nearly 20 crore Tirumala laddus were prepared using adulterated ghee between 2019 and 2024. He said he fully supported the investigation being conducted by the SIT and expressed readiness to cooperate with it at any time. He stated that honest investigation was welcome, but propaganda-based leaks without scientific results were dangerous and misleading.

Subba Reddy said that Chandrababu Naidu, as Chief Minister, previously made malicious remarks that animal fat was used in the preparation of laddus. He stated that to counter such false alle-

gations, a petition was filed in the Supreme Court, and the court directed the formation of a CBI-monitored SIT to examine whether animal fat was used or not. He added that now, before the SIT completes its inquiry, the same narrative is being circulated again, which is the reason he is issuing this statement. He said the investigation should be allowed to conclude and the SIT should decide the matter scientifically, while the media must stick to facts rather than rumors.

Subba Reddy pointed out that the allegations lacked consistency from the beginning. He said that first it was claimed that vegetable fat was mixed with ghee, and later the allegation changed to animal fat. He questioned why

those making accusations kept changing their narrative and did not wait for verified laboratory results. He asked whether the SIT had officially confirmed the presence of animal fat or not, and demanded that the truth be declared only after laboratory proof is available.

He reminded that officials themselves had earlier stated that the four suspicious ghee tankers were rejected and sent back without being used. He questioned how the same four tankers were suddenly being discussed again when they should not have entered the premises without laboratory clearance. He demanded that those claiming adulteration present scientific proof before making public accusations that hurt the faith of crores of

devotees.

Subba Reddy also responded to the allegations based on ghee procurement rates, pointing out that ghee purchased during his term at 326 per kilogram was being labelled as adulterated. He reminded that during the 2017-18 period, ghee was purchased at 273.95, 276 and 279 per kilogram. He asked whether, by the same logic, that ghee was also adulterated and whether laddus prepared in those years were impure. He said that politically motivated misinformation was damaging Tirumala’s sanctity and was being used only to target the YSRCP. He urged media houses to be responsible, not fall for TDP propaganda, and not support malicious political campaigns that undermine public faith.





# SEC begins preparation for local body elections

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Amaravati: The Andhra Pradesh State Election Commission (SEC) has begun preparations for conducting local body elections across the state, signaling the start of an important electoral exercise scheduled for early next year. The SEC has initiated formal communication with the Panchayati Raj and Municipal Administration departments to coordinate arrangements and ensure a smooth election process.

According to official sources, the SEC has already obtained the latest voters' list for all 175 Assembly constituencies from the Election Commission of India (ECI). Work is now underway to finalize and prepare these voter rolls for the upcoming elections to gram panchayats, municipalities, municipal corporations, mandal parishads, and zilla parishads. Election officials said the notification for the polls will be issued once the reservation process for various categories is finalized. The term of the existing local bodies is



set to end in phases beginning early next year.

The tenure of gram panchayats will expire on April 2, 2026, while municipal bodies are due to complete their term on March 17, 2026. Mandal parishad territorial constituencies (MPTCs) and zilla parishad territorial constituencies (ZPTCs) are expected to conclude their term by September 3 and 4, 2026, respectively. Given these timelines, the SEC is keen to finalize all preparatory work well in advance.

To ensure adequate polling infrastructure, the

SEC currently holds a stock of 1.2 lakh ballot boxes. However, authorities are considering procuring an additional one lakh boxes to meet contingency needs and to replace damaged or outdated equipment. The Commission is also expected to seek additional manpower from both the Panchayati Raj and Municipal Administration departments to assist with election duties, logistics, and counting arrangements.

Meanwhile, political parties have already begun internal mobilization and are preparing

their ground-level workers for the upcoming elections. Local body polls are seen as a crucial test of grassroots strength for all major parties, notably the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) and the opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP), particularly in the context of shifting political dynamics in the state since the 2024 Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. The previous round of local body elections in Andhra Pradesh was held in two phases during February and April 2021, under the YSRCP government.

Those elections were

marked by intense political competition and questions over transparency and fairness, which makes the coming round of polls even more significant for all stakeholders. According to reports, the state government is also in the process of completing the formalities related to panchayat amalgamation. This process, expected to conclude by the end of November, will play a key role in determining the final structure and number of local bodies eligible to go to polls.

The SEC is closely monitoring these developments before announcing the election schedule. Officials suggest that once the reservation lists are released and the merger process is cleared, the Election Commission will move swiftly to issue the official notification, possibly early next year. The next few months are expected to see intense political activity and administrative preparations as Andhra Pradesh readies itself for another round of grassroots democracy in action.

## UIDAI Plans Major Overhaul for Aadhaar Cards

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) is set to introduce a significant transformation in the security protocol and presentation of Aadhaar cards, aiming to curb the misuse of personal data and restrict offline authentication access. Under the proposed changes, soon to be officially implemented, the Aadhaar card will only display the cardholder's photograph and a secure QR code, removing all other personal information from the physical document. This development, confirmed by UIDAI Chief Executive Officer Bhuvnesh Kumar, is expected to enhance data privacy and protection for all Aadhaar holders. Speaking about the upcoming measures, Kumar highlighted that printed personal details on the Aadhaar card have been a key factor in the misuse and unauthorized storage of sensitive information by various organizations. The move to restrict cards to only photo and QR code is, therefore, intended to drastically limit the exposure and exploitation of citizens' personal data. The CEO has clarified that, going forward, all offline authentication



tion and verification based on printed Aadhaar details will be restricted, a major shift from current practices. From December, UIDAI will also roll out reinforced age verification protocols. These steps are particularly targeted at hotels, event organizers, and similar entities who currently collect, photocopy, or retain Aadhaar cards for verification purposes. Such practices will be prohibited under the revised guidelines. Kumar explained that as per existing laws, using biometric data or the Aadhaar number for offline verification or storage is already illegal, although many organizations fail to comply. The new regulations are intended to enforce stricter adherence and prevent the unauthorized storage of Aadhaar details.

Additionally, UIDAI will soon launch an upgraded mobile application designed to empower users with full control over their identity-sharing choices.

The app will allow a family of up to five to access their Aadhaar profiles, with users deciding exactly what information they wish to share with third parties. The application will feature advanced utilities such as one-click biometric lock or unlock, making security more robust and convenient. Updates to mobile numbers and addresses will also become more user-friendly through this digital platform.

UIDAI Deputy Director General Vivek Chandra Varma emphasized that these reforms will significantly reduce the dependence on physical Aadhaar copies and photo printouts, further solidifying the digital security architecture around India's most widely used identity document. In summary, the upcoming overhaul marks a pivotal shift in India's approach to data privacy, with user empowerment and misuse prevention at the heart of UIDAI's latest initiatives.

## Dr Hanumaiah Receives Best President Award from IMA Andhra Pradesh

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RAJAMPET: Dr Bodepudi Hanumaiah has been honoured with the Best President Award among all Indian Medical Association (IMA) branches in Andhra Pradesh. The award was presented during the 67th IMA Annual State Conference held on Saturday in Rajampet.

The recognition was conferred by IMA National President Dr Dilip Bhanusali in the presence of State President Dr G Nanda Kishore.

This prestigious award highlights Dr Hanumaiah's exceptional leadership, administrative excellence and unwavering commitment to strengthening the medical fraternity.

Under his guidance, the branch witnessed notable growth in member participation, scientific activities, community health initiatives and public health outreach programmes. Dr Hanumaiah earned widespread respect for promoting unity among doctors, addressing key health issues and encouraging ethical medical

practices. The initiatives he led played a pivotal role in enhancing patient care standards and reinforcing the IMA's contribution to public welfare.

While receiving the award, Dr Hanumaiah expressed heartfelt gratitude to his fellow doctors, committee members and the state IMA leadership. He dedicated the honour

to the collective efforts of the entire branch team.

The 67th IMA Annual State Conference brought together eminent doctors and specialists from across Andhra Pradesh to discuss pressing health issues, medical innovations, and future healthcare policies.



## AP extends the tenure of CS Andhra Pradesh Extends Chief Secretary Vijay Anand's Tenure; Sai Prasad Likely Successor



TPN Bureau | November 22

Amaravathi: The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to extend the service tenure of the state's Chief Secretary, K. Vijayanand, by an additional three months, allowing him to continue in his current role until February next year. Vijayanand was initially scheduled to retire at the end of this month. The extension, seen as a strategic administrative move, is expected to ensure continuity in state bureaucracy during a crucial period. According to highly placed sources, post-February, the state government is planning to hand over the reins of Chief Secretary to G. Sai Prasad, who is currently serving as the Special Chief Secretary, Water Resources Department and the Chief Minister's Office.

Sai Prasad is expected to hold the Chief Secretary post until his own retirement in May 2026.



There is also an indication that the government may consider extending his service period further, citing his administrative acumen and experience, to provide long-term stability within the state's top bureaucracy. This development comes as Andhra Pradesh is grappling with multiple governance priorities, and the continued leadership of senior IAS officers is considered crucial for effective administration.

The move has been welcomed by some sections of the bureaucracy, while observers await formal notifications and potential implications for departmental alignments in the months ahead. 37 Maoists Surrender in Telangana Amid Ongoing Operations. The state of Telangana witnessed a significant breakthrough in its efforts to curb Maoist activities, with as many as 37 members of the outlawed group reportedly preparing to surrender

before law enforcement authorities. This large-scale surrender, involving several key leaders and state and central committee members, marks a major setback for the Maoist party, which has been facing sustained pressure following recent high-profile encounters.

According to sources, the surrender follows repeated appeals for peace and development from Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who has called upon militants to lay down arms and join the mainstream. The ongoing 'Operation Kagaz' aimed at neutralizing Maoist threats, has placed considerable strain on the radical group, prompting many to seek rehabilitation. Among those surrendering are prominent Maoist leaders such as Azad, Koyyada Sambayya, Appas Narayana, and Erralla. The group is expected to formally surrender at the office of Director General of Police (DGP) Shivadhar Reddy at 3 PM, where further details will be provided to the media. This wave of surrenders is being perceived as a major success for state police and a step towards restoring peace and normalcy in conflict-affected regions.

Tirumala Prasadam Remarks by Anchor Sh

ivajyoti Spark Outrage

Popular Telugu anchor Shivajyoti has come under fire after a video of her making remarks about the revered Tirumala prasadam in a queue line went viral on social media. Recently, while visiting Tirumala with her husband and friends, Shivajyoti was caught on camera making comments considered insensitive and disrespectful of the sacred prasadam distributed to devotees by temple volunteers. The video, which shows her jokingly referring to themselves as the "richest beggars" while discussing the prasadam's quality and cost, quickly spread online, prompting widespread criticism from fans, Hindu religious organizations, and devotees. Many have lambasted her for making such statements while occupying a public position and during a religious pilgrimage. The controversy has reignited debates around public figures' responsibility and the growing influence of social media in amplifying sensitive matters. As calls for an apology mount, the incident serves as a reminder of the delicate balance between personal expression and respecting religious sentiments in an increasingly connected world.

## Four Arrested in Vinukonda Murder Case Following Dispute Outside Liquor Shop

TPN Bureau | November 22

Narasaraopet (Palnadu District): Police have arrested four persons, including two minors, in connection with the murder of a man who was brutally beaten to death following a minor quarrel in Vinukonda town. The arrests were announced by Narasaraopet Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) M. Hanumantha Rao during a press conference held on Saturday. According to the DSP, the victim, identified as Achu Katla Rambabu, a resident of Anguluru village in Epuru mandal, sustained fatal injuries when a minor dispute erupted on November 10 evening near a liquor shop in Vinukonda.

The preliminary investigation revealed that Rambabu was passing by the liquor outlet where the accused were present. He reportedly spat as he walked past, which the accused misinterpreted as a deliberate act directed towards them. Feeling insulted, the accused confronted Rambabu, leading to a heated argument. In the midst of the altercation, Rambabu allegedly struck one of the accused, provoking the group's violent response.



The four men attacked him mercilessly using their hands and legs, inflicting severe injuries. Following the assault, locals alerted authorities, and Rambabu was immediately shifted to the Vinukonda Government Hospital for treatment. Despite medical efforts, he succumbed to his injuries on November 13. Medical reports later confirmed that the victim sustained critical internal injuries to his heart and liver, which proved fatal.

DSP Hanumantha Rao stated that police teams swiftly launched an investigation based on eyewitness accounts and surveillance footage collected from nearby cameras. The evidence traced the suspects' movements and helped

identify all those involved in the crime. On Saturday morning, all four accused were apprehended from different locations in and around Vinukonda. "Two of the accused are minors, and all four played active roles in the assault that led to Rambabu's death," the DSP said.

He added that the police meticulously examined CCTV footage that clearly captured the sequence of events leading up to the attack. The suspects were taken into custody and will be produced before the court as part of legal proceedings, he added. The DSP also urged the public to exercise restraint in such trivial disputes and avoid letting minor provocations escalate into violent incidents.

"In this case, what started as a misunderstanding resulted in a needless loss of life. Strict legal action will be taken to ensure justice is served," he emphasized. Vinukonda Circle Inspector Balagani Prabhakar and staff from the local police station were present at the press conference. Police have intensified vigilance in the area to prevent similar incidents and have appealed for community cooperation in maintaining public order.

The arrests have brought some relief to the victim's family, though the tragedy underscores the dangers of impulsive violence. Investigations are ongoing as the police prepare to file detailed charges in court.





# Administraction Stalled at Dr YSR Horticultural University as VC Post Remains Vacant for 3 Months



TPN Bureau | November 22, Venkatramannagudem, West Godavari: The Dr. YSR Horticultural University in Venkatramannagudem, one of Andhra Pradesh's key

agricultural research institutions, has been without a Vice-Chancellor (VC) for nearly three months, throwing its administration into disarray. The university, a vi-

tal center for horticultural education and research, has found itself stuck in "temporary mode," with day-to-day operations continuing but strategic progress at

a standstill. Former VC Prof. Gopal retired on August 31 this year. Since then, neither a permanent nor temporary replacement has been appointed. Al-

though three senior professors' names were sent to the Principal Secretary for consideration, the file has not moved forward. Meanwhile, Prof. Gopal's petition seeking an extension of tenure till the age of 65 is pending in court, leaving the university without clear leadership. The absence of a VC has crippled major decision-making processes. Nearly Rs.10 crore in RKVY (Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana) funds allocated for research and infrastructure remain unspent, as approvals cannot be issued without the VC's signature. Officials warn that if the funds aren't utilized soon, the central government may withdraw them. Essential projects aimed at improving crop research, disease control, and hybrid variety development have stall

ed, delaying benefits to farmers across the state. The Registrar, continuing from the previous administration, has limited authority to take key decisions. With an annual budget exceeding Rs.100 crore, the university requires strong govern-

ance to manage its 600-plus staff, 10 constituent colleges, 30 research stations, and 4 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs). In the absence of leadership, faculty and scientists at the university are struggling with halted project approvals, de-

layed publications, and academic uncertainties for postgraduate and doctoral students.

Experts caution that the ongoing vacuum directly affects farmers, research outcomes, and the academic careers of hundreds of students. While other universities have promptly appointed acting VCs in similar situations, the inaction here highlights deep administrative neglect. With a massive institutional network dependent on quick decisions, the delay in appointing a Vice-Chancellor has turned into a question of accountability. As one senior scientist put it, "The entire system is waiting for one decision." The university community now anxiously asks: When will leadership return to Venkatramannagudem?



## Kambala Srinivasa Rao Extends Financial Aid to Road Accident Victims, Promises Continued Support

TPN Bureau | November 22 Rajamahendravaram: In a moving gesture that reflected compassion and humanity, Bharatiya Janata Party leader and Viswa Hindu Dharma Ramasena president Kambala Srinivasa Rao personally visited two families affected by recent road accidents in East Godavari district, extending financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh each and assuring them of continued support during their recovery. The two victims, Madi Ratna Teja Dora (30) from Rampachodavaram and Erula Ramesh from Koti Keshavaram village in Korukonda mandal are currently undergoing treatment for severe injuries at Sai Hospital, Rajamahendravaram.

Their families, struggling with emotional and financial distress, were taken by surprise when Kambala Srinivasa Rao arrived at the hospital to console them and offer help. Overwhelmed by emotion, the relatives could hardly speak, expressing deep gratitude for the leader's timely intervention. "I will continue to help until their treatment is completed," assured Kambala Srinivasa Rao, emphasizing that no family should feel abandoned in a time of tragedy. He added that his assistance would not

stop with a single donation but would continue as long as necessary to help the victims regain stability. Kambala Srinivasa Rao's compassion has been widely recognized in the East Godavari region, where he has played an active role in both spiritual and social service initiatives. From the tribal areas of Gokavaram and Rampachodavaram to Korukonda, Seethanagaram, Rajanagaram, and Burugupudi, he has initiated several welfare programs promoting community development and religious harmony. Residents describe him as a leader who responds swiftly to genuine human needs rather than confining himself to party activities. Many locals observed that leaders of such empathy are increasingly rare, and acts like this remind society that true service stems from love, not obligation. "Anyone can succeed as a political leader," said one resident, "but to win as a human being, one must have a heart like his." Kambala Srinivasa Rao's gesture has once again highlighted that humanity remains the greatest virtue. His aid not only eased the victims' immediate pain but also revived faith in compassionate leadership within the community.

## Krishna Veni College to Host ANU Inter-Collegiate Volleyball Tournament from November 25

TPN Bureau | November 22 Narasaraopet (Palnadu District): Krishna Veni Degree College, Narasaraopet, will be the venue for the Acharya Nagarjuna University (ANU) Inter-Collegiate Men's Volleyball Tournament and University Selections scheduled to take place from November 25 to 27. College Principal Dr. Nathani Venkateswarlu announced that all arrangements have been made for the smooth conduct of the three-day sports event, which will witness enthusiastic participation from various affiliated colleges under ANU. According to the organizers, the tournament will be inaugurated by prominent guests, including Chilakaluripet MLA and former minister Pattipati Pullarao, Narasaraopet MLA Dr. Chadalavada Aravinda Babu, and ANU Rector Prof. Ramineni Siva Rama Prasad. The distinguished delegates are expected to grace the opening



ceremony and formally declare the games open. Tournament Organizing Secretary Eedara Aadi Babu stated that extensive preparations are underway to ensure that the sports event is conducted with discipline and sportsmanship. The organizing committee, comprising faculty members and student volunteers, is coordinating to provide proper facilities such as accommodation, refreshments, and first-aid services for participating teams. The Volleyball Tournament serves as a platform for identifying promising players who will represent Acharya

Nagarjuna University in upcoming state and national-level competitions. College Principal Dr. Nathani emphasized that such events not only promote physical fitness but also inspire teamwork, leadership, and a competitive spirit among students. He further invited all affiliated colleges under Acharya Nagarjuna University to take part in the tournament and make the event a grand success through active participation and fair play. The games will be conducted on the Krishna Veni Degree College grounds, with league and knockout rounds to determine the final winners over the

three-day schedule. Local sports enthusiasts, students, and faculty are eagerly awaiting the event, which is expected to add vibrancy to the campus atmosphere. The college management expressed gratitude to the university authorities and public representatives for their continued encouragement toward sports and student welfare. The three-day tournament is seen as an example of the renewed emphasis on sports activities within the university's affiliated institutions, aiming to nurture young talent while strengthening the spirit of unity and healthy competition in the region.



## Farmers Must Adopt Cluster-Based Cultivation: Collector Kritika Shukla

TPN Bureau | November 22 Narasaraopet (Palnadu District): District Collector Kritika Shukla has advised farmers to adopt the cluster-based farming system to achieve higher returns by cultivating crops suited to their respective regions. She emphasized that planned cultivation in clusters helps streamline production, processing, and marketing, creating profitable opportunities for both farmers and entrepreneurs. Speaking at the SC/ST Grievance Redressal Programme held at the district collectorate on Saturday, the Collector distributed moringa (drumstick) seeds to members of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), as well as computers and blankets to welfare hostels. The event aimed to provide resources to encourage sustainable agriculture and promote digital learning among rural students.

Addressing the FPO farmers, Kritika Shukla said that having all facilities, right from crop production to processing and packaging—within a single cluster leads to greater efficiency and income stability. She urged farmers to follow natural farming methods by avoiding chemical fertilizers and pesticides, explaining that such practices ensure better soil health and long-term profitability. To support farmers interested in establishing moringa processing units, the district administration will provide land and ex-

tend loans under subsidy schemes. "We should not stop with seed distribution. The goal should be to make moringa cultivation a reliable income source for several seasons. For that, regular training programs for farmers are essential," she instructed agricultural officers. CSR Initiative for Welfare Hostels As part of the same event, the Collector distributed computers and blankets to students of welfare hostels. The equipment was provided by Infosys under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds. She directed hostel wardens to make use of the new computers by organizing computer literacy and training programs for students, enabling them to acquire digital skills at an early stage. The SC/ST grievance cell, which reviewed 11 petitions during the session, was instructed to ensure timely resolution of all complaints. The Collector stressed the need for coordinated action among departments to enhance transparency and accountability in addressing social and welfare issues. Joint Collector Suraj Dhanunjay Ganore, DRDA Project Director Jhansi, and DRRO Murali were among the officials present at the program, which concluded with a call to strengthen farmer collectives and improve rural education infrastructure through community partnerships.

## Palnadu's Historic Valor Remembered at Karampudi Festival with Cockfight

TPN Bureau | November 22 Karampudi: Karampudi village in Palnadu district came alive with vibrant celebrations as the Palnati Veerachar Utsavalu reached its most thrilling phase—the symbolic Kodiporu (cockfight), which reenacts the ancient Palnati war episode between the forces of Brahma Naidu and Nayakuralu Nagamma. The event drew huge crowds and notable guests, reflecting the enduring pride and cultural legacy of Palnadu. Macherla MLA Julakanti Brahmananda Reddy took up the role of Brahma Naidu by symbolically holding the rooster named Chittimallu, while prominent physician Dr. Unnam Nagamallikarjuna



Rao represented Nayakuralu Nagamma, holding her rooster Shivangidega. The mock cockfight, steeped in tradition, recreated the legendary contest that marked a key turning point in Palnati history nearly 900 years ago. The event was graced by Narasaraopet MP Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu, Palnadu district TDP president Kommalapati Sridhar, film producer Bandla Ganesh, and industrialist Karnati Venkateswara Rao, among others. The guests

praised the festival's unique spirit and its role in preserving local history. Speaking on the occasion, MP Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu said that the Palnati festivals hold rare historical and emotional significance. "Across the world, heroes are remembered through grand celebrations in Rome and elsewhere but I consider it my privilege that such valor is celebrated in my very parliamentary constituency of Palnadu," he remarked. District TDP chief Kommalapati

Sridhar emphasized the responsibility of every Palnadu citizen to preserve and spread awareness of this glorious heritage across the nation. He pointed out that the Palnadu saga, which symbolizes courage and sacrifice, remains a timeless testament to Andhra's cultural strength. Film producer Bandla Ganesh noted that these valor festivals have continued unbroken for nearly nine centuries. "Generations of Palnadu people have protected their traditions, carrying forward their ancestors' legacy with pride," he said. Following the event, special rituals were conducted at the Veerula Devalayam (Temple of Heroes) and other nearby shrines.



# Trump’s Trade Power, India’s Missed Opportunity



U.S. President Donald Trump’s recent Asia tour has highlighted the growing influence of trade as a tool of geopolitical power—an area where India appears to have missed the memo. Analysts note that while China has leveraged both its seller and buyer power, India has yet to fully exploit its potential in global trade.

Trump, who often emphasizes the U.S. as the world’s largest importer, has used this economic leverage to shape relationships with exporting nations. During his interactions with China,

he demonstrated how import dependence can translate into bargaining power, particularly in commodities like soybeans and corn, vital for Chinese agriculture. By contrast, India’s imports of U.S. soybeans, corn, and edible oils—totaling over \$18 billion annually—remain underutilized in diplomatic strategy.

China’s success, experts say, stems from a mix of forward planning, technological adoption, and strategic patience. The nation has invested in genetically modified crops, improved yields, and diversified im-

port sources, ensuring it can negotiate from a position of strength. India, meanwhile, continues to rely heavily on trade protectionism and domestic lobbying pressures, limiting its ability to wield similar influence.

The recent events underscore the shift in global power dynamics: reputation, moral authority, or political history no longer determine leverage—economic power does. Trump reportedly showed condescension toward India’s leadership, emphasizing that hard power is measured by what nations can

offer rather than what they expect. Analysts argue that India’s hesitancy to strategically use its import capacity has cost it potential influence in bilateral negotiations.

Experts point to lessons from history: like Deng Xiaoping’s dictum to “bide your time, hide your power,” nations must exercise patience and deploy strategic leverage rather than celebrate economic size prematurely. India, while the world’s fifth-largest economy, has yet to convert its market size into tangible diplomatic influence.

Commerce Minister Pi-

yush Goyal has urged Indian entrepreneurs to adapt, innovate, and move beyond tariff protections. Observers say this moment resembles India’s 1991 balance-of-payments crisis, signaling that reform may now be necessary, driven not by financial collapse but by geopolitical imperatives.

As global trade reshapes power structures, India’s challenge will be to align domestic policy with strategic opportunity, ensuring its buying power becomes a currency in international diplomacy rather than a missed chance.

# Amazon Layoffs Highlight AI Transition Challenges



Global tech industry trembled last week as Amazon announced the layoff of 14,000 employees, part of a broader wave that has seen over 1,72,000 jobs cut across American tech giants, including Meta, Microsoft, Salesforce, and Google. These reductions have sparked concerns about the human cost of automation, especially as artificial intelligence continues to transform workplaces worldwide.

The layoffs contrast sharply with the soaring market value of AI hardware and software leaders. Nvidia, whose chips power AI data centers, recently reached a staggering \$5 trillion market capitalization, while OpenAI, in partnership with Microsoft, plans to develop 30 gigawatts of computing resources at a cost of \$1.4 trillion. Such figures underscore a growing divide between AI-driven wealth creation and workforce instability.

Jensen Huang, Nvidia’s CEO, recently highlighted the future demand for skilled trades like electricians and plumbers as AI infrastructure expands. His comments illustrate the duality of the AI revolution: while some jobs are replaced by automation, new roles emerge that require technical, adaptive, and hybrid skill sets. Analysts emphasize that long-term success depends on the ability of workers to reinvent themselves, adapt to new tools, and blend core skills with technological fluency.

The rapid rise of AI has also amplified demand for cybersecurity, data management, and AI-specific roles, as automation tools proliferate. “Agentic AI,” which integrates intermediate technologies to enhance automation, demonstrates the need for professionals who can combine coding, industry knowledge, and problem-solving skills. As AI-generated content grows, so does the need for human oversight to manage misuse, maintain trust, and ensure quality.

Historical parallels offer lessons for today. The late Sitar-am Kesri, former Congress treasurer, was known for his impeccable trustworthiness—a quality still vital in the AI era. Similarly, past technological revolutions, such as electrification or industrial mechanization, created fears of job losses but ultimately gave rise to new roles. Roy Amara’s law, which notes that people overestimate short-term impacts and underestimate long-term change, remains relevant: AI may disrupt now, but it also generates opportunities for those prepared to adapt.

Experts advise tech professionals to focus on continuous learning, cultivate human-centric skills like trust and teamwork, and maintain financial prudence to navigate this transition. While AI is reshaping the workplace, the combination of human judgment, adaptability, and resilience will remain indispensable in the new digital economy.

# GST Reform 2.0: Turning Compliance Into Empowerment



Since its rollout in 2017, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India has been both a compliance challenge and an unintentional digital revolution. What began as a complex tax system has evolved into a live, verifiable digital ledger of the economy, enabling businesses and authorities alike to leverage real-time data. Mandatory e-invoicing and the GST Network (GSTN) turned every invoice into a trusted financial footprint, creating a foundation for credit access, financial inclusion, and data-driven governance.

For small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), GST filings became a financial passport. Lenders could now assess a firm’s health instantly, unlocking loans and invoice financing. Yet, this digital advantage is uneven. Only 12% of MSMEs are fully digitalised, leaving many reliant on paper records or outsourced accounting. This digital divide risks creating a two-speed economy, where businesses in digitally advanced states like Karnataka,

Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu thrive, while those in less-connected regions lag behind.

GST Reform 2.0 aims to bridge this gap. The 56th GST Council meeting introduced people-centric reforms, including a simplified two-rate tax structure and reduced levies on daily essentials. For businesses, the changes are transformative: provisional, risk-based refunds cover 90% of claims, easing cash-flow constraints, while a streamlined, automated GST registration scheme promises onboarding of low-risk entrepreneurs in just three days. The establishment of the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) by December 2025 adds a credible, rules-based enforcement layer.

The convergence of the initial digital engine and these deliberate reforms creates a powerful synergy. Real-time GST data not only empowers businesses with financial tools but also enables authorities to detect fraud efficiently. However, for the system to

achieve its full potential, digital literacy and access must improve. Experts advocate a three-pronged approach: scaling practical digital training, promoting affordable tech platforms for micro-enterprises, and using policy incentives to encourage adoption.

Looking ahead, GST is poised to become more than a tax mechanism—it could emerge as a cornerstone of India’s economic strategy. Recognising the GST data infrastructure as a national public good, similar to UPI, could stimulate private innovation in finance and supply-chain management. The next phase will test whether GST 2.0 can drive inclusive growth, ensuring that every MSME, regardless of location or size, benefits from this digital transformation.

GST’s journey—from chaotic rollout to digital backbone and now to a tool of empowerment—could redefine India’s economic landscape, shaping competitiveness and inclusivity for the decade ahead.

# India Pushes for Globalised Rupee Ecosystem

India is taking significant steps to reduce reliance on the U.S. dollar and strengthen its financial sovereignty amid an increasingly uncertain global trade environment. Geopolitical tensions, sanctions threats on Russian oil, and inconsistent U.S. tariff policies have accelerated efforts to develop a rupee-led international settlement system.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has spearheaded key initiatives to promote rupee internationalisation. In October, the RBI allowed authorised dealer (AD) banks and their overseas branches to extend rupee-denominated loans to residents, businesses, and financial institutions in Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka. This is facilitated through Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs), which now number around 200, up from 156 in February. The expansion allows bilateral trade settlements in rupees, bypassing the U.S. dollar, reducing conversion costs, and limiting exposure to dollar volatility. Surplus SRVA balances can also be invested in corporate bonds and commercial papers, enhancing liquidity and attracting foreign participation.

In parallel, the RBI has launched the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), or Digital Rupee (e), a blockchain-based, fully regulated digital token. The digital rupee supports atomic settlements via Delivery vs Payment (DvP) protocols, ensuring efficiency, privacy, and transparency. The RBI will also publish reference exchange rates for major trading partners’ currencies, starting with UAE dirhams and Indonesian rupees, to streamline INR-based trade settlements.



GIFT City in Gujarat has emerged as a hub for these developments. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Foreign Currency Settlement System in October, enabling faster and safer transactions in major currencies, starting with the U.S. dollar and expanding to the euro, yen, and pound. Meanwhile, BRICS countries are exploring integration of their digital currency systems, aiming to reduce intermediary costs and promote de-dollarisation. The

New Development Bank plans its first INR-denominated bond issuance to encourage local currency financing.

India is also planning onshore rupee bonds worth \$400-500 million with three- to five-year maturities by March 2026. These moves could expand investment opportunities in masala bonds and reinforce India’s role in global financial markets. Future plans include linking SRVAs with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) for international settlements

and integrating with central bank digital currencies, potentially enabling GIFT City to operate as a 24×7 global financial hub.

Analysts say these steps mark a strategic shift from a globalised outlook to transactional diplomacy, prioritising national financial sovereignty. By reducing dependence on offshore financial centres, India aims to enhance regional stability, attract investment, and strengthen the rupee’s global presence.



# PM Modi meets Indian origin tech entrepreneurs, community members in Johannesburg

**TPN Correspondent | Delhi**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Indian-origin tech innovators and members of the Indian community in Johannesburg on Friday urging them to strengthen their collaboration with India and contribute to the country's growth in emerging sectors. Modi is in South Africa to participate in the G20 Leaders' Summit, which has brought together world leaders for high-level discussions on global economic and geopolitical challenges.

In a social media post, the Prime Minister described the meeting as a "fruitful interaction," noting that the entrepreneurs shared insights into their work across a wide spectrum of industries, including FinTech, social media platforms, agriculture technology, education, healthcare and medical devices. Modi encouraged them to continue deepening ties with India's innovation ecosystem, highlighting the government's support for startups, digital infrastructure and cross-border collaboration.

The Indian diaspora in South Africa, one of the oldest and most influen-



tial abroad, also played a significant part in the interaction. Modi met several community members who are actively engaged with local organisations supporting cultural, educational and social initiatives. He acknowledged their contributions in strengthening India-South Africa ties and appreciated their efforts in preserving Indian heritage while integrating with South African society.

The Prime Minister highlighted the role of the diaspora as a bridge between the two nations, noting that Indian-origin professionals and entrepreneurs are making significant contributions to South Africa's technology and business landscape. He also emphasised India's growing importance as a global innovation hub and invited the community to be part of the country's expanding digital and economic transformation.

Modi's outreach to the Indian community has become a hallmark of his international visits, reflecting his government's emphasis on harnessing global Indian talent to support national development goals. The Johannesburg meeting continued this tradition, reinforcing India's engagement with its diaspora at a time when technological collaboration is gaining greater geopolitical significance.

# Lobbying intensifies for Bihar Assembly Speaker post

## BJP's Prem Kumar emerges frontrunner

**TPN Correspondent | Patna**

Intense lobbying has begun within the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) for the crucial post of Bihar Assembly Speaker, just a day after Chief Minister Nitish Kumar allocated portfolios to his new cabinet. With a special Assembly session expected soon, both the BJP and JD(U) are vying for the influential position, party insiders confirmed on Saturday.

Among the contenders, senior BJP leader and nine-term MLA Prem Kumar has emerged as the leading candidate. Elected repeatedly from the Gaya Town constituency, Kumar is one of the BJP's most experienced legislators. He previously served as the state's cooperative minister and was Leader of Opposition between 2015 and 2017. In the recent polls, he defeated Congress candidate Akhauri Onkar Nath by over 26,000 votes.

Sources said that JD(U) is also actively lobbying for the post, with the name



of Damodar Rawat, the MLA from Jhajha, gaining traction within the party. JD(U) leaders argue that since BJP's Awadhesh Narain Singh currently heads the state legislative council, the Speaker's chair should be allotted to Nitish Kumar's party under power-sharing norms. The BJP, on the other hand, is reportedly eyeing the Deputy Speaker position if the top slot goes to JD(U).

A special Assembly session will be convened soon to administer the oath to all 243 newly elected members and conduct the Speaker election. The date will be finalised at the state cabinet meeting scheduled for November 25. The Governor will appoint a Protem Speaker, who will oversee the swearing-in of the MLAs before the formal election.

In the last Assembly, BJP's Nand Kishore Yadav served as Speaker while JD(U)'s Narendra Narayan Yadav held the Deputy Speaker position.

Nitish Kumar, sworn in on Thursday for a historic 10th term, leads a cabinet that includes 14 BJP ministers, 8 JD(U) ministers, along with members from LJP (Ram Vilas), HAM and Rashtriya Lok Morcha. With lobbying intensifying, the Speaker election is set to be one of the first major political tests for the renewed NDA alliance.

# President Murmu Pays Tribute to Sri Sathya Sai Baba on Birth Centenary



**TPN Correspondent | Delhi**

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday lauded spiritual leader Sri Sathya Sai Baba, saying he

inspired millions worldwide to follow the path of selfless service. She made the remarks while addressing the birth centenary celebrations of Sai Baba at Puttaparthi in Sri Sathya Sai district, Andhra Pradesh.

Highlighting his endur-

ing philosophy, President Murmu said, "Sri Sathya Sai Baba emphasised that service to mankind is service to God. He linked spirituality with selfless service and personal transformation, inspiring millions to dedicate themselves to the welfare of others." She added that Sathya Sai Baba encouraged his followers to align spiritual growth with public welfare, motivating devotees across the globe to serve the underprivileged.

Murmu also emphasized the universal and timeless nature of Sai Baba's teachings. "His message of 'love all and serve all, help ever and hurt never' is eternal. He believed the world is our school, and the five human values of truth, good conduct, peace, love, and non-violence are our curriculum," she said. The President noted that the Sri Sathya Sai organisation continues to actively volunteer in community service, reflecting the

saint's philosophy of selfless love.

President Murmu arrived at Sri Sathya Sai Airport in Puttaparthi around 11 am, where she was received by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and other dignitaries. Following her arrival, she attended a special programme at the Poornachandra Auditorium, part of the centenary celebrations.

The event marked a major tribute to the spiritual leader whose teachings on compassion, selflessness, and human values continue to influence followers globally. By linking spirituality with social service, Sathya Sai Baba's message remains relevant, inspiring communities in India and abroad to contribute meaningfully to society.

The centenary celebrations included cultural programmes, spiritual discourses, and community service initiatives, reflecting the life and teachings of one of India's most revered saints.

# US Court Orders Byju's Founder to Pay \$1.07 Billion After Default Ruling



**TPN Correspondent | Delhi**

A US bankruptcy court has ordered Byju Raveendran, founder of EdTech giant Byju's, to pay over \$1.07 billion, holding him personally liable for the movement and alleged concealment of funds from Byju's Alpha, the company's US-based financing arm. The ruling was issued by Judge Brendan Shannon of the Delaware Bankruptcy Court after Raveendran repeatedly failed to comply with court directions to appear and provide documents.

The judgment is a default ruling, which occurs when a party does not participate in litigation or ignores court orders, allowing the court to decide the case without a trial. Byju Raveendran has denied all allegations and announced plans to appeal the US court decision, calling it expedited and claiming it denied him the opportunity to present a defence. His legal team argued that the court ignored relevant facts, including that the funds were used for the benefit of Think & Learn Private Limited (TLPL), Byju's India-based parent company, rather than for personal gain.

Byju's Alpha, incorporated in Delaware in 2021, was set up as a special-purpose vehicle to manage a \$1.2 billion term loan from a consortium of global lenders. The subsidiary had no operational business and primarily acted as a holding entity for the loan proceeds. Court filings revealed that \$533 million was transferred from Alpha to Camshaft Capital, a small Miami-based hedge fund, and subsequently moved through affiliated entities such as InspireLearn and offshore trusts without any consideration returning to Byju's Alpha.

The default judgment marks a major legal setback for Byju's, which has been grappling with financial and operational challenges in recent years. Observers note that the appeal process could extend the case timeline, and Raveendran's legal team is expected to challenge the court's expedited handling, emphasizing his right to present a full defence.

This ruling underscores increasing scrutiny of global fund management practices by Indian founders operating US-based financing entities, especially in high-profile EdTech ventures.

# Union Minister Accuses DK Shivakumar of MLA Lobbying in Karnataka



**TPN Correspondent | New Delhi**

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Saturday accused Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah of attempting to buy support from MLAs amid an escalating leadership tussle in the state.

Speaking to reporters, Joshi claimed that Shivakumar recently visited Bengaluru Central Prison to meet two jailed Congress MLAs, Vinay Kulkarni and Veerendra Pappi, undertrial prisoners, allegedly to secure their support after release. "Why had he not met them all these days? This meeting was clearly aimed at gathering numbers for a vote on the Chief Minister's post," Joshi said.

The Union Minister added that both leaders are actively mobilising MLAs to consolidate their positions, as Siddaramaiah faces calls to step down. "Whenever the Chief Minister is asked to resign, he insists on a vote. Both are busy ensuring legislative backing," Joshi claimed.

In response, Congress MLA HC Balakrishna, a close Shivakumar supporter, said the Deputy CM has his own strength and does not need external support. "All matters will be decided by the high command. Shivakumar has instructed leaders not to embarrass the party through public statements," Balakrishna clarified. He stressed that MLAs expressing personal opinions should not be construed as Shivakumar seeking support.

The allegations come amid intensifying Congress infighting in Karnataka, over demands for a leadership change after two-and-a-half years of the Siddaramaiah government. Party president Mallikarjun Kharge, who visited Bengaluru on Friday, is staying on to address the crisis. He is scheduled to meet Siddaramaiah and is expected to hold talks with Shivakumar to resolve the leadership dispute.

This episode highlights growing tensions within the ruling Congress in Karnataka, with the high command under pressure to mediate between warring factions and maintain party cohesion ahead of the next political developments.

The situation remains fluid, and political observers are closely watching how the high command manages internal dissent and the potential implications for state governance.



## Trump’s New Ukraine Plan Puts Zelenskyy in a Difficult Corner



TPN Correspondent | Dhaka

US President Donald Trump’s newly unveiled 28-point plan to end Russia’s war in Ukraine has intensified pressure on Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, pushing him toward concessions that heavily favour Moscow. The proposal, presented in Kyiv this week, demands territorial compromises, military reductions and guarantees that Ukraine will never join NATO.

Trump has argued that Ukraine can no longer sustain the battlefield struggle, claiming Zelenskyy “doesn’t have the cards” to continue resisting Russia. Speaking at the White House, Trump said he expects a response from the Ukrainian leader by next Thursday, saying, “We think we have a way of getting peace. He’s going to have to approve it.”

Zelenskyy, grappling with corruption scandals, battlefield losses and a harsh winter as Russia intensifies strikes on Ukraine’s energy grid, admitted the country faces one of the most difficult decisions in its history. Though he has not spoken to Trump since the plan became public, Zelenskyy says a discussion is expected soon.

Key elements of Trump’s plan

include Ukraine conceding the entire Donbas region, despite large parts remaining under Ukrainian control. Analysts note that Russia would need years to fully occupy the territory at its current pace, but Trump insists its loss is inevitable. The proposal also calls for a drastic downsizing of Ukraine’s armed forces and demands from European allies to block Kyiv’s future NATO membership.

The plan was delivered by US Army Secretary Dan Driscoll, surprising even his own staff. Early indications suggest Ukraine views the proposal as a starting point, though Trump’s willingness to negotiate further is unclear.

Zelenskyy faces political risks at home, where a \$100 million kickbacks scandal has already led to ministerial resignations. Experts warn that accepting Trump’s terms could endanger his government’s stability and undermine Ukrainian national dignity.

With looming energy shortages, uncertain European financial support and unrelenting Russian attacks, Ukraine must now weigh its survival against the cost of concessions that many fear would be impossible for the public to accept.

## China Builds World’s First Nuclear-Resistant Artificial Floating Island



TPN Correspondent | Tokyo

China is advancing a groundbreaking maritime project with the construction of the world’s first artificial floating island capable of surviving nuclear blasts. The massive 78,000-tonne semi-submersible structure—officially named the Deep-Sea All-Weather Resident Floating Research Facility—is expected to become fully operational by 2028, marking a major leap in offshore engineering and strategic ocean research.

Comparable in size to China’s Fujian aircraft carrier, the twin-hull platform is designed for long-term deployment in deep seas. It can withstand 6-9 metre waves and endure Category 17 typhoons, the strongest tropical cyclones rated in China. The facility will be able to support 238 personnel for up to four months without resupply, enabling extended scientific missions in remote waters.

Project leader Lin Zhongqin, an academician with Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), told Economic Information Daily that rapid progress is underway: “We’re racing to complete the design and construction, aiming for operational status by 2028.”

A report in the South China Morning Post reveals that the platform’s resilience is en-

hanced by advanced metamaterial sandwich panels, engineered to convert intense shock waves—including nuclear blast pressure—into far milder impacts. The core superstructure includes protected compartments for emergency power, communications and navigation, making blast resistance crucial to ensuring uninterrupted operations.

According to a research team led by Professor Yang Deqing of SJTU, the platform is designed for all-weather, long-duration deep-sea residency, reflecting more than a decade of Chinese research into far-sea mobile bases. Measuring 138 metres in length and 85 metres in width, the facility stands 45 metres above the waterline, offering a stable and protected workspace even in extreme marine conditions.

Although officially presented as a civilian scientific facility, the design cites GJB 1060.1-1991, a Chinese military standard for nuclear blast protection—fueling speculation about possible dual-use strategic capabilities.

With its vast endurance, cutting-edge materials and unprecedented blast resistance, China’s floating island marks a new frontier in maritime engineering and deep-sea infrastructure development.

# Trump Administration to Launch Immigration Crackdown in New Orleans

TPN Bureau | Washington

The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump is preparing to target New Orleans in the next phase of its ongoing city-by-city immigration crackdown, according to one current and two former immigration officials familiar with the planning. The move marks a continuation of the administration’s intensified enforcement campaign, which has been rolling out across several major American cities in recent months.

Sources said that U.S. Border Patrol agents could arrive in New Orleans as early as Saturday, November 22, 2025, with operations expected to continue into January 2026. Officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the plans, added that enforcement activity is likely to scale down temporarily during



the Thanksgiving holiday on November 20 and again around Christmas.

The planned operation forms part of Trump’s broader strategy to tighten immi-

gration enforcement by deploying federal agents to targeted cities deemed to have high levels of undocumented migrants or insufficient local cooperation with federal

authorities. Earlier phases of the crackdown have included increased workplace raids, broader use of mobile fingerprinting units, and expanded detention measures.

While the administration has maintained that such operations are necessary to restore law and order, critics argue that the measures create fear within immigrant com-

munities and disrupt local economies. Civil rights groups have warned that aggressive raids risk sweeping up individuals with no criminal background and could strain relations between federal agencies and municipal governments.

New Orleans, known for its diverse population and strong cultural identity, has previously positioned itself as a city supportive of immigrant communities. Officials there have not yet commented publicly on the reported federal plan.

As the operation prepares to launch, questions remain about its scope, scale and potential impact on residents. With enforcement expected to extend over several weeks, New Orleans is poised to become the next focal point in the Trump administration’s escalating immigration policy drive.

## Over 300 Children Abducted in Nigerian School Attack After Updated Count

TPN Correspondent | UN

The number of victims in the St. Mary’s School mass abduction in Nigeria’s Niger state has risen significantly, with authorities confirming that 303 schoolchildren and 12 teachers were taken by armed assailants. The updated tally was released on Saturday by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), following a full verification and census at the Catholic-run institution.

Most Rev. Bulus Dauwa Yohanna, chairman of CAN’s Niger state chapter, said the revised figures emerged after a thorough assessment during his visit to the school on Friday. Earlier estimates had placed the number of abducted children at 215. Yohanna also revealed that 88 additional students were captured while attempting to flee during Monday’s attack in the remote Papi community. The



victims, both boys and girls aged between 10 and 18, were taken during a midnight raid on the school dormitories.

The abduction occurred just four days

after another kidnapping of 25 schoolchildren in neighbouring Kebbi state’s Maga town, located about 170 km away. No armed group has claimed responsibility yet, but se-

curity forces, along with local hunters, have been deployed to mount rescue operations.

Yohanna criticised the Niger state government for claiming the

school had resumed classes despite previous directives to shut schools in high-risk areas. He dismissed the statement as an “afterthought” and urged families to remain calm

and prayerful as efforts continue.

School kidnappings have become a recurring tragedy in Nigeria, where armed gangs frequently target educational institutions to attract maximum attention. UNICEF reported last year that only 37% of schools across 10 conflict-affected states have effective early warning systems for threat detection.

The attack coincides with renewed international scrutiny, including recent claims by US President Donald Trump about targeted killings of Christians in Nigeria—assertions contradicted by evidence showing that both Christians and Muslims have been victims of such attacks. The incident also unfolded as Nigeria’s National Security Adviser Nuhu Ribadu visited Washington for security discussions with US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth.

## “Wipe My A\*\*”: Ex-CIA Man On Pak Apology Demand Over ‘India Will Win’ Remark



TPN Correspondent | Kolkata

A diplomatic and political row has erupted after former CIA officer John Kiriakou revealed that Paki-

stan’s Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) attempted to pressure him into issuing an apology over comments he made on the military balance between India and Pa-

kistan. Instead of complying, Kiriakou responded with an intentionally crude message, saying he would “wipe” himself with the party’s letter de-

manding contrition.

The controversy began after Kiriakou told ANI in October that Pakistan would lose a conventional war with India, stress-

ing that “nothing good will come out of an actual war” between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. His remarks ignited backlash in Pakistan, resulting in a wave of online abuse and numerous death threats. “I’ve lost count of how many death threats I received,” he said during a podcast interview with Julian Dorey released on November 18.

PTI, led since 2023 by former Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi, issued a formal letter condemning Kiriakou’s remarks “in the strongest possible terms.” The party demanded an “immediate apology” to former Prime Minister Imran Khan, its members and “the people of Pakistan.” According to Kiriakou, the letter came directly from the PTI president.

Instead of softening his stance, Kiriakou wrote back bluntly:

“In regards to your demand for an apology, I wipe my a\*\* with your demands.” He added that despite legal advice urging him to keep a low profile, he felt compelled to respond directly. PTI has not replied since.

Kiriakou, who served 15 years with the CIA, played a key role in US counterterrorism operations after 9/11, including the 2002 capture of top al-Qaeda operative Abu Zubaydah. He later became a whistleblower in 2007 by exposing the CIA’s torture programme, a move that led to his imprisonment for 23 months. Reflecting on his past, he maintains he has “no regrets, no remorse.”

The latest dispute underscores the heightened sensitivities surrounding India-Pakistan relations and the intense political polarization within Pakistan’s leadership.



# GST 2.0 Reforms To Put ₹2 Lakh Crore In People’s Hands: Sitharaman

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday announced sweeping GST reforms under “GST 2.0,” aimed at simplifying the tax system and boosting affordability for the common man. Speaking at an outreach programme in Visakhapatnam, she said the reforms will leave an additional ₹2 lakh crore in the hands of consumers by easing their tax burden and improving liquidity in the economy.

The revamped system, effective from September 22, will replace the existing five tax slabs (0%, 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%) with just two — 5% for essential goods and 18% for others. Sitharaman highlighted that daily necessities such as soaps, toothpaste and household essentials will now fall under the 5% or nil tax category, while life-saving medicines will see their rates cut from 12% to 5% or nil. Big-ticket items including two-wheelers, cars, televisions, and cement



will move from 28% to 18%, offering significant relief to the middle class. “Nearly 99% of goods that were taxed at 12% earlier have been shifted into the 5% slab under

the new GST 2.0 system,” Sitharaman said, underscoring the direct benefits to poor and middle-class families. She credited GST revenues for enabling infrastructure projects like

airports, expressways, and Vande Bharat trains. Revenues have grown from ₹7.19 lakh crore in 2018 to ₹22.08 lakh crore in 2025, with taxpayers increasing from 65 lakh to 1.51

crore over the same period. Calling it the biggest reform since the introduction of “One Nation, One Tax” in 2017, Sitharaman said GST 2.0 is designed with the

common man at its core. The government hopes the simplified structure will encourage greater spending and drive economic growth by making goods more affordable across the country.

# Urban Company Shares Soar Over 10% After Strong Market Debut



Urban Company shares made a bumper debut on the Indian stock exchanges on Wednesday (September 17), listing with a stellar premium and continuing their rally through the trading session. The stock opened at ₹162.25 apiece on the NSE,

reflecting a 64.77% jump over the issue price of ₹103. On the BSE, it listed at ₹161.00, marking a 56.31% premium. Soon after listing, Urban Company surged further to hit an intraday high of ₹179.00 apiece, nearly 74% above its IPO price and more

than 10% higher than its listing price. The ₹1,900 crore IPO, open between September 10 and 12, received overwhelming investor response, being subscribed 103.63 times. The grey market premium (GMP) had already hinted at a

strong debut, indicating nearly 50% gains over the issue price. Urban Company, a tech-enabled marketplace for home and beauty services, operates in 51 cities across India, UAE, and Singapore. The successful listing is being viewed as a boost for In-

dia’s startup IPO market, which has seen cautious momentum in recent years. Post listing, analysts largely advised investors to hold the stock for long-term gains. Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities, said the company offers a compelling structural growth story in the expanding home services segment. He recommended allotted investors to hold, while non-allotted investors should adopt a wait-and-watch strategy for a possible price dip. Shivani Nyati of Swastika Investmart suggested partial profit booking while holding the rest with a stop loss at ₹120. Meanwhile, Harshal Dasani of INVAsset PMS highlighted that the stock’s opening market capitalization of nearly ₹25,300 crore reflects investor conviction but also raises expectations on profitability and execution.

At 2:05 PM, Urban Company was trading at ₹163.30 apiece on the BSE, up 58.54% from its issue price, underscoring strong investor confidence in the company’s long-term growth prospects.

# Gold and Silver prices hit record high, driven by global uncertainty



Gold and silver prices surged to fresh record highs this week, supported by safe-haven demand amid rising global uncertainty, tariff concerns, and geopolitical tensions. Analysts expect the bullish momentum in bullion to continue in the near term as investors turn to precious metals for security during volatile times.

According to the Indian Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA), 24-carat gold closed at ₹1,09,707 per 10 grams on Friday, registering a sharp gain of ₹1,670 compared to Monday’s ₹1,08,037. Gold has remained above the ₹1 lakh mark throughout September, having started the month at ₹1,04,075.

Prices of 22-carat gold followed suit, ending the week at ₹1,00,492 per 10 grams, up from ₹98,962 earlier in the week. Silver prices also maintained a strong rally. The metal ended the week at ₹1,28,008 per kilo-

gram, higher by ₹3,595 from Monday’s ₹1,24,413. With silver holding firm above ₹1.20 lakh levels, investor appetite remains robust.

On the futures market, October gold contracts settled at ₹1,09,356

per 10 grams, up 0.34 per cent, reflecting sustained optimism. Globally, Comex gold traded at \$3,680.7 per ounce, extending gains as traders sought refuge from economic and political uncertainties. Analysts believe the upward trend will remain intact, citing geopolitical risks, a fragile economic outlook, and ongoing tariff issues. Jateen Trivedi of LKP Securities noted that gold gained 0.35 per cent at ₹1,09,350, with Comex prices factoring in expectations of a possible U.S. Fed rate cut to support economic growth. Despite being in overbought territory, bullion continues to attract premium buying. Market watchers see gold trading within a range of ₹1,07,000–₹1,12,000 in the coming weeks, reinforcing its role as a safe-haven asset during global uncertainty.

# US tariffs to hit 8% of India’s auto component output



The Indian auto component industry is facing significant headwinds as high US tariffs are expected to impact nearly 8% of the sector’s total production, according to ratings agency Icra. Auto component exports contribute almost 30% to the industry’s revenues, with the United States alone accounting for 27% of this share. However, the recent imposition of a 50% tariff on Indian goods has placed Indian exporters at a relative disadvantage compared to several Asian peers.

Despite the hurdles, Indian auto component exports to the US have witnessed steady growth in recent years. Shipments rose from USD 4.1 billion in FY2021 to USD 6 billion in FY2022, followed by USD 6.5 billion in FY2023, and USD 6.8 billion in FY2024. For FY2025, exports are projected to touch USD 7.3 billion, reflecting the strong demand for Indian-made components. However, experts caution that the escalating tariff regime could slow this momentum in the near future.

While China, Japan, Vietnam, and Indonesia face tariffs in the 15–30% range, India’s much higher tariff burden makes its products less competitive. Adding to the challenge, manufacturers in Mexico and Canada enjoy exemptions under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), further intensifying competition in the American market. This disparity underscores the growing need for India to accelerate trade talks with Washington to protect its export interests.

Geographically, Europe remains India’s largest export market with a 30% share, followed closely by the US at 27%, Asia at 26%, Latin America at 3%, and other regions contributing 13%. Domestic sales account for 56% of the industry’s revenues, while replacement demand makes up the remaining 15%. With exports under pressure, industry stakeholders are calling for urgent policy interventions to safeguard market access and sustain the sector’s growth trajectory.

# GST Cut on Renewables to 5% Aims to Power India’s Green Future



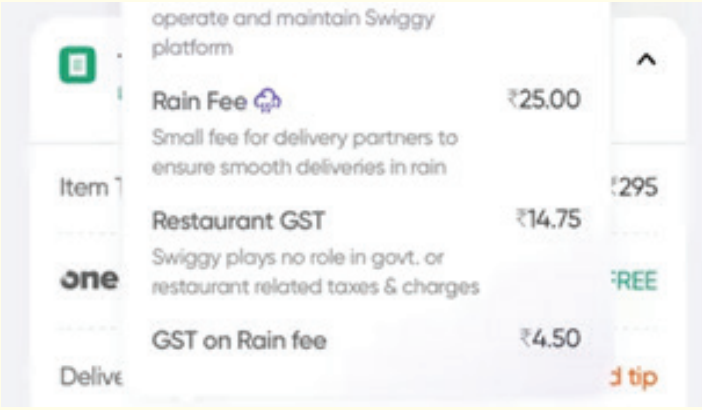
The government’s decision to rationalize GST rates across the renewable energy value chain from 12% to 5% is set to bring down the cost of clean energy projects, making electricity more affordable for households, farmers, industries, and developers. According to the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, the move will significantly reduce capital costs for utility-scale projects, rooftop solar systems, and solar pumps, while strengthening India’s clean energy ecosystem. For large-scale solar projects, where the cost typically stands at ₹3.5–4 crore per MW, the revised GST is expected to generate savings of ₹20–25 lakh per MW. A 500 MW solar park, for instance, could see project costs cut by over ₹100 crore, improving tariff competitiveness and lowering the financial burden on distribution companies (DISCOMs). Nationwide, annual savings of ₹2,000–3,000 crore in power procurement costs are anticipated. Households will also benefit as rooftop solar sys-

tems become cheaper. A 3 kW system will now cost ₹9,000–10,500 less, accelerating adoption under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana. Farmers under the PM-KUSUM scheme are expected to save nearly ₹17,500 on a 5 HP solar pump, translating into a collective saving of ₹1,750 crore across 10 lakh pumps, making irrigation more sustainable and cost-effective. The reform is also set to enhance competitiveness of Indian-made solar equipment, reducing module and component costs by 3–4%. With India targeting 300 GW of renewable capacity by 2030, a modest 2–3% cost reduction could free up investments worth 1–1.5 lakh crore, while creating 5–7 lakh jobs in the next decade. Faster renewable deployment will also help India avoid 50–70 million tonnes of CO2 emissions annually by 2030. Effective from September 22, 2025, the GST cut is being hailed as a landmark step to advance India’s green growth, energy independence, and Paris Agreement commitments.





## Zomato, Swiggy Users Face ‘Rain Fee’ Hike Under GST 2.0



Online food delivery users are feeling the pinch as platforms like Zomato and Swiggy now come under 18% Goods and Services Tax (GST) on their delivery fees, effective September 22, 2025. The move, part of the latest GST Council reforms, applies Section 9(5) of the Central GST Act to local e-commerce delivery services, making even small charges like the “rain fee” taxable.

The change has already started reflecting in bills, with users noticing higher costs for orders during adverse weather conditions. For instance, a delivery rain fee of Rs 25 now attracts an 18% GST, bringing the total to Rs 29.50, adding an unexpected extra burden on customers. Restaurant GST is also separately applied, as seen in typical bills showing charges such as Rs 14.75 for the meal itself.

Social media users quickly reacted to the new tax rules with humor and satire. One post on X (formerly Twitter) jokingly remarked, “After historic GST reforms, even Lord Indra has been brought under

the tax net. Now when it rains, you get Rs 25 Rain Fee + 18% GST = Rs 29.50. Next up: Sunlight Convenience Fee, Oxygen Maintenance Charge GST on Breathing, Pay as you inhale.” The witty post resonated widely, highlighting public frustration while keeping the tone lighthearted.

Industry experts note that the 18% GST on delivery charges is part of a broader effort to simplify and rationalize the tax structure under GST 2.0, ensuring all e-commerce services are brought under a uniform tax net. While this ensures compliance and transparency, it also means consumers need to adjust to slightly higher bills for routine food deliveries.

As the new rules settle in, users are exploring workarounds, apps, and loyalty discounts to offset the additional cost. Meanwhile, the humorous takes on social media continue to lighten the mood around a tax change that has everyone talking, proving that even small policy shifts can spark nationwide conversations online.

## Bengaluru Woman Goes Viral Walking 28 Golden Retrievers, Wins Hearts



A heartwarming video from Bengaluru has captured social media’s attention, showing a woman taking a peaceful stroll with 28 golden retrievers in the RT Nagar area of the city. Titled “28 dogs, 1 big heart. Meet the dog lover aunty of RT Nagar, Bangalore!”, the clip highlights the calm and disciplined demeanor of the dogs as they accompany their owner on her walk. The sight of so many well-behaved furry companions has left viewers both amazed and delighted.

The video’s voiceover explains, “We saw a lady in RT Nagar, Bengaluru, walking with 28 golden retrievers, all matching, all happy. She looked so peaceful, smiling with her furry family. In today’s life, loyal friends are rare, but sometimes love and loyalty comes on four legs.” The footage has since gone viral, garnering over 7.2 lakh views and sparking hundreds of comments praising her dedication and love for the animals.

Many social media users shared their personal experiences with the woman and her

dogs. One viewer wrote, “She has customised her Innova car for the dogs. I love her,” while another recalled, “I’ve been seeing these dogs and this lady since I was a kid, she’s such a nice person.” Others reminisced about earlier days when the number of retrievers was smaller, highlighting her long-standing commitment to caring for them. Humorous comments also emerged, including one that jokingly read, “HR: Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years? Me be like: Woofff.”

The viral moment comes in the wake of a Supreme Court directive last month modifying its earlier order on the management of stray dogs. The court clarified that dogs could be released from shelters after sterilisation, except in cases of aggressive behaviour or rabies infections.

This Bengaluru woman’s dedication to her furry friends has struck a chord with viewers nationwide, proving that love, patience, and loyalty often come on four legs, leaving the internet collectively saying, “We love her.”

# Google Tests New Gboard Features: AI Writing Tools, Flick Keys, and More

Google is rolling out new experimental features for Gboard, the default keyboard on most Android devices, aiming to enhance user experience and boost productivity. One of the most notable additions is the AI-powered Writing Tools, designed to help users improve, refine, and polish their text messages across apps. The feature can suggest edits, provide alternative phrasing, and even help craft more professional or engaging messages, making typing faster and more efficient.

Another interesting feature being tested is “flick keys to enter symbols.” When enabled, users can quickly access a symbol associated with a key by touching it and swiping downwards. This functionality is similar to the Apple keyboard experience on iPads, offering a faster way to type symbols without



switching keyboard modes. While it may take some time for users to get accustomed to the gesture, it promises to streamline text input once mastered.

The latest Gboard beta is also reportedly testing other small enhancements, such as improved emoji suggestions, smarter autocorrect options, and better multilingual support. Google appears focused on integrating AI and intuitive gestures into the keyboard, aiming to

make it more than just a typing tool—it becomes an assistant capable of anticipating and refining user input in real time.

These features are currently in beta testing, meaning they are being evaluated by select users before a wider rollout. Google often uses beta releases to gather feedback and tweak functionalities for performance, ease of use, and reliability. Users interested in trying these new features can join the Gboard beta program through the Google Play Store.

With AI-driven writing assistance and gesture-based input, Gboard is moving beyond traditional keyboard functions, reflecting Google’s push to combine smart technology with everyday tools, ultimately making typing faster, more accurate, and more intuitive for millions of Android users worldwide.

## Thinnest Yet Strongest? iPhone Air Survives JerryRigEverything Durability Test

Apple recently unveiled the iPhone 17 series along with the iPhone Air, its slimmest smartphone yet. At the launch, the company highlighted the Air’s durability, claiming it is the most robust iPhone to date. With tech enthusiasts eager to see how it performs in real-world stress tests, YouTuber JerryRigEverything put the device through his signature durability assessment.

The iPhone Air measures just 5.6mm in thickness, making it remarkably slim, yet it features a titanium frame designed to enhance structural strength. The 6.5-inch OLED display is safeguarded by Corning’s Ceramic Shield 2, which Apple says is three times more scratch-resistant than the previous generation. This combination of lightweight design and reinforced materials has made it a point of curiosity for fans and reviewers alike.

During the test, the iPhone Air faced standard scratch, burn, and bend assessments. The screen resisted scratches up to higher levels on the



Mohs scale, confirming Apple’s claims about Ceramic Shield 2. Its titanium frame provided significant rigidity, minimizing bending even under extreme pressure, and

demonstrating an impressive balance between thinness and structural integrity.

The device also fared well in drop and burn tests, with minimal cosmetic damage to the screen and body. This suggests that Apple’s engineering approach—using premium materials like titanium while keeping the device ultra-thin—successfully delivers both aesthetics and durability.

For users who prioritize sleek design without compromising toughness, the iPhone Air appears to be a compelling option. While ultra-thin devices often face criticism for fragility, this test indicates that Apple has managed to push the boundaries of smartphone engineering, creating a device that is as strong as it is slender. The iPhone Air may well redefine expectations for premium smartphones, balancing portability, elegance, and resilience in one package.

## Delhi Metro’s Airport-to-Railway Station Ride Wows Passenger: “Built Differently”



A Delhi Metro commuter has gone viral for sharing their seamless journey from the airport to New Delhi Railway Station (NDLS) in under an hour, praising the city’s public transport network. The post, titled “Delhi Metro is

just built differently”, detailed the passenger’s experience of travelling from the airport after arriving from Mumbai.

According to the passenger, they landed in Delhi at 2:14 PM and collected their luggage by 2:24 PM. By 2:30

PM, they were already on the airport metro platform, and by 2:54 PM, they had reached NDLS. Boarding their train by 3:10 PM, the total travel time from landing to getting on the railway train clocked in at just under an hour.

In the viral post shared on X (formerly Twitter), the user wrote, “Less than 1 hour from airport to railway station. This is how public transport should work!! @OfficialDMRC”, highlighting the efficiency and convenience of the Del-

hi Metro system. The journey impressed many online, who lauded the capital city’s ability to connect key transport hubs swiftly.

Delhi Metro, the lifeline of India’s capital, caters to millions of commuters daily, providing quick and hassle-free connectivity not just within the city but also to neighbouring states. Its extensive network, combined with efficient train schedules, allows passengers to reach major locations like railway stations, airports, and business districts in record time.

The viral post reflects a growing appreciation for well-planned urban transport solutions, particularly in cities where traffic congestion can make otherwise delay travel. Many users echoed the sentiment, praising Delhi Metro for its reliability, speed, and overall user experience, calling it a benchmark for how public transportation should operate in modern cities.

This passenger’s story serves as a reminder of how strategic infrastructure and timely execution can make urban commuting both fast and convenient, leaving travelers impressed and the internet celebrating Delhi Metro’s efficiency.



# Australia Beat India by 4 Wickets in 2nd T20I, Take Series Lead

Australia defeated India by 4 wickets in the second T20I at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, taking a 1-0 lead in the five-match series. The hosts chased down India's modest target of 126 with ease, maintaining their dominant form in the series.

India, sent in to bat by Australian captain Mitchell Marsh, struggled from the start. The team was bundled out for 125 in 18.4 overs, losing early wickets under pressure. Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood starred with the ball, dismantling India's top order in a sensational spell. He accounted for vice-captain Shubman Gill, captain Suryakumar Yadav, and Tilak Varma in the initial overs, putting India on the back foot immediately.

Amid the batting collapse, Abhishek Sharma stood out with a resilient 68 runs, while Harshit Rana, promoted to No. 7, contributed 35 runs, providing some resistance. Despite their efforts, India could not recover, as the middle and lower order failed to



capitalize on the platform created by Sharma and Rana.

Australia's chase was clinical, anchored by steady batting performances and disciplined bowling. The visitors managed the target efficiently without losing control, showcasing their experience and composure in tricky situations.

This win gives Australia an early edge in the five-match T20I series, placing pressure on India to respond in the remaining games. The Indian team will need to address their batting fragility, especially their vulnerability against fast bowling in powerplay overs, to remain competitive in the series.

The third T20I is scheduled to be played later this week, where India will look to bounce back and level the series, while Australia aims to consolidate their lead and secure a significant advantage in the contest.

## Abhishek Sharma Shines as Hazlewood Tears Through India in 2nd T20I



India were bundled out for 125 in the second T20I against Australia at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, with Abhishek Sharma the lone bright spot amid a top-order collapse. The first match of the five-game series in Canberra had been abandoned due to rain.

Abhishek's 37-ball 68 featured aggressive strokes on the off-side, including slashes, check drives, and lofted shots, helping him reach a 23-ball half-century in his debut appearance at the iconic venue. His innings stood out as the only resistance against the relentless Australian pace attack.

Australia's Josh Hazlewood led the charge, wreaking havoc on India's top and middle order. He dismissed vice-captain Shubman Gill, captain Suryakumar Yadav, and Tilak Varma early, leaving India reeling at 5 wickets down in just eight overs. The rest of the batting lineup faltered under pressure, failing to build partnerships or mount a meaningful chase.

# 16-Year-Old Ilamparathi A R Becomes India's 90th Chess Grandmaster

Ilamparathi A R, a 16-year-old chess prodigy from Chennai, has become India's 90th Grandmaster after achieving his final norm at the GM4 Bijeljina 2025 Chess Festival in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ilamparathi's journey to the Grandmaster title has been marked by consistent performance across international tournaments. He secured his first GM norm at the Hanoi tournament in Vietnam in December 2023, followed by a second norm at the Singapore International Open in 2024. Crossing the 2500 Elo rating at the Rilton Cup (2024-25) positioned him for the final push, and his performance in Bosnia sealed the prestigious title.

The achievement was widely celebrated in the chess community. AICF president Nitin Narang took to social media to congratulate Ilamparathi, saying, "Grandmaster No. 90 for Bharat! Congratulations to Ilamparathi A R on fulfilling all the requirements to become the 90th Grandmaster of the country. Wishing you many more laurels and continued



success in making the nation proud."

Legendary Indian chess player and five-time World Champion Viswanathan Anand also praised the young prodigy, noting, "He has been missing the title on a few occasions, but each time he came back and worked harder. I really believe he has a lot of potential and we hope to work together towards greater achievements."

Ilamparathi's rise is seen as a continuation of India's growing prominence in international chess, following in the footsteps of players like Viswanathan Anand and Praggnanandhaa R. His achievement at such a young age highlights his talent, dedication, and the growing support system for chess in India.

The chess fraternity and sports enthusiasts across the country have hailed Ilamparathi's accomplishment, celebrating him as an inspiration for aspiring young players aiming to excel on the global stage.

## Sinner, Zverev Advance to Paris Masters Quarter-Finals



Italy's Jannik Sinner and defending champion Alexander Zverev powered into the Paris Masters quarter-finals on Thursday, keeping their title hopes alive in dominant fashion.

Sinner eased past Francisco Cerundolo 7-5, 6-1 to reach the last eight, setting up a high-voltage clash with American Ben Shelton. The victory means Sinner remains on track to reclaim the World No. 1 ranking, following Carlos Alcaraz's shock early exit at the hands of Britain's Cameron Norrie.

"It was a crucial first set. Francisco is very talented and tough to play against, but I raised my level in the second," Sinner said after his win. The 24-year-old, who has yet to drop a set this tournament, is aiming for his fifth title of the season.

Shelton continued his dream season, beating Andrey Rublev 7-6(6), 6-3. The American fifth seed, who won his maiden Masters 1000 title in Toronto earlier this year, also secured a debut spot at the ATP Finals in Turin.

"It's the result of a year's hard work — the ups, downs, and comebacks," Shelton said.

Meanwhile, Zverev maintained his title defence with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina. The German third seed will next face former World No. 1 Daniil Medvedev, who defeated Lorenzo Sonego in three sets. "Daniil is my kryptonite — he beats me most of the time," Zverev admitted.

Elsewhere, Alexander Bublik stunned fourth seed Taylor Fritz 7-6(5), 6-2 to meet Alex de Minaur, who cruised past Karen Khachanov 6-2, 6-2. Felix Auger-Aliassime also advanced, rallying past Daniel Altmaier 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, keeping his ATP Finals hopes alive as the Paris Masters heads into an electrifying final weekend.

## Oman Replaces Pakistan at Junior Hockey World Cup



Oman will join the lineup for the upcoming FIH Men's Junior World Cup 2025 in Tamil Nadu, following Pakistan's late withdrawal, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced on Wednesday. The tournament is scheduled from November 28 to December 10, with matches to be held in Chennai and Madurai.

Oman earned the spot as the next highest-ranked team from the Junior Asia Cup 2024, stepping in after Pakistan decided not to participate despite qualifying through last year's continental championship. The Pakistan Hockey Federation informed the FIH that the team would not accept the invitation, citing internal consultations with their government before the event.

Pakistan had been placed in Group B alongside India, Chile, and Switzerland. With Oman taking their place, the group composition has been updated ahead of the tournament. This late withdrawal marks the second recent instance of Pakistan pulling out from a major hockey event in India, after the Men's Asia Cup in Rajgir, Bihar, where Bangladesh replaced them. The withdrawal also cost Pakistan a chance to qualify for next year's World Cup, as the Asia Junior Cup served as a qualifying event.

The FIH had initially postponed the official draw for nearly a month to accommodate Pakistan's decision-making, eventually holding the ceremony at its headquarters in Lausanne. The Men's Junior World Cup 2025 will feature 24 teams for the first time, alongside the Women's edition, reflecting the FIH's Empowerment and Engagement strategy aimed at promoting wider participation.

Germany enters the tournament as the defending champions, having won the 2023 edition in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The inclusion of Oman ensures the tournament maintains full participation and competitive balance, while giving the Middle Eastern nation an opportunity to showcase its growing hockey prowess on the global stage.



## Mahieka Sharma Quashes Engagement Rumours With Hardik Pandya



Actress-model Mahieka Sharma has dismissed speculation about her engagement to cricketer Hardik Pandya, putting an end to the social media frenzy. The rumours began after Mahieka was spotted wearing a diamond ring at a puja ceremony, prompting fans and media to speculate about an engagement. Hardik Pandya had confirmed their relationship in October 2025, which fueled the chatter further. On Friday, Mahieka took to Instagram Stories to address the rumours in a witty post. Sharing an image of a black cat wearing a pink wig, she captioned, “Me watching the Internet decide I’m engaged when I just wear nice jewellery every day.” She continued the humorous thread with a playful nod to potential pregnancy rumours. In another post, featuring a man driving a toy car, she wrote, “Wyd if I pull up in this to fight the pregnancy rumours?” The actress attended a puja

ceremony at Hardik Pandya’s residence a few days ago, where the priest performing the rituals shared glimpses of the event, further sparking media attention. Mahieka’s posts, however, clarify that the jewellery she wore was purely ornamental and not a symbol of engagement, while keeping the tone lighthearted and humorous. The couple, who have been in a relationship since earlier this year, continue to be in the public eye, but Mahieka’s witty social media response has successfully put engagement rumours to rest—at least for now. Her playful and humorous approach has been widely appreciated by fans, who lauded her for addressing the speculation with grace and a sense of humor, rather than feeding the gossip cycle. With the social media storm calmed, the couple can now focus on their relationship without constant public scrutiny, though fans continue to follow their updates closely.

## Vijay’s ‘Jana Nayagan’ Audio Launch Set for Malaysia



The makers of Thalapathy Vijay’s upcoming action entertainer ‘Jana Nayagan’ have announced that the film’s audio launch will take place in Malaysia on December 27, 2025, at the Bukit Jalil Stadium in Kuala Lumpur. This marks Vijay’s return to Malaysia after three years and is particularly special as ‘Jana Nayagan’ is reported to be his last film. Co-producer Jagadish Palanisamy shared an emotional note, reflecting on his journey with Vijay, from attending the ‘Nanban’ audio launch as a fan to now organizing the #OneLastDance – ‘Jana Nayagan’ audio launch. He described the event as more than just an audio launch, calling it “an emotion” for fans and the team. To build anticipation, the makers released a video montage showcasing Vijay’s most iconic on-screen moments, spanning films such as ‘Ghilli’, ‘Thuppakki’, ‘Mersal’, ‘Bigil’, ‘Master’, and ‘Leo’. The montage also includes Malaysian fans sharing personal sto-

ries, highlighting how Vijay has inspired and impacted their lives. One fan described Vijay as a lifelong source of inspiration, while another, who has no family, called him her brother. Directed by H. Vinoth, the film features a powerful ensemble cast including Bobby Deol, Pooja Hegde, Mamitha Baiju, Prakash Raj, and Gautham Vasudev Menon. Produced by Venkat K. Narayana under KVN Productions, ‘Jana Nayagan’ is slated for a global release on January 9, 2026, coinciding with Pongal celebrations. With its Malaysian audio launch, the event is expected to be a historic celebration for Vijay’s fans, marking a memorable chapter in the actor’s illustrious career while setting the stage for the much-anticipated global release. This launch not only celebrates the film’s music but also Vijay’s connection with fans worldwide, making it a truly emotional and grand occasion.

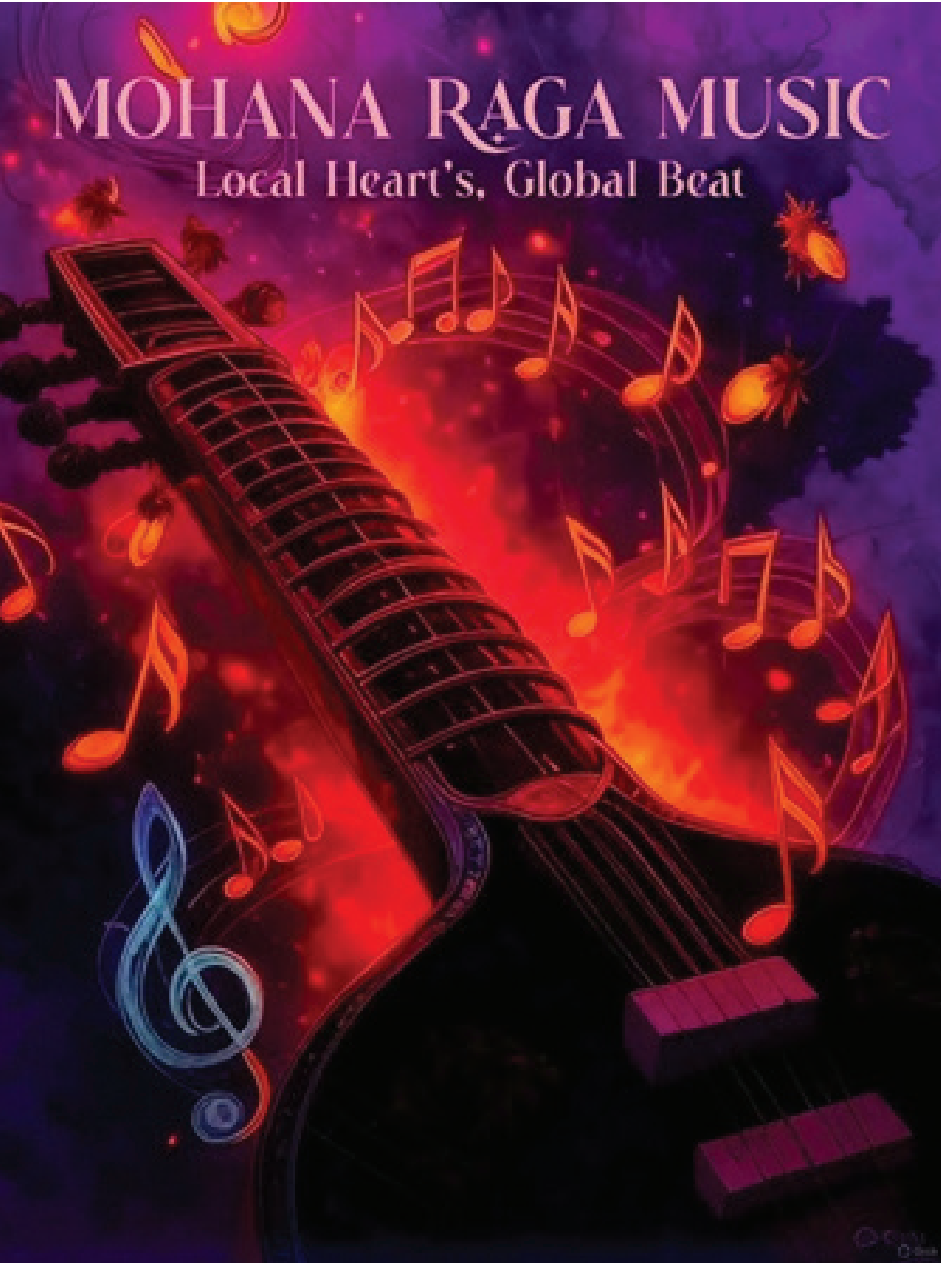
# Champion’s ‘Gira Gira Gingiraagirey’ Promo Shines with Charm

The much-awaited musical journey of Champion has officially begun with the release of the promo for its first single, “Gira Gira Gingiraagirey.” The film features Roshan in the lead role and marks a grand collaboration between Swapna Cinemas, Anandi Art Creations, and Concept Films, with Zee Studios presenting this ambitious project. Directed by Pradeep Advaitam, the movie is set in a period backdrop, blending sports drama with patriotic elements. The newly released song promo has already started drawing attention for its delightful and refreshing musical vibe. Composer Mickey J Meyer, known for his melodious and emotionally soothing works, brings his trademark touch once again. His composition in this track is filled with pleasant, smooth orchestration, creating an instantly engaging musical atmosphere. Adding further allure, singer Ram Miriyala



lends his expressive vocals, giving the track a warm and charming feel that resonates even in the short preview. The promo also introduces audiences to the world of the film’s heroine, played by Anaswara Rajan. Her character appears to be a strong-willed, independent woman determined to follow her artistic calling. She is shown dreaming of building her own drama company, symbolizing ambition, self-belief, and creative passion. These glimpses hint that her role will add significant emotional and narrative depth to the film. Champion, with its combination of sports, patriotism, drama, and melodic storytelling, is shaping up to be a promising entertainer. The launch of “Gira Gira Gingiraagirey” sets the tone with a gentle yet sparkling musical start, raising anticipation for the full song and the upcoming promotional content. Fans can now look forward to more musical treats as the makers prepare for the next phase of the film’s campaign.

## Manchu Manoj Begins a New Musical Venture



Manchu Manoj has stepped into a fresh creative chapter with the launch of his new music label, Mohana Raga Music. The venture holds deep emotional value for the actor, as music has always been an integral part of his life. Manoj shares that this dream has been nurtured within him and his family for many years, finally taking shape in a form that connects directly to his artistic spirit. Known for carving a distinctive space in Telugu cinema, Manoj began his journey as a child actor and went on to deliver memorable performances in films such as Bindaas, Current Theega and Potugadu. His energetic performances, unique acting style, and

commitment to performing his own stunts have made him a dependable and versatile presence on screen. Beyond acting, he has remained deeply involved in the creative process of filmmaking, often contributing ideas and participating in behind-the-scenes work. Music, however, has always been a personal passion. Manoj has showcased his vocal talent in songs like “Pyar Mein Padipoya” from Potugadu and released the soothing independent track “Antha Baguntamra” during the pandemic. As a lyricist too, he has penned songs such as “Pistha Pistha,” “Yenno Yenno,” and “Pranam Poye Badha,” each reflecting his raw and expressive artistic

style. His creative contributions extend to working in music and action departments for several films produced by his father Dr. Manchu Mohan Babu, his brother Manchu Vishnu, and his sister Lakshmi Manchu. He has even added rap segments to multiple family projects. Manoj’s collaboration with composer Achu Rajamani for the Hollywood film Basmati Blues, starring Brie Larson, further expanded his artistic horizons. With Mohana Raga Music, Manoj hopes to bring more heartfelt, soulful work to audiences, marking the beginning of an exciting new phase in his artistic journey.

## Naga Chaitanya Birthday Special: Mahesh Babu to Unveil NC24 First Look



Tollywood fans are in for an exciting treat as the makers of NC24, starring Akkineni Naga Chaitanya, have announced a major update ahead of the actor’s birthday. The film, directed by Virupaksha filmmaker Karthik Varma Dandu, is gaining strong buzz after BTS visuals hinted at its intriguing mythological thriller backdrop. The much-awaited title and first look poster will officially be launched on November 23 at 10:08 am. Adding to the excitement, the team revealed that Superstar Mahesh Babu will be unveiling the film’s first look. A special poster featuring Mahesh Babu in a striking Varanasi-themed visual, designed by Chaitanu, has already gone viral, raising anticipation among fans of both stars. The makers shared that this announcement is part of a birthday gift for Naga Chaitanya, whose special day falls on the same date. Meenakshi Choudhary plays the female lead in

NC24, marking another strong pairing for the actor. Rising talent Sparsh Srivastava, known for his impressive performance in Laapataa Ladies, is playing a crucial role in the film, adding further depth to the cast. NC24 is being produced by BVSS Prasad under the Sri Venkateswara Cine Chitra banner, with Sukumar Writings presenting the project. The film’s technical strength is amplified by the involvement of Ajaneesh Loknath of Kantara fame, who is composing both the music and background score. His inclusion has already elevated expectations around the film’s audio and atmospheric elements. With a powerful cast, an accomplished technical crew, and the major boost of Mahesh Babu launching the first look, NC24 is shaping up to be one of the most anticipated films in Tollywood’s upcoming lineup. Fans are eagerly waiting for tomorrow’s unveiling to get a first glimpse of this promising mythological thriller.