

# AP Government Finalises PG Medical Course Fees for Five New Government Medical Colleges

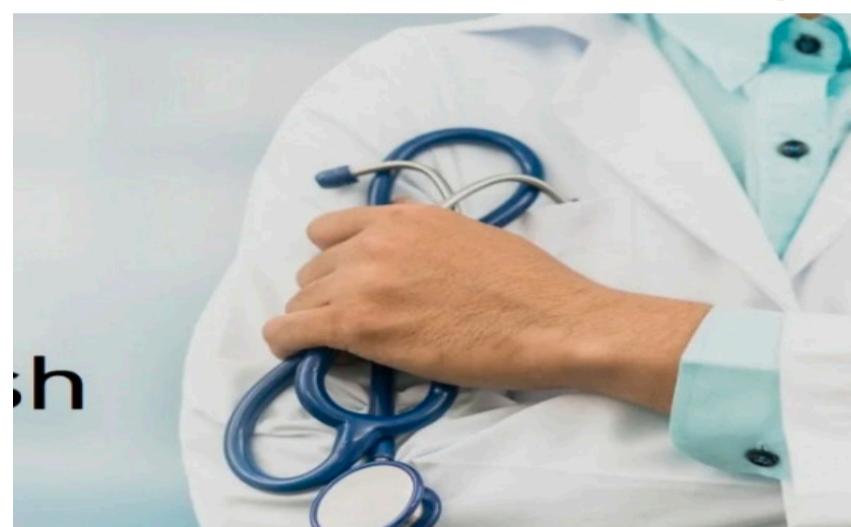
TPN Bureau | Dec 4

Vijayawada : The Andhra Pradesh Government has finalised the annual fee structure for Post-graduate (PG) medical admissions in the five newly established government medical colleges for the 2025-26 academic year. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has approved the Health Department's proposal, setting differential fee slabs for government, management, and NRI quota seats in line with a rationalised, transparent pricing model.

According to the notification issued by the Health, Medical, and Family Welfare Department, the annual fees have been fixed at 30,000 for government quota seats, 9 lakh for self-financing (management) quota seats, and 29 lakh for NRI quota seats. The decision follows a detailed proposal prepared by Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav and examined by a committee of department officials.

PG Seats Approved by NMC

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has approved a total of 60



PG seats across four medical specialties in the five new colleges Rajahmundry, Nandiyal, Vizianagaram, Mac hilipatnam, and Eluru. Rajahmundry, Nandiyal, and Nandyal colleges have been allotted 16 seats each, Vizianagaram and Machilipatnam 12 seats each, and Eluru four seats.

As per NMC norms, 50% of PG seats are allocated under the All India Quota and the remaining 50% under the State Quota. Within the State Quota, the seats are distributed as 50% government quota, 35% management quota, and 15% NRI quota. However, due

to the limited number of seats only four per specialty there will be no NRI admissions this year under the State Quota.

Fee Structure Determination

Last year, MBBS admissions in these five colleges were conducted under a self-financing model with the previous government fixing annual MBBS fees at 15,000 for government quota, 12 lakh for self-financing, and 20 lakh for NRI seats.

However, no PG fee structure was determined at that time, as PG admissions were expected to begin only after the first batch of MBBS graduates. Upon reviewing

the issue, Minister Satya Kumar Yadav directed officials to evolve a rational and proportion-based approach for calculating PG fees.

Department records revealed that the previous government had not documented the methodology used in deciding the MBBS fee structure. To ensure transparency, the minister proposed using the same proportional logic that guided MBBS fee differentiation between government, self-financing, and private medical institutions.

Based on that rationale, the committee recommended 9 lakh as the

annual fee for self-financing PG seats and 29 lakh for NRI seats significantly lower than the rates prevailing in private medical colleges. Comparison with Private Colleges

For reference, PG medical courses in private colleges currently charge 4,96,800 for government quota seats, 9,93,600 for management quota, and 57,50,000 for NRI quota. The new state-determined structure is expected to make government PG education considerably more affordable while maintaining fiscal sustainability for the newly opened institutions. The Chief Minister approved the proposal, stating that this calibrated approach would enhance access to advanced medical education, incentivize merit-based admissions, and strengthen post-graduate medical infrastructure across the state's public healthcare system.

Officials said the revised fee structure underscores the government's commitment to promoting medical education in the public sector without imposing excessive financial burdens on deserving students.

# India's First Awake Coronary Bypass Surgery performed on 76-Year-Old Myasthenia Gravis Patient at Aster Ramesh Hospitals



TPN Bureau | December 4

Applications, the medical team adopted the Awake Bypass Technique.

In this technique, patients remain conscious and breathe independently throughout the surgery. With the help of thoracic epidural anesthesia, only the chest area is numbed, allowing surgeons to perform the bypass without the need for ventilator support.

The complex procedure was led by Aster Ramesh Hospitals' Cardio-Thoracic and Vascular Surgery team comprising Dr Jayaram Pai, Dr Shivaprasad, Dr Ashok Kumar, Dr Bharat Siddharth and Dr Srikanth Mahapatra. The anesthesia team included Dr Loganthan Chakravarthy, Dr Pavan and Dr Hima bindu.

Managing Director Dr Pothineni Ramesh Babu noted that the hospital consistently follows international treatment protocols and attracts patients from

across India and countries such as Bangladesh, New Zealand, Pakistan and several African nations. He highlighted that Aster Ramesh Hospitals' achievements have been acknowledged by both the Limca Book of Records and the Guinness World Records. Over the past 37 years, the hospital has performed more than 25,000 heart surgeries, including 2,500 complex bypass and valve procedures, 3,500 neonatal and pediatric heart surgeries and 10,000 surgeries under the NTR Vaidya Seva Scheme.

Dr Ramesh Babu congratulated the entire team for this historic accomplishment. The patient is recovering well, and the success of this rare awake bypass surgery opens new avenues of hope for cardiac patients with Myasthenia Gravis and other high-risk conditions.

# Jagan Launches Scathing Attack on Chandrababu Government, Lists "Failures Across All Sectors"

TPN Bureau | December 4

IJAYAWADA: In one of his most hard-hitting press briefings in recent months, former Chief Minister and YSRCP President YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday delivered a blow-by-blow critique of the Chandrababu Naidu-led coalition government, accusing it of monumental failures in agriculture, education, health, administration and law and order. He also alleged widespread misuse of state institutions to target political opponents and suppress dissent.

Addressing the media, YS Jagan said the governance collapse under the coalition had severely affected farmers, students, employees and the poor, creating unprecedented distress across sectors. "The State today is being run under a Red Book constitution, where vindictive politics, nepotism and manufactured cases have become the order of the day," he said.

He also Sector "Handed Over to Private Entities"

Jagan said the government's decision to privatise medical colleges had triggered massive public backlash, leading to a signature campaign that has already collected one crore endorsements. The signatures, he said, will be submitted to the Governor on December



16.

He accused the government of weakening the Aarogyasri scheme by delaying dues and shifting public health responsibilities to private players while also ordering the payment of salaries to private staff. "This is a reckless abandonment of public health," he said.

## Education Sector in Deep Crisis

Jagan alleged that the state's education system was in shambles, citing the deaths of 29 students due to contaminated water and food in hostels and government institutions. Many more students were hospitalized due to poor hygiene, he said, adding that students were now compelled to carry their own lunch boxes as the quality of midday meals had deteriorated sharply. He claimed that key reforms introduced during the previous YSRCP regime had been undone, worsening the situation. Mourning fee reimbursement

dues had pushed thousands of students and families into distress, he said.

## Farmers "Cheated at Every Step"

The former Chief Minister launched a strong attack on the government over its handling of agriculture. "Farmers are not getting MSP for any crop. There is no input subsidy, no crop insurance and no capital support," he said. He noted that Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBKs), which served farmers effectively during the YSRCP government, had been sidelined, giving rise to the public slogan 'Save AP'.

## False Cases, Misuse of Police and Administrative Machinery

Jagan accused Chandrababu Naidu of misusing state institutions to close cases against himself while filing false cases against YSRCP lead-

ers. Citing the case of MLA Pinnelli Ramakrishna Reddy, he said even the district SP had clarified that a recent murder was due to TDP group rivalry, but multiple cases were still filed against the MLA.

He alleged similar "false implication" in the so-called liquor scam, claiming that manufacturing units and distribution networks belonged to leaders aligned with the ruling coalition, yet YSRCP leaders were being targeted. "From Jogi Ramesh to Mithun Reddy and Chevireddy Bhaskar Reddy, the list of those being falsely implicated keeps growing," he said.

Tirupati Laddu and Parakamani Allegations

Jagan said that Chandrababu had fabricated allegations of adulterated ghee used in Tirupati laddu preparation, despite a robust quality checking mechanism in place. He said ghee procurement during Chandrababu's past tenure ranged from 276 to 314

Jagan accused the government of renegeing on Super Six promises such as stipends for unemployed youth, Street Nidhi support, pensions, free bus travel for women, free gas cylinders, and Talliki Vandana. Employees, he said, were "cheated" as only one of five pending DAs was being paid, and commitments on PRC, IR and medical reimbursement were ignored.

## Double Standards on VSP

Jagan said the government had failed to properly address the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP) issue. The key problem, he said, was the lack of a captive mine, not employee work standards. He reminded that the previous YSRCP government had passed a resolution in the Assembly opposing VSP privatization.

## Coalition Government Draws 20 Lakh Crore Investments in 18 Months: Ministers Kandula Durgesh, Bharat

TPN Bureau | December 4



IJAYAWADA: A ndhra Pradesh Ministers Kandula Durgesh and TG Bharat announced that the coalition government has attracted investments worth 20 lakh crore within just 18 months, driven by what they termed the strong and credible "CBN brand." Speaking at a media conference held at the Publicity Cell Secretariat on Thursday, the ministers detailed the approvals given during the latest meeting of the State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB).

Minister Durgesh said that under the chairmanship of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, the 13th SIPB meeting approved fresh investments worth 20,444 crore. A total of 26 companies received the green signal to set up units in the state, creating 56,278 direct jobs. Additionally, six companies were cleared under the Early Bird Incentive Scheme, including firms that had signed MoUs during the recent CII Summit in Visakhapatnam. The government has also set up a dedicated monitoring portal to track real-time progress on MoUs signed during the Visakhapatnam Global Investment Summit, he

said.

Durgesh added that nearly 50% of all MoUs signed so far have already entered the implementation stage. Of the total investments committed during the summit, projects worth 7.69 lakh crore have initiated processes. Region-wise, 1.69 lakh crore is flowing into the Visakhapatnam Economic Region, 87,000 crore into the Amaravati Economic Region, and 73,000 crore into the Tirupati Economic Region. Across 13 SIPB meetings, approvals worth 8.29 lakh crore have been granted, enabling employment for 7,62,148 people.

He said global giants such as Google, TCS, Cognizant, Arcelormittal, Raymond and Reliance are investing in Andhra Pradesh across sectors including green energy, IT, tourism, infrastructure, logistics, food processing, aerospace and defense.

"This is a testimony to investor faith in the state," Durgesh said, adding that the Chief Minister's focus is not just on Ease of Doing

Business but also on the Speed of Doing Business.

The minister highlighted welfare achievements, stating that the government has already fulfilled its Super Six promises. Under various schemes, the government has disbursed substantial benefits: 10,000 crore under Thalliki Vandana, free LPG cylinders under Deepam-2, 25 crore free bus journeys for women under Street Shakti, 6,310 crore under the farmer support schemes and 50,000 crore through pensions. He criticized the former Chief Minister for resorting to "misleading statements" and said the public no longer believes such claims.

Industries Minister TG Bharat said the world is once again looking toward Andhra Pradesh. He noted that while the previous government damaged the state's brand image, the coalition government is restoring confidence. Massive investments have been secured across energy (4.54 lakh crore), industries (2.02 lakh crore), IT (1.22 lakh crore), food processing (8,519 crore), APCRDA projects (45,589 crore), urban development (4,942 crore) and several other sectors. He affirmed that the government is committed to generating over 20 lakh jobs.

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## NHAI Chairman Meets COSL Chairman Vallabhaneni Balashowry; Discusses Key Road Projects in Machilipatnam Constituency

TPN Bureau | December 4

New Delhi: In a significant meeting held in the Parliament House complex, New Delhi, on Thursday, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) Chairman Santosh Kumar Yadav met the Chairman of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation (CoSL) and Machilipatnam Member of Parliament, Dr. Vallabhaneni Balashowry.

The meeting, which took place at the CoSL Chairman's office, focused on various infrastructure and highway development projects in the Machilipatnam parliamentary constituency in Andhra Pradesh.

During the cordial interaction, Dr. Balashowry briefed the NHAI Chairman on the ongoing and proposed national highway projects connecting Machilipatnam and surrounding areas.

The discussion prom-

inently featured the planned expansion of the Vijayawada-Machilipatnam National Highway (NH-65), the development of port connectivity roads, and several greenfield routes aimed at improving regional connectivity and supporting industrial growth in coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Dr. Balashowry emphasized the strategic importance of upgrading NH-65 from four lanes to six lanes, citing increased vehicular traffic between Vijayawada and Machilipatnam.

He highlighted that the highway serves as a crucial economic lifeline for both cities, facilitating trade, industry, and port-related cargo movements. The MP urged that the widening work be expedited to improve transport efficiency and ensure safety for commuters. The CoSL Chairman also brought to the NHAI Chairman's attention the need for faster



progress on the Gudavada-Kankipadu greenfield road and the Pedana-Lakshmiapuram road development works.

These projects, he noted, are vital links that would decongest existing routes and enhance last-mile connectivity with Machilipatnam Port,

which is undergoing major expansion. He stressed that improving the road infrastructure in the region would directly contribute to the overall economic upliftment of Krishna district and neighboring areas.

Dr. Balashowry further apprised Mr. San-



tosh Kumar Yadav about the detailed developmental requirements around the port region, where improved road access would enable smoother logistics operations and attract industrial investments.

He requested that NHAI prioritize these

several of these projects are already under various stages of execution and administrative approval. The NHAI's renewed commitment is expected to give a significant push to the completion timelines, paving the way for enhanced connectivity between Machilipatnam Port, Vijayawada city, and other inland regions.

The meeting is considered a key step in advancing road infrastructure in the Machilipatnam Lok Sabha constituency, which is emerging as a vital hub for transport and trade in coastal Andhra Pradesh.

With the NHAI Chairman's assurance and the MP's continued follow-up, these projects are likely to see accelerated progress, promising improved mobility, economic benefits, and better quality of life for people across the region.

## Roshan Kanakala's "Mowgli (2025)" to Hit Screens on December 12 – A Tale of Love and Struggles

TPN Bureau | December 4

Rajahmundry, East Godavari: The much-anticipated Telugu romantic drama Mowgli (2025), starring the young sensation Roshan Kanakala, is generating strong buzz in trade circles ahead of its release. Directed by Sandeep Raj, the film is slated for a grand theatrical release on December 12 under the banner of People Media Factory. As part of its promotional campaign, the film's team organized a media meet at F Café in Rajahmundry on Thursday, where the lead cast and crew interacted with reporters and

shared insights about the project.

Speaking at the event, hero Roshan Kanakala said that Mowgli is not just another love story but "a blend of emotions, romance, and internal conflict." He revealed that his role depicts a simple young man on a heartfelt journey, inspired by real emotions. "This movie will take audiences back to their first love memories," he shared.

Thanking director Sandeep Raj for his vision, Roshan expressed confidence that the film would strike a deep emotional chord with youth. The actor

further added that most of the shooting took place around the picturesque locations of Paderu and Parvathipuram near Visakhapatnam, which adds a natural charm to the story.

He remarked that Kalabhairava's music and Harsha Chemudu's comic timing would stand out as major highlights. "Mowgli is not just a film, it's a story that young audiences will feel connected to a true love battle," he concluded. The team also noted that Visakhapatnam holds an emotional sentiment for them, making it the symbolic starting point for

promotions.

Actress Sakshi, who plays the female lead, said she loved beginning promotions in Visakhapatnam, a city close to her heart. She described her role as that of a deaf and mute girl, calling it one of the most challenging and emotionally demanding parts she has ever played. "Though my character doesn't have dialogues, I communicate through expressions and eyes. This film combines intense emotion with a fresh romantic angle," she said, praising both Roshan and Sandeep Raj for their constant encouragement dur-

ing filming.

Comedian Harsha Chemudu, who is known for his natural humor, remarked that his role brings comic relief in an otherwise intense narrative. "My character acts as a bridge in the hero's journey. Mowgli offers laughter, tears, and a strong message," he said, adding that audiences would thoroughly enjoy the experience.

With an engaging premise, soulful music, and emotional storytelling, Mowgli (2025) aims to touch hearts across generations when it hits theaters on December 12.



## CS Reviews Grain Procurement, Fertilizer Availability, and Seasonal Diseases With District Collectors

TPN Bureau | December 4

VIJAYAWADA: Chief Secretary K Vijayanand held a comprehensive video conference with district collectors on Thursday from the AP Secretariat, reviewing key issues including grain procurement, fertilizer availability, cyclone-related damages, control of seasonal diseases, public perception, and ongoing administrative priorities.

Addressing the collectors, the Chief Secretary stressed that there must be no shortage of gunny bags at any grain procurement centre in the state. He instructed officials to ensure

that paddy is purchased from farmers promptly, with all procurement centres functioning efficiently to avoid complaints. "Collectors must take proactive measures to ensure swift procurement and maintain farmer confidence," he said.

Reviewing the availability of fertilizers, Vijayanand discussed the district-wise demand and supply of various fertilizer types. He directed collectors to take all necessary precautions to prevent shortages, especially during the crucial agricultural season.

Cyclone Ditwah Damage Assessment

The CS also reviewed the impact of Cyclone Ditwah with collectors from Nellore, Chittoor and Tirupati districts. He collected detailed information on road damages and other losses in affected areas. Collectors were instructed to immediately submit proposals to the State Disaster Management Authority for restoration works. "Relief and repair efforts must begin without delay," he said.

Focus on Health and Seasonal Diseases

Medical and Health Secretary Saurav Gaur asked collectors to give special attention to seasonal disease

control, noting that guidelines have been issued for managing scrub typhus. He assured that necessary testing kits will be supplied to districts.

Commissioner of Medical and Health, Veerapandian, who participated virtually, instructed officials to intensify measures against water-borne and vector-borne diseases. He said ASR, Manyam, and other districts require heightened monitoring for malaria, and directed the Food Safety Department to conduct regular inspections to prevent food-borne illnesses.

He further instructed of-

ficials to conduct medical camps, regular testing, and observe a weekly dry day every Saturday to eliminate mosquito-breeding sites. Special emphasis was placed on hostel cleanliness and strict enforcement of hygiene standards.

Review of MoU Grounding and Other Priorities

State Industries and Investment Secretary Dr N Yuvraj urged collectors to expedite the grounding of industries associated with the MoUs signed during the recent CII Partnership Summit, aligning with the government's accelerated implementation strategy.

Director I&PR KS Viswanathan, RTGS CEO Prakhar Jain, and other senior officials attended the conference. Markfed MD Manajir Jilani, along with district collectors and departmental officials, also participated virtually, contributing to the holistic review of ongoing state priorities.

## DA Hike Announced for Judicial Officers and Retired Judges in Andhra Pradesh

TPN Bureau | December 4

Amaravati: In a significant administrative decision benefiting members of the state judiciary, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has announced a dearness allowance (DA) hike for

Government structure and provide much-needed financial relief to members of the judicial fraternity," Minister Farooq said.

The revision from 55% to 58% is part of the periodic adjustment made by the government to balance the

past year.

The additional 3% DA increment will reflect in the salary bills and pension disbursements in the coming months, after completion of necessary administrative procedures by the Pay and Accounts Department.



serving and retired judicial officers. The DA has been increased from 55% to 58%, following the guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice. The order, issued by the State Law Department, will take effect retrospectively from July 1, 2025. State Law and Minority Welfare Minister N.M.D. Farooq announced the decision through an official press release from his camp office in Amaravati on Thursday.

He stated that the increase would apply to all categories of judicial personnel, including sitting and retired judges of the High Court, subordinate judiciary officers, and family pensioners. "The Law Department has implemented the DA hike in line with the directions received from the Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India. The revised rates will ensure parity with the Central

impact of inflation on public servants' real income. Dearness allowance serves as a compensatory mechanism for the rising cost of living and is revised twice a year based on the All-India Consumer Price Index (AICPI). According to the press note, the enhanced DA rates will also extend to retired judges, judicial officers, and family pensioners who continue to receive benefits under the existing pension rules.

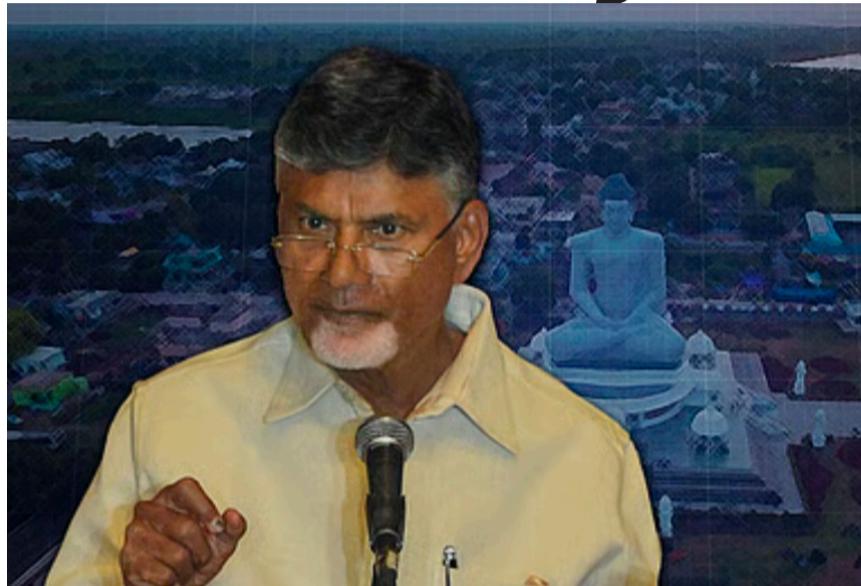
This ensures uniformity across active and retired segments of the judiciary, maintaining fairness in pay structure and post-retirement benefits. The Law Department's move is expected to benefit hundreds of judicial officials across Andhra Pradesh. Senior administrative officials described the order as a timely measure, considering cost-of-living adjustments and inflation trends over the

Minister Farooq also highlighted that the decision underscores the government's commitment to supporting the welfare of its judicial cadre. He acknowledged the continuous cooperation of the judiciary in upholding the rule of law and ensuring justice delivery even under challenging circumstances.

Experts in public administration noted that this increase is part of a broader effort by the state to align with central pay scales and maintain fiscal discipline while prioritizing employee welfare. They also emphasized that the revised DA rates would set a precedent for future adjustments applicable to other departments. The minister concluded by reiterating the government's dedication to maintaining transparency and efficiency in administrative decisions affecting state employees and pensioners.



# Amaravati to Be Developed as a 'Creative City', Says CM Chandrababu Naidu



TPN Bureau | Dec 4  
Vijayawada: Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu reaffirmed his government's commitment to developing Amaravati as a modern, "creative city" that reflects Telugu heritage and prioritizes sustainability and greenery. Chairing the 55th meeting of the Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) on Thursday, the Chief Minister said that every structure in the capital should carry a distinctive architectural character while promoting a green and eco-friendly environment.

The Chief Minister

noted that the government had conducted a detailed study on urban design models for the capital city, drawing inspiration from prominent national and international projects. He emphasized that Amaravati should serve as a model of innovation and cultural representation for future generations of Andhra Pradesh. The CRDA meeting, which was attended by key officials including Municipal Administration Minister P. Narayana, Chief Secretary K. Vijayanand, and Principal Secretary (Municipal Administration) Suresh Kumar, approved

a series of major development proposals. Among them is the construction of Lok Bhawan (Raj Bhavan) in Amaravati at an estimated cost of 169 crore. The authority also cleared the establishment of a Judicial Academy with a budget of 165 crore. In a significant infrastructure boost, the CRDA gave its nod to call tenders worth 532 crore for linking the Seed Access Roads to the National Highway-16, which will improve connectivity to the capital region.

The meeting further resolved to avail NABARD loans amounting to

7,380 crore to accelerate ongoing and upcoming development activities. Naidu also approved the second phase of land pooling notification, which will expand development in the Amaravati capital region. During the review, officials briefed the Chief Minister on the progress of various projects including government complexes, residential quarters for ministers, MLAs, and All India Service officers.

Highlighting cultural

symbolism in his vision, the Chief Minister directed officials to plan the installation of an NTR statue at Neerukon-

da, emphasizing that the project should be modeled on global standards after studying similar iconic monuments.

"Amaravati should echo the spirit and creativity of the Telugu people," Naidu said, calling for meticulous design and planning that blends culture, environment, and modernity. The meeting concluded with directions to CRDA and Amaravati Development Corporation to speed up execution works and ensure high-quality, sustainable development across the capital region.

## Visakhapatnam Declared India's Safest City for Women; Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha Leads Celebratory Rally



TPN Bureau | December 4

VISAKHAPATNAM: Visakhapatnam has been officially recognized as the safest city for women in India in the NARI 2025 Report, prompting celebrations across the city. On this occasion, Andhra Pradesh Home and Disaster Management Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, Visakhapatnam City Police Commissioner Dr. Shankar Brata Bagchi, IPS, senior police officers, women constables and large groups of women police personnel participated in a special rally.

Bagchi highlighted key safety initiatives, including Shakti Teams, the Shakti App, real-time police response, and the use of drones for surveillance in vulnerable zones. Speaking on the alarming rise in online harassment, he urged young women not to suffer in silence and appealed to them to report online abuse immediately. He publicly shared his mobile number for direct assistance, assuring complete confidentiality and swift action.

Andhra University Vice-Chancellor Prof. GP Rajasekhar spoke about the university's initiatives for women's safety and empowerment, including strict grievance redressal systems, women in leadership roles, and expanded self-defense programs. He announced a panel discussion with students in January to help draft a policy document for the government.

Women who had received timely assistance from the police shared emotional testimonies, while two POCSO fast-track conviction cases were presented through video.

Awards were presented to officers, investigators, and legal staff for excellence in POCSO fast-track cases and for their contributions during the recent CII Summit. Senior officials including DCPs and ACPs attended the event.

sustainable urban development. He credited the recognition to the relentless efforts of Vizag City Police, working 24/7 under the guidance of the Chief Minister. Deputy Chief Minister, Home Minister, Home Mi

nister and DGP.

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In her address, Home Minister Anitha said women's safety is the top priority of the NDA government. She noted that CM Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan and Minister Nara Lokesh are giving unprecedented attention to women's protection. She praised the efficiency of Shakti Teams and strict enforcement of POCSO laws that have resulted in long-term convictions in several cases.

The Minister also stressed the need for moral education, parental responsibility, and community participation to build a drug-free, crime-free society. She congratulated police personnel, legal teams, and citizens for their contribution to the city's national recognition.

Later, addressing a gathering, Commissioner Bagchi said that the "City of Destiny" has witnessed rapid progress over the past 18 months. With rising investments and a surge in tourism, he emphasized that public safety—especially women's safety—is fundamental to sus-

## Early Bird Incentives Approved for Six Companies; 8.29 Lakh Crore Investments Cleared



TPN Bureau | Dec 4

AMARAVATI: The State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB), chaired by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, has approved early bird incentives for six companies and sanctioned investment proposals worth 8.29 lakh crore. The decisions were made during the board's 13th meeting held at the Secretariat, where ministers T.G. Bharat and Kandula Durgesh brie

fed the media later.

Chief Minister Naidu directed officials to set up a dedicated investment portal to monitor project progress and ensure the timely execution of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). The board also decided to design an action plan to bring the approved projects into execution within the next 45 days. Addressing the press, Minister T.G. Bharat said the state government is actively

facilitating industrial growth across key sectors. He revealed that out of the total MoUs signed so far, nearly 50% of the investment processes have already commenced following the recent CII conference. "Investment activity worth 1.69 lakh crore has begun in the Visakhapatnam region, 87,000 crore in the Amaravati region, and 73,000 crore in the Tirupati region," Bharat said.

"Through the cumulative investment commitments of 13.25 lakh crore, around 16.13 lakh jobs will be generated in the coming years." To accelerate ground-level implementation, the government plans to appoint a dedicated officer for every project involving investments above 1,000 crore. The SIPB also resolved to ensure that as many foundation stone-laying ceremonies as possible take place before the upcom-

## EO reviews TTD trusts



TPN Bureau | December 4

TIRUPATI: TTD EO Anil Kumar Singh held a review on Sri Venkateswara Sarva Shreyasara and Pranadana Trusts, run by TTD.

A meeting was held with the officials concerned at the conference hall of the TTD administration building on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, the EO said that if students studying in TTD educational institutions are taught Sanatana Dharma, moral values, devotion, personality development, skill development and other topics along with education, they will become exemplary citizens.

He said that taking students for field observation along with education would increase their knowledge.

He also instructed the officials to set up labora-

atories to correct the shortcomings in the creative thinking of the students, provide training with experts for skill development, and provide necessary infrastructure facilities.

He wanted to provide training with experts to children studying in TTD Bala Mandir and other schools to increase the pass percentage even further.

Similarly, the EO instructed to make arrangements to distribute hearing aids to the children of Sravanam Project after the training was completed.

He also directed to set up a special system to identify the shortage of medicines in TTD hospitals, which medicines are needed, and to identify the medicines required by the patients from time to time.

Similarly, the EO in-

structed to use funds from Sri Venkateswara Pranadana Trust to treat serious cases and special cases of patients in hospitals.

A nine member committee should be formed to monitor the supply of medicines, the process of purchasing and basic facilities in TTD hospitals from time to time and prepare a report accordingly.

The Staff should be appointed to provide necessary medical services in PAC-5 of Tirumala.

Additional EO Ch Venkata Chowdhary, JEO V. Veerabrahman, FA and CAO O. Balaji, SVIMS Director Dr. R. V. Kumar, BIRRD Director Dr. G. Jagadish, CMO Dr. Kusuma Kumari, Padmavati Children's Hospital Director Dr. Srinath Reddy, DEO Venkata Sunil and others participated in this meeting.

## World Bank-ADB Joint Technical Mission Begins at APCRDA Office in Amaravati



TPN Bureau | December 4

VIJAYAWADA: A week-long programme to focus on safeguards, stakeholder engagement, PPP planning and field implementation under AIUDP.

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) on Thursday launched a week-long Joint Technical Mission of the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), scheduled from December 4 to 11, 2025. The mission aims to bolster safeguards, improve stakeholder engagement, strengthen PPP frameworks, enhance contract management, and support field-level execution under the Amaravati Integrated Urban Development Project (AIUDP).

The inaugural session focused on core concepts related to Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), and Sexual Harassment (SH). It included introductions, agenda setting, and a detailed presentation of mission objectives. Technical sessions were led by World Bank specialists Jaya Sharma (Senior Gender and Social Development Specialist) and Shriti Munshi (GBV Consultant), as well as Vijayalakshmi, Legal Counsellor from the One Stop Centre (OSC), Guntur. Teams from APCRDA and ADCL actively participated.

Day one featured in-depth discussions on India's GBV legal frameworks, survivor support systems, the World Bank's Good Practice Notes on SEA, risk mitigation measures, and survivor-centric response mechanisms.

Operational teams from APCRDA, ADCL, PgMC, PMC, and

contractors attended the sessions. Over the next several days, the mission will offer practical guidance on GBV/SEA/SH, and OHS compliance, traffic and road safety, and PPP pipeline development. Field visits, community consultations, and parallel technical interactions are planned throughout the week.

The mission will conclude on December 11 with focused sessions on PPP strategies, contract management, and review meetings involving AP Government departments and key stakeholders. APCRDA affirmed its commitment to transparency, accountability, and best-practice implementation across the Amaravati and AIUDP programmes in partnership with global development institutions.

Day one featured in-depth discussions on India's GBV legal frameworks, survivor support systems, the World Bank's Good Practice Notes on SEA, risk mitigation measures, and survivor-centric response mechanisms.

Operational teams from APCRDA, ADCL, PgMC, PMC, and

# Avanigadda MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad Inaugurates New Rythu Seva Kendra

TPN Bureau | December 4

Vijayawada: A newly constructed Rythu Seva Kendra (Farmer Service Center) was inaugurated by Avanigadda MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad on Thursday. The new facility, situated opposite the local Revenue Hall, has been built under the supervision of the State Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Department to enhance support services for farmers in the region. The building was constructed with a total budget of 27.94 lakh, including 23.94 lakh from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and 4 lakh from Gram Panchayat funds.



multiple initiatives set up at the new center. He inspected the paddy procurement process, observed the grain moisture testing facility, and visited the agricultural knowledge book exhibition arranged for farmers' benefit.

He urged officials to ensure that the new center serves all farmers efficiently and promptly. Several prominent local officials and public representatives attended the event, including Agricultural Market Committee (AMC) Chairman Kolur Venkateswara Rao, Mandal Parishad President Tungal Sumathi, PACC Chairman Yalavarthi

Naga Muneshwara Rao (Chinna), Tahsildar K. Nagamalleswara Rao, Vice MPP Puligadda Pitcheshwara Rao, and Co-option Member Shaik Nazeer Basha.

Officials from the Panchayat Raj Department – DEEE Pagadala Suresh Babu, AE Brahmananda Babu, ADA Jayaprada, and Agriculture Officers Shubha Harika and Mu-

## BJP Delegation Meets DGP Harish Kumar Gupta, Seeks Security for Atal-Modi Suhasan Yatra



TPN Bureau | December 5

Vijayawada: A delegation of senior leaders from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) met Andhra Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Harish Kumar Gupta on Thursday to discuss security arrangements ahead of the upcoming Atal-Modi Suhasan Yatra. The delegation, led by BJP State General Secretary Nagothu Ramesh Naidu, submitted a formal representation requesting the police department's support and cooperation for the smooth conduct of the statewide event.

During the meeting held at the DGP's office in Mangalagiri, Ramesh Naidu briefed Harish Kumar Gupta about the objectives and itinerary of the Atal-Modi Suhasan Yatra. The yatra is being organised to highlight the governance model and welfare initiatives championed by former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Prime Minister Narendra

Modi. BJP plans to conduct the event across all districts in the state, engaging with citizens, beneficiaries, and party workers.

Ramesh Naidu requested the police department to make necessary security and traffic arrangements at all public meeting venues and during the procession. He also urged the DGP to provide special security cover to BJP State President P.V.N. Madhav, who will be participating in the yatra and addressing multiple gatherings during the program.

Expressing appreciation for the state police department's efforts in maintaining peace and law and order, the BJP delegation said the coalition government in Andhra Pradesh led by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in alliance with BJP and Jana Sena has been giving priority to law and order, ensuring a peaceful and secure environment throughout the state.

They also lauded the DGP and senior officials for their proactive engagement with political parties on public and security issues. The DGP assured the delegation that the department would examine their representation and extend all possible cooperation to ensure the safety and success of the yatra.

He instructed the concerned district police units to coordinate closely with local BJP committees for route permissions, crowd management, and VIP security. Those who accompanied Ramesh Naidu included BJP State Secretary Sandhi Reddy Srinivas, Party Program Coordinator Paturi Nagabushanam, NTR District President Adduri Sri Ram, leaders Iska Sunil, Vitta Ramesh, and Paila Suresh Babu, among others.

The meeting concluded with the delegation expressing confidence that the event would be conducted peacefully with full police support.

## Foundation Stone Laid for Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy in Amaravati

TPN Bureau | December 4

Vijayawada: In a significant boost to sports infrastructure in Andhra Pradesh, the foundation stone for the Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy was laid at Abbarampalem village in Amaravati. The ceremony was conducted with traditional Vedic rituals, symbolizing the beginning of what is expected to become a major center for badminton excellence in South India.

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) has allotted 12 acres of land on a freehold basis for the academy's development. Officials confirmed that all formalities, including the sale agreement, had been completed earlier, paving the way for construction to begin. The upcoming facility aims to nurture young badminton players and train them for success at both national and international levels.

Padma Bhushan awardee and Chief National Badminton Coach Pullela Gopichand, along with his family members, government dignitaries, sportspersons, and well-



wishers, attended the ceremony. Addressing the gathering, Gopichand expressed gratitude to the state administration for its support and vision in promoting sports. He said the academy

would include international-standard indoor courts, advanced sports equipment, athlete dormitories, fitness centers, and specialized training programs designed to identify and develop e

merging talent from Andhra Pradesh and across India.

Gopichand emphasized that the Amaravati academy will play a vital role in building the next generation of badminton

## Tribal Students Shine on Day 2 of Udbhav-2025 with Cultural Brilliance

TPN Bureau | December 4

Vijayawada: The second day of the 6th National EMRS Kala Utsav – Udbhav-2025 – at KL Deemed-to-be University, Vijayawada, unfolded as a vivid celebration of tribal artistry, creativity, and cultural diversity, as students from across India delivered mesmerizing performances that enthralled audiences and judges alike.

The national-level event, organized by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, featured an extensive lineup of 22 competitive events on Thursday, ranging from mimicry, quiz, shloka recitation, and creative writing to folk, classical, and devotional music, as well as solo and group

and Uttarakhand (13). Andhra Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh jointly held the fifth position with 11 medals each, signifying impressive performances from both states.

Andhra Pradesh's Strong ShowHost state Andhra Pradesh continued to make its mark with commendable results. Its students clinched Gold medals in Classical Music (Vocal) and Aashu Kaavitham (Telugu Extempore Poetry), a Silver in Patriotic Group Song, and a Bronze in English Senior Extempore Poetry. The homeground enthusiasm was evident as audiences cheered every victory, adding to the event's festive spirit.

Grand Finale on Friday

Excitement now builds for the grand finale on December 5, which will feature nine major events including Regional Tribal Group Dance, Folk Orchestra, One-Act Play, Storytelling, and Visual Arts. Results for Drawing, Painting, Cartooning, and Indigenous Craft will also be announced before the concluding valedictory ceremony at 5 PM, where the Pratibha Puraskar and championship trophies will honor the best of Udbhav-2025.

As Udbhav-2025 enters its final day, it stands as a proud tribute to the artistic excellence and cultural spirit of India's tribal youth, uniting creative voices from every corner of the nation.

## Seven New Sand Reaches to Be Made Available Soon: District Collector Dr Lakshmisha

9 EXISTING REACHES HOLD 7.27 LAKH METRIC TONNES OF SAND; STRICT MONITORING TO PREVENT VIOLATIONS

TPN Bureau | December 4

VIJAYAWADA: NTR District Collector Dr G Lakshmisha announced that seven new sand reaches will soon be opened to ensure smooth and uninterrupted sand supply to the public. He stressed that the district is implementing the sand policy in a highly transparent manner and directed officials to work in coordination so that people do not face any difficulties in accessing sand.

The Collector chaired the 6th District-Level Sand Committee meeting virtually from the Collectorate on Thursday. The meeting reviewed the availability of sand in current reaches, sand removal from

patta lands, the approval process for new reaches, and the measures taken to prevent illegal sand transportation to Telangana.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Lakshmisha said that 7.27 lakh metric tonnes of sand is currently available across nine active sand reaches in the district. He stated that the approval process for seven new reaches—two in Jaggayyapeta mandal, two in Chandrapadu mandal, and three in Kanchikacherla mandal under the Krishna and Munneru river belts—is nearing completion.

The Collector informed that 34 applica-

tions were received for removal of sand mounds formed in patta lands, of which 26 applications have already been approved by the committee. Environmental clearance has been granted for two of these applications, and notifications will be issued soon, he added.

Officials reported that strong enforcement measures are in place to prevent illegal transport of sand to Telangana. A total of 248 cases have been registered and 440 individuals arrested in connection with illegal transportation. The IVRS-based public feedback system indicated good satisfaction levels regarding sand supply in the district, the Collector noted.

Joint Collector S Illakkia, Mines DD Srinivas Rao, officials from various departments, and committee members participated in the meeting.

champions. "Our goal is to create a high-performance center that supports athletes with world-class training, coaching, and scientific sports management," he stated.

The initiative aligns with the state government's broader mission of encouraging sports and wellness among youth. APCRDA officials assured full logistical and administrative assistance to ensure the project's timely completion. They reaffirmed the government's commitment to transforming Amaravati into a modern, multi-sport destination that reflects the region's growing prominence in athletics.

The academy is also expected to generate local employment opportunities and inspire sports participation at the grassroots level. Once completed, the Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy in Amaravati is anticipated to become a world-class training hub, strengthening India's badminton ecosystem while enhancing Andhra Pradesh's reputation as a nurturing ground for top-tier sporting talent.



and blending traditional dance forms, indigenous languages, and musical expressions that highlighted cultural unity amid diversity.

Medal Tally After Two Days

At the end of the second day, the overall medal standings after 29 events placed Odisha in the lead with 22 medals, followed closely by Telangana (20), Sikkim (16),



# RVR Group Gifts 1-Crore Silver Mandapam to Mopidevi Temple

RVR Group Gifts 1-Crore Silver Mandapam to Mopidevi Temple

TPN Bureau | December 4, 2025

Mopidevi, Krishna District: The sacred Mopidevi Sri Subrahmanyaswamy Temple, one of the most revered temples in Andhra Pradesh, received a grand donation on Thursday as the Hyderabad-based RVR Group presented a silver mandapam worth 1 crore to the temple. RVR Group Chairman R.V.R. Chowdary and his family members personally donated the intricately designed silver mandapam to the temple authorities in a formal ceremony held at a t Mopidevi.

The offering, made as part of the family's de-

votion to Lord Subrahmanyaswamy, adds a magnificent new feature to the temple's sanctum. The silver mandapam, designed with detailed craftsmanship by temple artisans, will serve as a special platform for conducting major rituals, poojas, and festivities.

The offering reflects the family's long-standing spiritual connection with the temple and their continued support for preserving Andhra Pradesh's religious heritage. The ceremony was attended by several notable dignitaries and political leaders. Minister Kollu Ravindra, APSRTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana Rao, Avanigadda MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad, and Swachhanda Corporation Chairman Kom-



maredy Pattabhiram graced the occasion.

Also present were Avanigadda Constituency TDP Observer Kanaparthi Srinivasa Rao and various local

leaders and devotees. During the event, RVR Chowdary handed over the silver mandapam and donation receipts to the temple's Executive Officer Dasari Rama-

vra Prasad Rao. The temple authorities expressed deep gratitude to the RVR family for their extraordinary contribution.

Speaking at the cere-

mony, EO Prasad Rao noted that the silver mandapam stands as a lasting symbol of devotion and generosity. He also mentioned that it would be integrated into

the temple's traditional puja settings, especially during the annual Brahmotsavams and special festive occasions attended by thousands of devotees.

Minister Kollu Ravindra praised the donation, describing it as a remarkable gesture of faith and service.

"Contributions like this not only preserve our religious traditions but also inspire others to participate in temple development and community service," he said.

He further appreciated RVR Chowdary for maintaining a balance between his business success and spiritual commitment. The Mopidevi temple, dedicated to Lord Subrahmanyaswamy, holds great significance in the coastal region and draws devotees from

across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The temple is famed for rituals related to Sarpa Dosha Nivarana and other traditional pujas seeking blessings for prosperity and family welfare. With this donation, the Mopidevi temple is expected to enhance its devotional ambience, offering devotees an enriched spiritual experience. The silver mandapam will soon be inaugurated for public viewing after special purification rituals (samskaranam) conducted by temple priests.

Temple officials stated that such contributions are vital for the preservation of cultural and architectural sanctity, ensuring the temple continues to serve as a beacon of faith for generations to come.

## Temple Development Grants of 3.5 Crore Sanctioned for Srikakulam and Nagayalanka temples

TPN Bureau | December 4

Avanigadda: The Andhra Pradesh government has sanctioned a total of 3.5 crore for the development of two prominent temples in Krishna district, marking a significant step in promoting religious infrastructure and cultural heritage in the region. Avanigadda MLA Mandali Buddha Prasad announced the funding on Thursday while addressing the media at his constituency office.

According to the MLA, the Sri Eka Ratri Prasanna Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple, located at Srikakulam village in Ghatasala mandal, has received a sanction of 2.5 crore, while the Sri Subrahmanyaswamy Temple in Nagayalanka has been allotted 1 crore.

The funds have been approved from the Sarva Shreyo Nidhi (Temple Welfare Fund) under the Endowments Department (Devasthanams and Dharmadayas), aimed at renovation, infrastructure development, and facilitating improved amenities for devotees. The decision, MLA Buddha Prasad noted, follows directives from Chief Minister N.



Chandrababu Naidu to undertake comprehensive development and restoration of important temples across Andhra Pradesh.

The allocation is part of the state's ongoing initiative to preserve ancient temples and promote spiritual tourism. He expressed gratitude to State Endowments

Minister Anam Ramanayana Reddy for promptly approving the funds and supporting the long-pending demands of local devotees and temple committees. Speaking to reporters, Mr. Buddha Prasad stated, "Both Srikakulam's Mallikarjuna Swamy temple and Nagayalanka's Subrahmany-

swamy temple have deep historical and spiritual significance.

The devotees have long been requesting funds for their development. With the support of the Chief Minister and the Endowments Minister, these temples will soon witness major improvements that will benefit thousands of pil-

grims visiting these holy sites every year. "The allocated funds are expected to cover structural renovation, temple premises beautification, provision of basic amenities like rest houses and drinking water facilities, and improved access roads leading to the temple sites.

The MLA mentioned that project work will commence soon after the department finalizes the technical and administrative approvals. Plans are also underway to ensure that development works are carried out while preserving the heritage architecture and traditional temple customs. Devotees and local residents from both Srikakulam and Nagayalanka expressed happiness over the government's decision.

They said the grants would help restore the grandeur of these temples and increase pilgrim footfall, boosting local economy through religious tourism. Mr. Buddha Prasad, who personally took an active role in pursuing the funding proposal with the Endowments Department, extended his thanks to Minister Anam Ramanayana Reddy on behalf of devotees from both villages.

## Gurazala: Devotees celebrate grand Patha Patamma Ammavari Tirunalla festival

TPN Bureau | December 4

Gurazala, Palnadu District: The annual Sri Patha Patamma Ammavari Shidimanu (Tirunalla) Mahotsavam was celebrated with great devotion and splendor in Gurazala on Thursday, coinciding with Margashira Shuddha Pournami. A large number of devotees thronged the temple to offer prayers and seek the blessings of the goddess.

As part of the ritual, devotees prepared traditional pongal dishes and offered them as naivedyam after making offerings to dogs in accordance with customary practice. To ensure smooth conduct of darshan, the Endowments Department and temple management committee made special queue arrangements, facilitating hassle-free entry for pilgrims. After the darshan, the Arya Vaisya Association distributed laddu prasadam to devotees.

Endowments Department Officer P. Poornachandra Rao, staff member K. Srinivas Rao, temple board members, and several volunteers supervised the arrangements. Police forces, led by DSP B.L.N. Jagadish, maintained strict vigil and crowd control around the temple premises to ensure safety and order.

The festivities reached a peak on the fifth day, attracting prominent attendees including Gurazala MLA Yarapathineni Srinivasa Rao, Palnadu District Collector Kritika Shukla, and SP Krishnarao.

They were warmly welcomed by officials from the Revenue, Police, and Endowments Departments at the Panchayati Raj Guest House before proceeding on foot to the temple. En route, members of the temple committee and local communities greeted them with showers of marigold petals and traditional honors. On arrival, they were re-

ceived with poorna kumbham honors and offered prayers to Ammavaru.

The dignitaries sought divine blessings and expressed appreciation for the organization of the festival. The Endowments Department presented framed portraits of Goddess Patha Patamma to the visiting officials as a token of respect and gratitude. Among those present were DSP Jagadish, RDO V. Muralikrishna, NS Project Right Canal Chairman Pulukuri Kantharao, TDP Mandal President Jamigumpala Lakshminarayana, and local TDP leaders from BC, SC, and Minority wings.

The entire festival environment reflected a strong spirit of devotion, community harmony, and cultural continuity, marking yet another successful celebration of the revered Patha Patamma Ammavari Tirunalla in Gurazala.

## Narasaraopet MLA GV Anjaneyulu Flags Off Horticulture Study Tour in Palnadu District

TPN Bureau | December 4

Narasaraopet (Palnadu District): State Chief Whip and Narasaraopet MLA GV Anjaneyulu on Thursday flagged off a horticulture study tour for farmers of his constituency, reaffirming his vision to transform the region into a major horticulture hub.

The tour, aimed at enhancing farmers' technical knowledge and exposure, will take them to Pedavegi and Jangareddygunu in Eluru district to study palm oil plantations and best practices over two days.

Addressing farmers before flagging off the vehicles, MLA Anjaneyulu emphasized the vast income potential of horticultural crops compared to traditional farming.

"Farmers cultivating fruits and vegetable crops are earning between 1 lakh and 3 lakh per acre. Through exposure visits like these, our farmers can learn the methods and innovations that ensure higher productivity and profits," he said.

The MLA revealed that his goal is to promote horticulture across 40,000 to 50,000 acres in and around Vi-

nukonda and Narasaraopet, gradually developing the entire region into a "Horticulture Hub." He said palm oil cultivation, which provides steady income for up to 30 years, is a sustainable model successfully adopted in East and West Godavari districts and can be replicated in Palnadu as well.

Anjaneyulu announced that he would dedicate his monthly salary as MLA toward conducting such farmer exposure visits, supporting persons with disabilities, and promoting initiatives that strengthen the constituency's economic foundation. He also said similar activities would be taken up through the Shiva Shakti Foundation to further encourage horticulture and allied sectors.

Highlighting the changing agricultural trends, he urged farm-

## 77 New DDO Offices Inaugurated Across Andhra Pradesh; Pawan Kalyan Launches Virtually

TPN Bureau | December 4

Manasaraopet: In a major administrative strengthening step aimed at improving grassroots governance, Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Pawan Kalyan, virtually inaugurated 77 newly established District Development Officer (DDO) offices across the state on Thursday.

The new offices are expected to play a crucial role in strengthening rural development administration and ensuring faster implementation of welfare schemes. As part of the statewide initiative, a new DDO office was officially inaugurated at Linganguntla village in Narasaraopet mandal of Palnadu district. The inauguration ceremony at Linganguntla was attended by Narasaraopet MLA Dr. Chadalavada Aravinda Babu, who participated as the chief guest.

The event saw the par-



ticipation of district officials, panchayat raj department representatives, and local public representatives. Speaking through the virtual platform, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan emphasized that the government's objective is to ensure that officials remain closely connected with the public at the village level.

"With these new DDO offices, we are laying the foundation for a more responsive, transparent,

and efficient rural governance system. This will help speed up developmental activities and strengthen local administrative mechanisms," he said. At the Narasaraopet event, MLA Dr. Chadalavada Aravinda Babu expressed gratitude to the state government and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan for prioritizing administrative decentralization drive, reflecting the state government's focus on strengthening governance at the grassroots level.

He stated that the new DDO office in Linganguntla would serve as an important anchor for implementing development programs and coordinating activities of the Panchayat Raj and Rural Development departments across the region. Local residents and public representatives welcomed the move, saying it would reduce delays in government processes and improve coordination between officials and citizens.

District officials observed that the DDO offices will function as key administrative hubs for monitoring development works, implementing welfare programs, and addressing public grievances efficiently. The inauguration of these 77 DDO offices marks a major milestone in Andhra Pradesh's ongoing administrative decentralization drive, reflecting the state government's focus on strengthening governance at the grassroots level.

ers to diversify into high-demand crops instead of relying on low-income paddy cultivation. He advised growers to make full use of government subsidies up to 90 percent on drip irrigation systems, drones, and farm machinery, stressing efficiency and modernization as the key to progress.

"By following the Pancharasuthram introduced by former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for farmers' welfare, we can certainly achieve success," he asserted. He also appreciated the government's initiative to provide scholarships and fee reimbursement for differently abled students, calling it a commendable step toward inclusive development. Among those present at the event were ADA Ravikumar, AO G. Varalakshmi, Horticulture Officer Nabi, alliance leaders, and several farmers and officials.

# Telangana's Temples Marching Forward



Telangana's temples are seeing major improvements, thanks to the government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Endowments Minister Smt. Konda Surekha. The government is working hard to make temples beautiful and grand, but most importantly, they're making sure ordinary people have basic facilities when they visit. They are fixing many things that were ignored before and are giving special importance to the people's religious beliefs. This commitment was clear during the big festivals. The recent Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara, the state's largest gathering, was held successfully, with the government spending ₹110 crores to ensure a smooth experience. Now, they are planning an even bigger festival next time, including permanent construction at the site. The Bonalu festival in Hyderabad was also celebrated on a grander scale, with ₹20 crores sanctioned—more money than before—due to the Minister's special interest. In a

first, the Endowments Department started Mass Karthika Month Lamp Festivals (Deepotsavams), bringing spiritual light to all temples every evening during the holy Karthika month. They're also using technology: people who can't attend the Sammakka-Saralamma festival can now offer 'gold' and receive prasadam online through services like Mee Seva and the Postal Department. This online service was also available for prasadam during Maha Shivaratri. On the administrative side, the government gave promotions to 33 long-serving employees and moved temple staff around in transfers after 16 years. New events like the River Lamp Offering (Nadi Aarathi) have begun at sacred places like Bhadrachalam. Big Plans for Big Temples: The government is spending about ₹400 crores to improve temples across the state.

Yadagirigutta is getting a new gold plating on its main dome (about 63 kg of gold). They've also planned

a Vedic School and acquired a large area of land for building guest houses. Vemulawada received ₹76 crores for improvements, including building a new free meal (Annadanam) center. Bhadrachalam received ₹60.20 crores to buy land for future development. The government is also protecting temple property. They started a special effort to secure over 632 acres of temple land. They plan to use some of this land for solar plants, involving women's self-help groups (Indira Mahila Shakti Groups). They are also using modern mapping technology (GIS digitalization) to keep track of temple lands, which is a commendable step. Overall, Telangana's religious sites are not just being preserved; they are being actively developed using modern methods, greater funding, and a deep respect for the public's faith, ensuring a bright future for these cultural landmarks.

**Sagar Vanaparthi,  
Policy Analyst.**

**Press Note No. 2025**  
Dr. Revanth Reddy, ACR, Telangana on launching State Anti-corruption Week during the period from 01.12.2025 to 10.12.2025, addressing the International Anti-corruption Day (20 December).

As a part of the preventing corruption and facilitate reporting of corruption incidents, on 01.12.2025, Mr. K. Suresh Reddy, Director General, ACR, Telangana launched the Q21 Club compliance system. This system broadly intended to specially designed to help people living in the living and remote areas report corruption quickly, securely and without any intermediaries.

The new digital system is expected to significantly reduce political interest in the Human, creating lesser costs, improved service delivery and greater Transparency. By enabling users reporting through a single app, the ACR aims to further strengthen its commitment to efficiency, accountability and transparency. The Q21 Club will be deployed in all Government Offices and Intermediate public places.

The Director General, ACR, Telangana also urged the people to bring awareness among the citizens for combating the corruption.

Dr. Revanth Reddy, ACR, Director, ACR along with Joint Directors and Dy. Directors of ACR participated in the programme.

**CALL POINT NUMBER 1000-7000-111111111111**

In case of detection of bribe by any public servant, the public are requested to contact Toll Free Number of ACR i.e. 1000 for taking action as per law. Telangana can also be connected through social media platforms WhatsApp (+91-94401-01100), Facebook (@Telangana-ACR), @RevantReddy (@Telangana-ACR). The name and details of the various complainants will be kept confidential.

**ACR**  
Anti-corruption Bureau  
Telangana

## India Needs More Bureaucrats, Not DOGE-Style Cuts, to Improve Efficiency



As the US disbands its controversial Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), once championed by Elon Musk and former President Donald Trump, the episode offers a cautionary tale for countries like India that often romanticise drastic bureaucratic downsizing. DOGE's 10-month run, marked by the firing of 2,60,000 federal workers, ultimately collapsed under its own chaos. Rather than improving governance, it promoted a techno-dystopia that sidelined human expertise in favour of hyper-automation.

Yet in India, where frustrations over red tape are common, many saw DOGE as a model for streamlining governance. This reflects a broader belief that bureaucracies are bloated and inefficient. However, global research—and India's own experience—suggest the opposite: the Indian state is severely understaffed, not overstaffed.

Much of India's administrative reform discourse relies

on curbing bureaucratic discretion through digital surveillance tools—MIS dashboards, biometric attendance, GPS tracking and command-and-control centres. These systems aim to "discipline" civil servants but often undermine their ability to deliver public services. Frontline workers, from teachers to anganwadi staff, say they are reduced to "clerks" uploading data rather than solving real implementation challenges.

Restricting discretion also removes critical feedback loops from frontline officers who best understand on-ground realities. When their voices are ignored, bureaucratic culture shifts toward rigid adherence to process rather than outcomes. Many officers describe themselves as powerless "post officers," reflecting a system that overvalues data compliance instead of service delivery.

International comparisons highlight India's staffing crisis. In 2011, government em-

ployment accounted for only 4.6% of total employment—far below the US, where public employment stands at 15.9%. India has 1,623 government servants per 1 lakh residents, compared to 7,681 in the US. At senior levels, the gaps are stark: a 23% shortfall in IAS posts in 2018, only 940 diplomats compared to nearly 14,000 in the US State Department, and nearly 48% vacancies among Block Development Officers, according to research by Devesh Kapur and Aditya Dasgupta.

As outlined in State Capability in India, co-authored by current Cabinet Secretary T.V. Somanathan, India's state machinery performs remarkably well given its size and burdens. The real path to efficiency lies not in axing staff or replacing them with algorithms, but in empowering frontline workers, restoring autonomy, and expanding the workforce to match the country's administrative needs.

## Putin in Delhi: India-Russia Ties Enter a More Transactional Phase



Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to New Delhi has renewed attention on a relationship long steeped in nostalgia and strategic habit. While expectations from his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi remain high, the India-Russia partnership is undergoing visible transformation, shaped by shifting global geopolitics, sanctions pressure, defence diversification, and India's broader multilateral alignment strategy.

For decades, defence ties served as the backbone of bilateral relations. Since the 2000 Strategic Partnership declaration and the 2010 upgrade to a "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership," India has relied on Moscow for trusted defence supplies, advanced technologies, and diplomatic support. Legacy platforms—from MiG and Sukhoi aircraft to T-90 tanks and the INS Vikramaditya—cemented Russia's role as India's key armaments partner. Flagship ventures like BrahMos and the S-400 exemplified deep collaboration.

But the landscape is changing. Russia remains India's largest single defence supplier, yet its share of imports has declined sharply as New Delhi diversifies towards the US, France, Israel, and domestic production under Make in India. Sanctions and the Ukraine conflict have disrupted deliveries and payments, exposing the risks of overdependence and accelerating India's push for selective, high-end cooperation rather than broad reliance.

Energy and trade ties have expanded, particularly after India increased purchases of discounted Russian crude. Trade has surged to over \$65 billion, but remains starkly imbalanced: India's exports are still below \$5 billion. Western sanctions on Rosneft and Lukoil have complicated payments, creating rupee surpluses and pushing experiments with local-currency settlement. Ambitious connectivity initiatives—INSTC, Chennai-Vladivostok, and the Northern Sea Route—have political backing but face infrastructural and sanctions-related hurdles.

Geopolitically, both countries champion multipolarity and coordination in BRICS, SCO, and the G20. But Russia's tightening embrace of China limits Moscow's ability to balance Beijing on issues central to India's security. Meanwhile, India's deepening partnerships with the US, QUAD, and Europe constrain overt alignment with a heavily sanctioned Russia. This dynamic has led to a more pragmatic Indian approach—maintaining ties with Moscow while diversifying across multiple partners.

Looking ahead, the relationship will remain relevant but more constrained and transactional. Cooperation will endure in nuclear energy, hydrocarbons, select defence technologies, and Eurasian connectivity. Yet Russia will no longer occupy the central position it once did in India's foreign policy. Instead, New Delhi will pursue a calibrated partnership—resilient in priority sectors but shaped by the realities of a rapidly evolving global order.

## The rupee's real problem: A rising import bill and stagnant exports



The Indian rupee's latest slide has sparked concern, especially since domestic fundamentals appear stable. Inflation remains within the RBI's tolerance band, economic growth hit 8.2% in Q2 FY26, and weakening US manufacturing data should typically soften the dollar. Yet the rupee continues to depreciate, and attributing this solely to tariff threats from the Donald Trump administration oversimplifies the issue. India's currency pressures stem from long-standing structural vulnerabilities in the external sector—not short-term geopolitical shocks.

At the core of the problem is a persistent mismatch: India's heavy import dependence alongside modest export performance. India relies on a narrow set of imports—crude oil, gold, electronics, edible oils, and key intermediate goods. As incomes rise and manufacturing expands, the import bill grows faster than export earnings, widening the current account deficit. HSBC estimates FY26's deficit may nearly double from 0.6% to 1.4% of GDP, signalling mounting pressure on the rupee.

Meanwhile, India's export performance has remained largely stagnant for decades. The country accounts for just 1.8% of global merchandise exports and 4.3% in services. By contrast, China's share jumped from 4% in 2001 to over 15% by 2022 due to its deep integration with global value chains and massive investments in logistics and manufacturing. India continues to grapple with high logistics costs, unpredictable regulations, quality-control issues, and limited participation in global supply chains.

Policy priorities must therefore shift toward expanding export capacity. This includes strengthening R&D, improving university-industry collaboration, modernising logistics through programmes like Gati Shakti, and ensuring a stable, predictable trade regime. India also needs deeper participation in global supply chains through free-trade agreements and partnerships. Finally, a shift from volatile portfolio flows to long-term FDI would provide greater currency stability.

The rupee's recent depreciation is a reminder that currencies reflect economic strength. Without bold reforms to raise competitiveness and diversify exports, the rupee will continue to mirror India's unrealised potential.

# Putin's India visit: A tense tightrope walk for PM Modi government

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India has put the Modi government in a delicate diplomatic position, balancing India's strategic ties with Moscow while managing relationships with the U.S. and European Union. The visit, set against the backdrop of the International Criminal Court (ICC) issuing an arrest warrant against Putin, presents both opportunities and challenges for New Delhi.

According to Ministry of External Affairs officials, the ICC warrant does not impact India, as the country is not a signatory. Nevertheless, the optics of hosting Putin amid ongoing international scrutiny have raised questions about India's diplomatic positioning.

The agenda of the visit spans multiple sectors, including energy, trade, defence, nuclear cooperation, and labour mobility. Agreements reached during the visit are likely to influence India's broader geopolitical strategy, especially as Western nations closely monitor India-Russia engagements.



The Modi government faces the task of ensuring that strategic cooperation with Russia, particularly in defence and energy, does not strain ties with Western partners. Analysts suggest that India's handling of the visit reflects a careful calibra-

tion of national interests, maintaining long-standing relations with Russia while upholding commitments to global partners. Energy security and defence acquisitions, including ongoing collaborations on missile systems and military

technology, are expected to dominate discussions. At the same time, New Delhi must navigate the political optics, both domestically and internationally, to avoid perceptions of endorsing controversial actions by Moscow.

Putin's visit underscores India's evolving foreign policy approach—pursuing pragmatic partnerships while walking a tightrope between global powers, asserting strategic autonomy, and safeguarding national interests.

## "Young children, elderly suffering": Sonia Gandhi asks Centre to take action to curb air pollution



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Thursday called on the central government to take immedi-

ate measures to curb air pollution in the Delhi-NCR region, emphasizing the severe impact on vulnerable groups, particularly young children and the

elderly. Speaking to reporters outside Parliament, Gandhi highlighted that air pollution levels in the national capital have reached

alarming proportions, posing serious health risks. "It is the responsibility of the government to protect the health of its citizens, especially those most vulnerable. Young children and the elderly are suffering, and urgent action is needed," she said.

Gandhi urged the Centre to implement stricter measures to control vehicular emissions, industrial pollution, and stubble burning in surrounding states, which significantly contribute to Delhi's deteriorating air quality. She stressed that comprehensive policy interventions and timely enforcement are crucial to prevent a public health crisis.

The Congress leader also called for increased monitoring of air quality, wider public awareness campaigns, and immediate provision of medical support for those affected by pollution-related ailments.

She warned that failure to act decisively could exacerbate respiratory and car-

diovascular diseases among residents. Sonia Gandhi's remarks come amid rising concerns over Delhi-NCR's worsening air quality, particularly during the winter months when pollution levels typically spike. Authorities have already issued health advisories, but environmental activists argue that more proactive steps are needed to tackle the problem at its source.

Gandhi concluded by urging the government to view air pollution not just as an environmental issue but as a public health emergency, requiring coordinated action at both the central and state levels. Her statement reflects growing public concern over the long-term effects of air pollution on vulnerable populations in the capital region.

The call for urgent government intervention is expected to reignite debate in Parliament over policies to combat air pollution and protect citizen health.

## Rahul Gandhi Criticizes Exclusion of Opposition in Foreign Visits



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi : Congress MP and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi has criticized the government for sidelining the Opposition during visits by foreign dignitaries, calling it a break from long-standing parliamentary tradition.

Speaking to reporters, Gandhi said that historically, visiting leaders have met with the LoP, a practice followed during the tenures of former Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpeyi and Manmohan Singh. "It usually is a tradition that whoever visits from outside has a meeting with the LoP. It used to happen during the governments of Vajpeyi ji, Manmohan Singh ji. This has been a tradition. But these days, foreign dignitaries or when I visit abroad, Government suggests them not to meet the LoP. This is their policy and they do it all the time," he remarked.

Addressing the recent visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Gandhi

emphasized the importance of Opposition participation in diplomatic engagements. "We have re-

lations with everyone. LoP gives a different perspective. We too represent India. It is not just the Gov-

ernment which does it. Government doesn't want the Opposition to meet people coming from out-

side... Modi ji and Foreign Ministry don't follow this norm. It is their insecurity," he added.

Gandhi's comments highlight the Congress party's concern over diminishing parliamentary conventions and reduced Opposition engagement in foreign diplomacy. Analysts say that while the government controls official diplomatic channels, excluding the LoP from such meetings could be perceived as politicizing foreign relations.

The Congress leader's criticism comes amid a series of high-profile foreign visits by heads of state, where Opposition leaders have raised questions about transparency and inclusivity. Gandhi's statement underscores the party's push for greater recognition of the LoP's role in India's international engagements, arguing that the Opposition's perspective is essential to present a more comprehensive view of the nation on the global stage.

## Trinamool MLA Suspended Over Babri Masjid Remark

TPN Correspondent | Kolkata

Trinamool Congress (TMC) MLA Humayun Kabir has been suspended from the party after making controversial remarks about constructing a mosque modeled on the Babri Masjid in Murshidabad, triggering widespread political backlash.

Kabir's statement, seen as highly sensitive given the historical and communal implications of the Babri Masjid issue, prompted immediate action from the TMC leadership. The party described his comments as "irresponsible" and "contrary to the party's ethos of communal harmony."

The suspension was announced by senior party officials, who emphasized that the TMC remains committed to maintaining peace and religious coexistence in West Bengal. Party sources added that Kabir's views were personal and did not reflect the party's stance.

The remarks have sparked reactions across political circles, with opposition parties criticizing the TMC for allowing



such statements from its members, while community leaders called for calm and restraint to prevent escalation.

Kabir's suspension underscores the sensitivity surrounding religious issues in India, especially topics linked to historical disputes like the Babri Masjid. Analysts suggest that political parties are increasingly cautious about statements from their representatives that could inflame communal tensions.

The TMC leadership has indicated that strict

action will be taken against members who violate party discipline or make statements that could disrupt social harmony.

Humayun Kabir's suspension comes amid growing scrutiny of political leaders' statements in West Bengal ahead of upcoming local elections, highlighting the challenges parties face in managing internal discipline while addressing communal sensitivities.

## Ray-Ban Meta (Gen 2) AI Glasses Launch in India at ₹39,900

TPN Correspondent | Lucknow

Meta has officially launched the second-generation Ray-Ban Meta AI glasses in India, starting at ₹39,900. The new iteration brings several upgrades, including improved video capture, extended battery life, enhanced Meta AI features, and a refreshed design.

The Gen 2 glasses aim to offer a more seamless and stylish experience for users looking to integrate AI and social media functionalities into daily life. Meta highlights that the device now provides higher-quality video recording, making it easier to capture moments on the go. Battery performance has also been upgraded, promising longer usage without frequent recharging—a key concern for wearable tech enthusiasts.

In addition to hardware improvements, the new glasses integrate the Meta AI experience, enabling smarter inter-



actions and a more intuitive interface for users. Social media sharing, content creation, and real-time AI-driven features are designed to make the glasses a versatile tool for both casual and professional use.

The style and ergonomics of the Gen 2 model have also been refined, keeping the classic Ray-Ban aesthetic while enhancing comfort for extended wear. The glasses come in multiple frame styles and lens options, cater-

ing to diverse user preferences.

Meta's launch in India reflects the growing market for wearable tech that blends fashion with functionality. With AI integration becoming a key trend, the Ray-Ban Meta Gen 2 glasses aim to position themselves as a premium choice for users seeking both innovation and style.

The device is now available for purchase through select online and offline retail outlets across India.

## Rajnath Singh and Andrei Belousov lay wreath at the National War Memorial



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Russian Defence Minister Andrei Belousov paid homage to India's fallen soldiers by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial in New Delhi on Thursday, December 4, 2025.

The ceremony, held shortly after Belousov's arrival, was attended by senior officials including Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan and Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, underscoring the significance of the visit.

Belousov's trip coincided with the 22nd India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on

Military and Military Technical Cooperation, co-chaired by Singh and Belousov at the Manekshaw Centre. The commission is a key platform for advancing defence collaboration between the two countries, highlighting the longstanding strategic partnership.

The visit follows the Russian State Duma's ratification of the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS), which facilitates military logistics sharing between India and Russia, further cementing operational and strategic coordination.

The wreath-laying

ceremony and subsequent talks signal India and Russia's intent to deepen defence ties amid evolving global security dynamics. Observers noted that the focus on advanced air defence systems, missile technology, and defence manufacturing reflects both nations' commitment to strengthening military readiness and technological collaboration.

Belousov's visit reaffirms the robust bilateral defence partnership, emphasizing mutual respect, shared strategic interests, and continued cooperation in defence and military-technical domains.

## UAE Hosts Mass Wedding for 54 Palestinian Couples in Gaza



TPN Correspondent New Delhi

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) organized a mass wedding for 54 Palestinian couples in Khan Younis, southern Gaza, on Tuesday, December 2, 2025, marking its 54th Eid Al Etihad celebrations. The ceremony, held amid the ruins of the Hamad residential area, was conducted under the UAE's humanitarian operation "Gallant Knight 3" (also called "Chivalrous Knight 3"), symbolizing hope and resilience amid ongoing destruction.

Named "Thawb al-Farah" (Gown of Joy), the event brought together families, community leaders, and couples selected through a lottery from over 577 applicants. The initiative aimed

to provide a moment of happiness to Gaza's population, which has faced over two years of conflict, displacement, and severe humanitarian challenges.

The 54 couples, chosen from across the Gaza Strip, were required to be permanent residents and already engaged. Each couple received modest financial aid and essential supplies to help start their married life despite shortages and insecurity.

Since November 2023, the UAE's broader humanitarian campaign has delivered more than 8,700 lorries and 1.6 million aid parcels to Gaza, addressing urgent needs for food, medicine, and essential items.

Ali Al Shehi, Head of the UAE Mission in Gaza, highlighted that the wedding reflects the UAE's dedication to human well-being. "This ceremony shows that joy and hope can prevail even in the face of destruction," he said, underscoring the symbolic significance of the initiative in promoting resilience and community solidarity in Gaza.

The mass wedding was widely praised for bringing a rare moment of celebration and optimism to families living under challenging circumstances.

## Japan PM Takaichi's "Work, Work, Work" Wins Catchphrase of the Year



TPN Correspondent | Jerusalem

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's pledge to "work, work, work and work" has been named the country's catchphrase of the year, reflecting her determined rise as Japan's first female leader. The phrase, first spoken in October when she became head of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), captured public attention for its intensity and sparked mixed reactions in a nation already known for long working hours.

Takaichi, an ultraconservative leader, clarified that the recognition was meant to highlight her personal enthusiasm, not to encourage overwork. "I have no intention of suggesting long working hours as a virtue," she said while accepting the award from a private committee.

Since taking office, Takaichi has drawn attention not just for her work ethic but also for her bold political stances, including remarks on potential Japanese military action if China attacks Taiwan. Her conservative policies aim to regain support from right-wing voters after the LDP's losses under her predecessor Shigeru Ishiba.

Her personal dedication has

been extraordinary: she reportedly sleeps only two to four hours a night while also caring for her husband, who is recovering from a stroke. She balances this with daily hot tub sessions for relaxation.

Takaichi's style has also made her a cultural phenomenon. Fans have embraced her black "Grace Delight Tote" bag, nicknamed the "Sanae Bag," and her sparkly Jetstream 4&1 pen, which have both sold out quickly. Many women admire her minimalist workwear and short haircut, seeing her as a new type of role model.

## Macron Urges China to Push for Peace, Rebalance Trade



TPN Correspondent | Beijing

French President Emmanuel Macron met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Thursday, urging China to play a role in ending the war in Ukraine and addressing trade imbalances between the two nations. This marks Macron's fourth visit to China during his presidency, aimed at strengthening diplomatic ties, promoting a ceasefire in Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II, and attracting Chinese investment to France.

The leaders met in the Great Hall of the People, where Xi emphasized the importance of more "balanced" economic relations, two-way investment, and a "non-discriminatory" business environment. Beijing has long resisted European Union tariffs on Chinese products, including steel and electric vehicles, which Brussels claims are sold at unfair prices due to state subsidies.

Xi reiterated China's support for peace in Ukraine, stating, "China supports all efforts committed to peace and hopes that all parties will reach a fair, lasting, and binding peace agreement acceptable to all parties." China, a major Russian trading partner, continues to maintain a neutral stance on the conflict.

without condemning Moscow's invasion.

Macron highlighted the need for both nations to overcome differences, calling cooperation "decisive" for global peace and stability. Xi echoed the sentiment, emphasizing "more stable" bilateral ties.

The meeting occurs amid renewed international efforts to broker an end to the nearly four-year conflict in Ukraine. Macron's approach contrasts with a US-backed plan that has faced criticism for appearing aligned with Russian interests.

The summit reflects France's dual strategy of pushing for peace in Ukraine while seeking to strengthen trade and investment relations with China, reinforcing the growing global importance of Sino-European diplomacy.

## Trump Administration Targets H-1B Applicants Linked to Censorship



TPN Bureau | Washington

The Trump administration has announced stricter vetting for H-1B visa applicants, targeting individuals involved in "censorship" of free speech. The directive, issued in an internal State Department memo on December 3, 2025, applies to both new and repeat applicants seeking the visa for highly skilled work in the United States.

H-1B visas are essential for U.S. companies, particularly in the technology sector, allowing employers to hire foreign professionals in specialized fields. The enhanced scrutiny requires U.S. officers to review applicants' resumes, LinkedIn profiles, and public activity for any involvement in suppressing free expression. Those deemed complicit in censorship could face visa denials.

The move is part of the administration's broader focus on protecting free speech and ensuring that foreign nationals entering the U.S. respect constitutional principles.

It comes amid ongoing tensions between U.S. tech companies, foreign talent, and concerns over authoritarian practices in countries

like China and India, which are major sources of H-1B applicants.

Industry experts have noted that the enhanced vetting could slow visa processing and complicate hiring for tech companies that rely heavily on international talent.

Companies that employ large numbers of H-1B work-

ers, such as those in Silicon Valley, may face challenges in onboarding engineers, IT specialists, and other highly skilled professionals under the new policy.

The Trump administration's memo signals a stronger emphasis on ideological alignment alongside professional qualifications for visa

applicants. U.S. officials are expected to implement the directive immediately, reviewing social media activity, professional networks, and other public records to assess potential risks related to free speech censorship.

Critics argue the policy may unfairly target applicants from countries with

restrictive information environments, while proponents claim it strengthens U.S. national security and democratic values. The long-term impact on the technology sector and H-1B program remains to be seen, with both employers and prospective applicants closely monitoring the evolving rules.

## "I'll Come To New York": Netanyahu's Big Assertion Despite Mamdani's Arrest Threats



TPN Correspondent | Dhaka

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has declared he will visit New York City despite threats from mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani to arrest him over an International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant. In an interview with the New York Times' Dealbook forum, Netanyahu said, "Yes, I'll come to New York," signaling his intent to proceed with the visit.

When asked about engaging with Mamdani, Netanyahu added, "If he changes his mind and says that we have the right to exist, that'll be a good opening for a conversation." The 34-year-old democratic socialist mayor-elect has supported Israel's right to exist but refrained from recognizing it as a Jewish state, arguing that no country should enforce a "hierarchy of citizenship" based on religion.

Mamdani has claimed that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza and vowed to involve the New York Police Department to enforce the ICC warrant if Netanyahu enters the city. The Hague-based ICC last year stated there were reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu

bore responsibility for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity linked to Israel's offensive in Gaza following the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack. Israel, along with the US and Russia, has repeatedly rejected accusations of genocide and apartheid and does not recognize the ICC's jurisdiction.

Despite Mamdani's assertions, an arrest in New York is highly unlikely. Legal experts note that in the United States, immigration and diplomatic matters are managed at the federal level, and a city mayor lacks authority to enforce international arrest warrants. Additionally, the US government, under former President Donald Trump, has historically supported Israel and taken measures, including sanctions against ICC judges, to shield Israeli officials from prosecution.

Netanyahu's planned visit underscores the continuing

tension between international legal mechanisms and geopolitical realities. While Mamdani's threats highlight local activism against alleged war crimes, the practical enforcement of ICC warrants in the US remains extremely limited, making an actual arrest improbable.

## Imran Khan Slams Army Chief Munir from Jail



TPN Correspondent | Lahore

Pakistan's jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday sharply criticized Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir calling his policies "disastrous" for

the country and accusing him of deliberately stoking tensions with Afghanistan. Khan's comments came a day after his sister, Dr Uzma Khan, visited him at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail—the first family meeting in over

a month following special permission from the Shehbaz Sharif government.

In a post on X, Khan, 73, said Munir's policies have fueled terrorism in Pakistan and alleged the army chief prioritizes appeasing

Western powers over national interests. "Munir deliberately ignited tensions with Afghanistan to be seen internationally as a so-called 'mujahid,'" Khan wrote. He also condemned drone strikes and military

operations targeting Pakistanis, warning they only exacerbate terrorism.

Khan accused Munir of moral and constitutional failings, claiming he and his wife have been imprisoned on fabricated charges

and subjected to severe psychological torture. "I have been kept in complete solitary confinement for four weeks, cut off from human contact and basic necessities guaranteed under the jail manual," Khan said.

He further alleged that his legal and family rights have been repeatedly denied despite high court orders, noting that his sister Noreen Niazi was forcibly dragged during an attempt to meet him. Praising Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, Khan urged continued resistance against what he described as a climate of repression.

Uzma Khan, after her meeting, described Imran's health as "perfectly fine" but confirmed he was enduring "mental torture in solitary confinement." The PTI founder reiterated that law enforcement in Pakistan is selectively applied, targeting his party while exempting others.

# Markets Rebound After Early Losses

Mumbai: Equity markets rebounded on Thursday, December 4, 2025, after slipping in early trade, with investors engaging in value buying at lower levels. The 30-share BSE Sensex and the 50-share NSE Nifty both recovered to trade in positive territory following an initial dip.

In early trade, the Sensex fell 156.83 points to 84,949.98, while the Nifty slipped 47 points to 25,938.95. Analysts attributed the initial weakness to cautious sentiment among investors amid mixed global cues and profit-booking in select heavyweight stocks.

However, the markets staged a recovery as buyers stepped in to pick up fundamentally strong stocks at lower valuations. The rebound was broad-based, with gains seen across key sectors such as IT, banking, and consumer goods.

Market experts noted that the positive momentum was supported by optimism around corporate earnings, easing crude oil prices, and stable global equity trends. "Investors found value



at lower levels, which triggered buying in large-cap and mid-cap stocks. We expect the markets to maintain a steady uptrend if global cues remain supportive," said a senior market strategist.

Trading activity also saw notable participation from foreign institutional investors, who added to positions in banking and IT shares. Sectoral indices such as the BSE IT index and BSE Bankex led the gains, while healthcare and metal stocks also contributed positively.

Market breadth was healthy, with a majority of stocks on both exchanges closing higher by midday. Analysts cautioned, however, that

while short-term gains were visible, investors should remain alert to global macroeconomic developments and domestic policy announcements that could influence market direction. Overall, Thursday's

session reflected a recovery mood after early jitters, with the Sensex and Nifty demonstrating resilience amid mixed sentiments and renewed investor confidence in buying opportunities at lower levels.

## Rupee Hits Record Low of 90.43 Against Dollar

The Indian rupee slumped 28 paise to a fresh all-time low of 90.43 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday, December 4, 2025, as sustained foreign institutional investor (FII) outflows and restrained intervention from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) weighed on the currency.

The rupee opened at 90.36 in the interbank market and slipped further to hit 90.43 against the greenback, marking another record after breaching the 90-a-dollar mark for the first time on Wednesday, when it closed at 90.15. Forex traders attributed the fall to strong dollar demand from importers and limited RBI intervention ahead of the upcoming Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting.

Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran stated that the weakening rupee has not impacted inflation or exports significantly. However, import-dependent sectors such as petroleum, electronics, and gems and jewellery could face higher input costs, potentially pressuring inflationary expectations.

Global factors also influenced the rupee. The dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against



a basket of six major currencies, was up 0.14% at 98.99, while Brent crude rose 0.49% to USD 62.98 per barrel. Trade tensions with the US have prompted investors to adopt a cautious stance, with expectations of a resolution toward year-end.

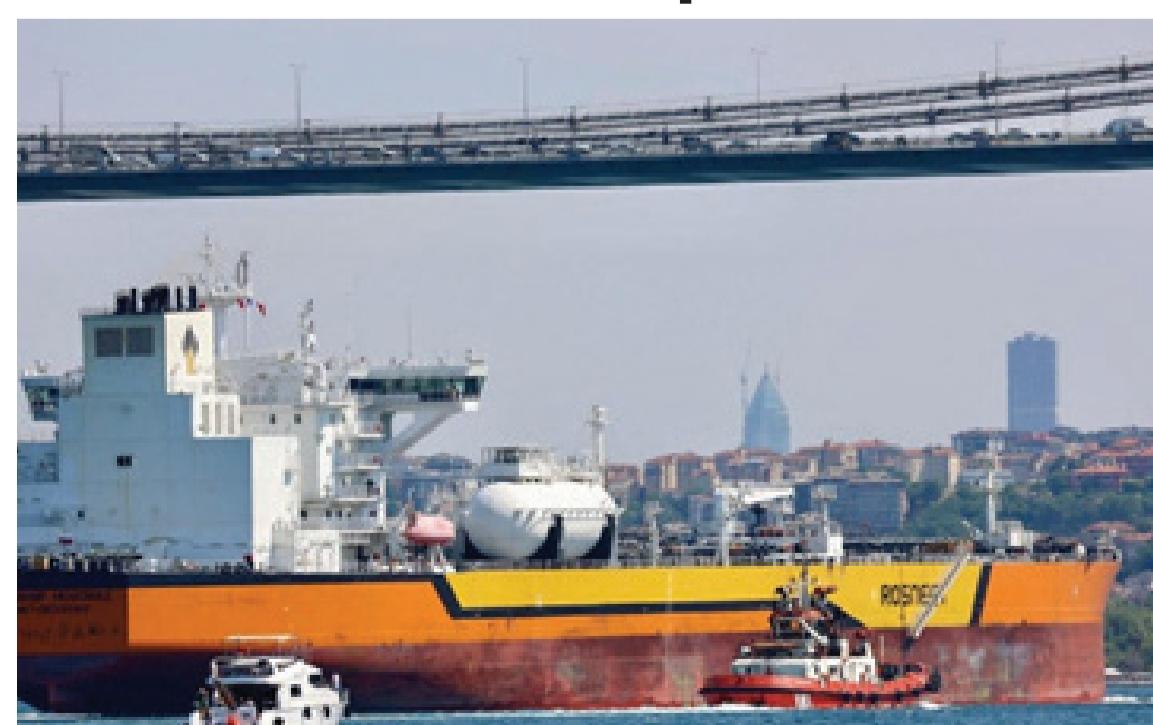
Analysts suggest further depreciation is possible. Anil Kumar Bhansali of Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP noted, "Until the trade deal materialises, the rupee could weaken toward 91.00. With a weak rupee, we do not expect RBI to cut rates on Friday."

All eyes are now on RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, whose rate-setting panel will announce its decision on Friday. Market participants are looking for guidance on the rupee's stability amid falling inflation, rising GDP growth, and ongoing geopolitical

tensions.

On the equity front, domestic markets showed resilience, with the Sensex rising 45.99 points to 85,152.80 and Nifty up 14.35 points to 26,000.35 in early trade, despite FII net outflows of Rs 3,206.92 crore on Wednesday.

## India Slashes Russian Oil Imports by 38%, sharpest fall so far



India significantly reduced its crude oil imports from Russia in October 2025, marking

the sharpest single-month fall so far. According to the Ministry of Commerce and In-

dustry, India imported \$3.55 billion worth of Russian crude oil last month, down 38% from

\$5.8 billion in October 2024. In volume terms, imports dropped 31% to 71.6 lakh tonnes, com-

pared with 103.8 lakh tonnes in the same month last year. This decline follows a 29% fall in value and 17% fall in volume in September 2025, reflecting a combination of a high base effect from the previous year and an overall reduction in India's oil imports. Despite the drop, Russia continues to be a key supplier, accounting for around 32% of India's total oil imports by both value and volume.

The data indicates that India's overall oil import bill also fell by 15.4% in October 2025. In contrast, oil imports from the United States surged, with volumes rising nearly 40% and value increasing 18.3% compared to October 2024. This suggests a gradual diversification of India's crude sourcing amid global energy market shifts.

The decline in Rus-

sian oil imports comes amid growing international scrutiny of Russian energy exports and changing trade dynamics. Analysts note that India's reduction, while significant, still keeps Russia as a major supplier due to competitive pricing and long-term supply agreements.

The Ministry's figures highlight India's evolving energy strategy, balancing economic considerations with geopolitical factors. As global energy markets remain volatile, India appears to be cautiously adjusting its import mix while maintaining energy security.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's ongoing visit to India adds diplomatic context to the trade developments, underscoring the strategic importance of energy ties between the two nations.

## Health, Security Cess Not on Essentials: FM



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday, December 4, 2025, clarified that the proposed Health and National Security Cess will not be levied on essential commodities, and the revenues collected will be shared with States to fund specific health initiatives. The announcement came during the discussion of the Health and National Security Cess Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha.

Ms. Sitharaman explained that the levy would primarily target demerit goods, with a focus on pan masala units. The cess will be imposed based on the production capacity of these units, in addition to the existing 40% Goods and Services Tax (GST) already applicable. She emphasized that the measure is aimed at generating funds for public health and national security priorities while discouraging consumption of harmful products.

"The Health and National Security Cess will be collected from production capacity of pan masala units. Essential commodities will remain exempt," Ms. Sitharaman said. She added that the proceeds from the cess will be

allocated to States under designated health schemes, ensuring that the revenue supports public welfare.

The Finance Minister further highlighted that the cess is part of a broader strategy to strengthen the country's health infrastructure and security mechanisms. By linking the levy to production rather than sales alone, the government aims to enhance compliance and streamline collection.

The bill has sparked discussion among lawmakers regarding its implementation, potential impact on consumers, and the administrative framework required to monitor production-linked levies. Analysts note that while the measure targets high-risk products, its success will depend on effective enforcement and transparent distribution of funds to State health programs.

With the Health and National Security Cess Bill, the government seeks to balance public welfare financing with curbing the consumption of products with adverse health impacts, without burdening essential goods or everyday consumers.

## Silver Prices Soar to Record Highs in India



Silver prices in India have hit unprecedented levels, climbing to an all-time high of Rs 1,84,727 per kg on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) on Wednesday, December 3, 2025. The March contract alone surged by Rs 3,126, extending the metal's rapid upward momentum. Over the past month, silver spot prices jumped nearly 20%, from Rs 1,48,717 to Rs 1,77,886.

MCX data highlights the extraordinary long-term gains, showing silver has risen 98% in one year, 133% in two years, 182% in three years, and an astonishing 419% over the last decade.

Experts attribute the rally to a mix of global and domestic factors. A key driver is the expectation that the US Federal Reserve may soon cut interest rates. Historically, lower rates boost demand for precious metals as investors seek alternatives to low-yielding financial assets.

Tight global silver inventories are also fueling the

surge. Stockpiles remain constrained, showing little sign of easing, which has added upward pressure on prices.

Industrial demand is another significant factor. Rapid growth in sectors such as solar energy, electronics, and green technology has increased silver consumption, positioning the metal as not just a safe-haven asset but a vital industrial commodity.

Market analysts caution that while silver's rally offers potential gains, the market remains volatile. Investors are advised to balance the allure of high returns with prudent risk management.

With both investment and industrial demand driving the market, silver's momentum shows no immediate signs of slowing. The metal's performance in the coming months will likely be influenced by interest rate decisions, supply constraints, and global industrial trends, making it one of the most closely watched commodities in India today.

## Fabergé 'Winter Egg' Expected to Fetch Rs 200 Crore at Auction



A rare Fabergé masterpiece—famously known as the Winter Egg—is once again headed to auction, and experts believe it could command an extraordinary price of Rs 200 crore. Just four inches tall, the jewel-like creation is considered one of the most exquisite and valuable decorative eggs ever made.

Crafted in 1913 for Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, the Winter Egg was designed by Alma Pihl, one of the very few female artists at the House of Fabergé. The Tsar commissioned it as an Easter gift for his mother, Empress Maria Feodorovna. Today, only two eggs created by Pihl survive—one held by the British royal family, and this newly surfaced piece now set for sale.

What sets the Winter Egg apart is its extraordinary craftsmanship. Made from rock crystal, the exterior shimmers like frozen glass and is embellished with nearly 4,500 dia-

monds, giving it a glistening, frost-like appearance. Inside the egg lies its signature surprise: a miniature basket of flowers, crafted from precious stones and quartz. The delicate design symbolises the transition from winter to spring, capturing the elegance and imagination for which Fabergé is renowned.

The egg's journey through history is just as striking as its design. After the fall of the Romanov dynasty in 1917, many royal treasures were sold off by the new communist regime. Despite its immense value, the Winter Egg was reportedly sold to a London dealer for only £450 due to Russia's financial crisis at the time.

More than a century later, the piece is poised to break auction records. With its rich imperial history, intricate artistry, and extreme rarity, the Fabergé Winter Egg stands as one of the world's most extraordinary—and expensive—art objects.

## Over 1,000 Amazon Workers Warn Against 'Warp-Speed' AI Rollout



More than 1,000 Amazon employees have signed an open letter urging the company to slow down its rapid expansion of artificial intelligence systems, warning that the current "all-costs-justified, warp-speed" approach could harm workers, democracy and the environment. The letter, published on November 26, comes amid Amazon's ongoing plan to cut up to 14,000 corporate jobs globally this year.

The signatories include engineers, product managers and warehouse associates, reflecting concerns across the company's workforce. Their message has also drawn support from over 2,400 employees at other major tech firms, including Microsoft, Apple, Google and Meta—showing a broader industry unease about unchecked AI growth.

Employees argue that Amazon's leadership is pushing ahead with AI adoption without adequate guardrails, risking mass job displacement and expanding workplace surveillance. They also highlight the environmental cost of large-scale AI infrastructure, which demands vast energy resources at a time when climate concerns are mounting.

The letter warns that deploying powerful AI tools without proper oversight could contribute to democratic backsliding, especially when combined with rising global authoritarianism. Workers fear that AI-driven decision-making in logistics, hiring, productivity tracking and customer-facing services could concentrate power and reduce transparency.

"We believe that the warp-speed approach to AI development will do staggering damage," the letter states, urging Amazon to invest in stronger safety, privacy and ethical standards before scaling further. Employees want clearer policies on how AI may affect job roles, along with commitments to retraining and protecting workers' rights.

As Amazon accelerates integration of generative AI across e-commerce, cloud services and warehouse operations, the internal pushback underscores a growing divide between corporate strategy and employee anxieties. Workers say AI innovation is inevitable—but warn that without meaningful safeguards, its consequences could be far-reaching and irreversible.

## Apple Watch Rolls Out Hypertension Alerts for Users in India

Apple has introduced a new hypertension notifications feature for Apple Watch users in India, aiming to help identify signs of chronic high blood pressure in people who may not know they have the condition. The feature analyzes 30 days of PPG (photoplethysmography) sensor data using machine learning and is designed specifically for users without a prior hypertension diagnosis.

Unlike a traditional blood pressure monitor, the Apple Watch does not measure blood pressure directly or show BP readings. Instead, it looks for long-term patterns linked to chronic hypertension and alerts eligible users—those over 22, not pregnant, and undiagnosed—if concerning trends emerge. Once enabled through the Watch or Health app, the feature runs automatically in the background.

Dr. Adam Phillips, a cardiologist at Apple involved in developing

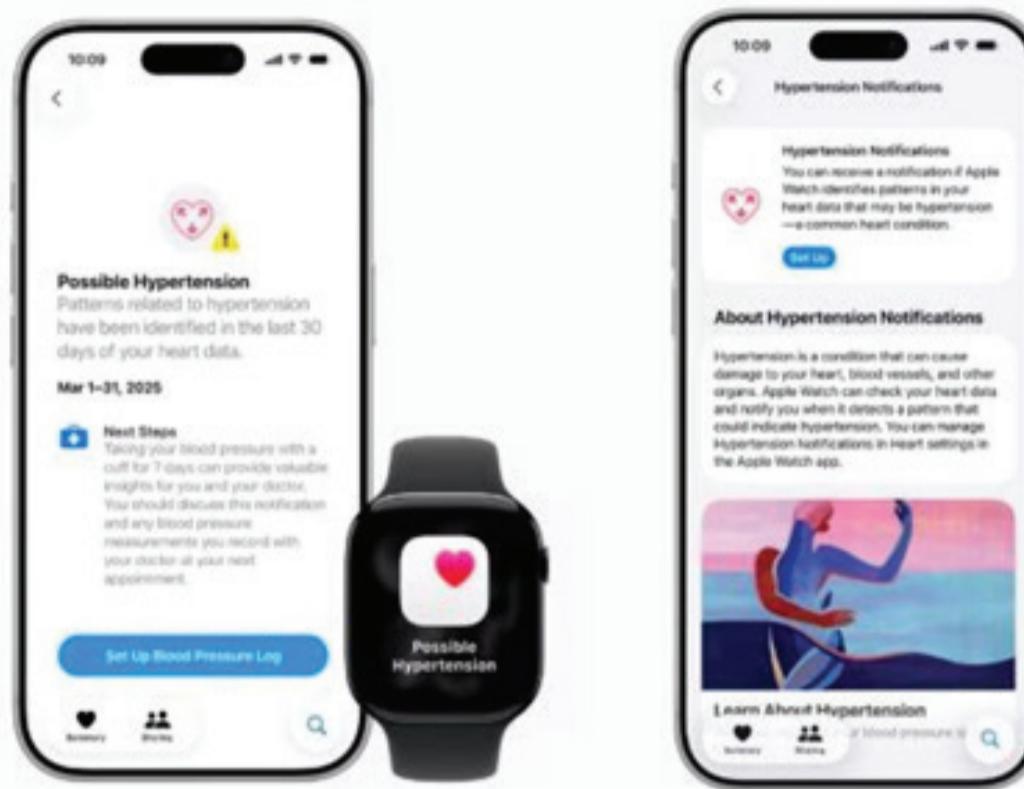
the feature, said it is built on three principles: scientific valida-

tion, actionable insights, and privacy. Apple used data from

dated it on 2,229 adults. In testing, it achieved 41.2% sensitivity in detecting hypertension and 92.3% specificity in identifying users without it—performance comparable to clinical BP cuffs.

The feature works on Apple Watch Series 9, 10, 11, Ultra 2, and Ultra 3. If a user receives a notification, Apple recommends logging blood pressure for seven days using a certified external BP cuff. Reports generated through the Health app can be shared with doctors via email, messaging apps, or WhatsApp.

Hypertension affects 1.3 billion people worldwide, with nearly half going undiagnosed. Apple says its goal is to help this large population get early alerts that can encourage timely medical evaluation and prevent complications such as heart attacks, stroke, and kidney disease.



## Russian Firm Claims Neurochip Can Turn Pigeons Into Human-Controlled Drones

A Russian neurotechnology company, Neiry, has announced that it is developing a system that can turn real birds—starting with pigeons—into remotely operated "biodrones." According to a translated post from the company, its implanted neurochip allows an operator to control the bird's flight by uploading tasks, similar to programming conventional unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Unlike trained messenger birds, Neiry claims its biodrones require no training at all. After surgery, the bird can reportedly be guided through brain stimulation. By activating specific neural regions, researchers say they can create an impulse that makes the bird "want" to fly in the commanded direction.

The company argues that using live birds offers significant advantages. Pigeons can naturally navigate complex urban environments and have better endurance than many mechanical drones. Neiry also asserts that the risk of operational failure is equivalent to the normal chances of a bird falling mid-flight.

The biodrone system involves implanted electrodes, a back-mounted stimulator, and a remote controller that sends directional cues. A GPS receiver tracks the bird's location in real time. Neiry claims that operators can manage entire flocks, up-

dating flight paths through the neural interface. A pigeon equipped as a PJN-1 biodrone can reportedly fly up to 310 miles in a day, and with adequate sunlight for the on-board power system, nearly 1,850 miles in a week.

Founder Alexander Panov

says the company plans to expand the technology to other species: ravens for heavier payloads, gulls for coastal monitoring, and albatrosses for long-range ocean surveillance.

Neiry states that the project is in its final testing

phase and will soon be used for remote monitoring. However, the company has not disclosed how many birds have been harmed during development or provided data on surgical success rates, raising ethical and welfare concerns.



## AI Firms Fall Short of Global Safety Standards: Study



A new report from the Future of Life Institute (FLI) has found that the safety practices of leading artificial intelligence companies, including Anthropic, OpenAI, xAI and Meta, remain far below emerging global standards. The findings were released in the latest edition of FLI's AI Safety

Index on Wednesday.

The independent expert panel that evaluated these companies concluded that, despite rapid efforts to build increasingly powerful and potentially superintelligent AI systems, none of the firms has developed a robust, reliable framework to control or align such ad-

vanced technologies. The report warns that safety measures are not keeping pace with the accelerating AI race.

The study comes at a time of growing public anxiety over the societal impacts of smarter-than-human systems. Recent incidents linking AI chatbots to self-harm

and suicide cases have intensified scrutiny. Concerns have also risen around AI-powered hacking, manipulation, and psychological harm.

Max Tegmark, MIT professor and president of FLI, criticized the regulatory vacuum surrounding AI development. "Despite recent up-

roar over AI-powered hacking and AI driving people to psychosis and self-harm, US AI companies remain less regulated than restaurants and continue lobbying against binding safety standards," he said.

While governments worldwide are exploring guardrails for advanced AI, the tech industry continues its rapid expansion. Major companies are investing hundreds of billions of dollars to scale up machine learning infrastructure, signaling no slowdown in the competitive push toward superintelligence.

FLI—founded in 2014 and initially supported by Elon Musk—has long warned about the existential risks posed by uncontrolled AI. Just this October, a group of prominent scientists including Geoffrey Hinton and Yoshua Bengio called for a moratorium on developing superintelligent AI until stronger public oversight and scientific understanding are in place.

The institute argues that without stringent safety standards, the gap between AI capabilities and governance will continue to widen, increasing the risk of real-world harm.

# AIFF Super Cup Semi-final: FC Goa vs Mumbai City FC

The AIFF Super Cup 2025-26 semi-finals reach a thrilling climax on Thursday as FC Goa takes on Mumbai City FC at the PJD Stadium in Fatorda. With a place in the final—and a pathway back to continental football—at stake, both sides are primed for a high-intensity clash.

Mumbai City FC enters the match after an extended training block without competitive fixtures, while FC Goa comes in on the back of gruelling AFC Champions League Two commitments. Despite the contrasting rhythms, both teams are motivated to deliver top performances. Mumbai City head coach Petr Kratky expressed confidence in his squad's preparation. "Goa are a very good team and are playing in the ACL Two, so they're in full rhythm, but we've prepared as best as possible," he said. Midfielder Brandon Fernandes, eager for his first Super Cup final with the Islanders, added, "It's a massive semi-final for us. We want to win, reach the final, and return to AFC competition." Fernandes, facing his former club, emphasized focus on



the present, saying, "Goa is my former team, but that doesn't change anything about this game."

FC Goa head coach Manolo Marquez acknowledged the mental and physical demands of competing in both the AFC Champions League Two and the Super Cup. "We are training more, playing more, and it's mentally demanding, but we are prepared. Playing strong matches is better preparation than training alone," he said. Young defender Ronny Wilson Kharbodon, who debuted against Al Nassr, called the experience invaluable for growth and preparation. Past encounters between the two teams have been goal-filled affairs, with 16 goals in their last five meetings. FC Goa ended Mumbai City's 10-game unbeaten run in February with a 3-1 win, setting the stage for another intense showdown. Both coaches agree on one thing: attacking, possession-based football will dominate. With so much at stake, fans can expect an electrifying match as FC Goa and Mumbai City FC battle for a spot in the Super Cup final.

## Sunil Narine Becomes First Bowler to Claim 600 T20 Wickets



Trinidadian mystery spinner Sunil Narine etched his name in crick-

eting history by becoming the first bowler to claim 600 wickets in competitive

T20 cricket. The milestone came during a World ILT20 match for his franchise,

Abu Dhabi Knight Riders, against Sharjah Warriors on Wednesday. In celebration of his unprecedented feat, the franchise presented Narine with a special edition jersey featuring the number 600.

Narine, 37, achieved the landmark by dismissing England's Tom Abell, highlighting his enduring skill and consistency over years of T20 cricket. Known for his variations and deceptive spin, Narine has been a match-winner for every team he has represented, consistently troubling batsmen with his flight, pace, and guile.

Over his illustrious career, Narine has played for multiple franchises in the Knight Riders family, including Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League, Trinbago Knight Riders in the Caribbean Premier League, Los Angeles Knight Riders in Major League Cricket, and Abu Dhabi Knight Riders. His performances have often turned games

in his team's favor, making him one of the most feared and respected bowlers in T20 cricket worldwide.

"The Knight Riders family stands immensely proud of Narine's extraordinary achievement, recognising that this record may well stand the test of time as one of cricket's most enduring milestones," the franchise said in a press release on Thursday.

This milestone not only underscores Narine's longevity in T20 cricket but also cements his status as one of the format's all-time greats. With his experience, guile, and tactical intelligence, Narine continues to be a pivotal figure on the field, inspiring the next generation of spinners to emulate his remarkable journey. Fans and teammates alike celebrated the moment, acknowledging Narine's dedication, skill, and impact on T20 cricket over the past decade and a half.

## Historic Night in Raipur: South Africa Pull Off Record-Breaking Chase Against India



surpassing Australia's previous pursuit of 359 runs in Mohali in 2020. South Africa's 2025 Raipur chase of  $359/6$  now sits jointly at that list.

The match also set a new

Africa ODI history. With both teams combining for a massive  $720$  runs, this became the  $^{*}\text{highest aggregate ever recorded}^{*$  in ODIs between the two nations. Remarkably, it broke the record set just days earlier in

the first ODI of the same series, where  $681$  runs were scored.

Additionally, this game entered India's record books as only the  $^{*}\text{third instance of a successful 350+ chase in ODIs played in India}^{*$ , fur-

ther highlighting how extraordinary the Raipur showdown was. The stage is now set for a dramatic series decider, with both teams carrying strong momentum into the final encounter.

## India Sends Star Shooters to ISSF World Cup Final in Doha



Top Indian shooters are all set to showcase their talent at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Final, beginning today in Doha, Qatar. The tournament promises high-octane competition, bringing together the world's elite marksmen and women to compete across rifle, pistol, and shotgun events.

India will field a strong 15-member squad, led by reigning world champion Samrat Rana, who has been in exceptional form this season. Joining him are seasoned shooters like Srujan Singh, known for her precision in rifle events, and Manu Bhaker, India's ace pistol shooter who has consistently delivered on the international stage. The team represents a balanced mix of experience and young talent, aiming to secure medals across multiple categories.

With the ISSF World Cup Final serving as the culmination of the season's shooting calendar, the stakes are high. Athletes will compete not only for medals but also to improve their world rankings and prepare for upcoming global competitions, including

the Olympics. Indian shooters have historically performed well at ISSF events, and expectations are high for podium finishes in Doha.

The Indian contingent has been training rigorously under the guidance of national coaches and sports psychologists, focusing on both technical precision and mental resilience. The athletes have also participated in pre-event practice sessions at the venue to acclimatize to local conditions, including lighting, wind patterns, and humidity.

Fans and sports enthusiasts across India are eagerly watching as the nation's top shooters aim to continue India's strong legacy in the shooting sports arena. The ISSF World Cup Final in Doha is set to run over several days, with medals up for grabs in both individual and mixed team events.

With Samrat Rana leading the charge, and stalwarts like Srujan Singh and Manu Bhaker in the fray, Team India hopes to return home with an impressive medal haul, reinforcing India's position as a global powerhouse in shooting sports.

## Barreto: Indian U15 Footballers Match European Talent



Mohun Bagan legend Jose Ramirez Barreto has delivered a striking revelation about Indian football, claiming that Indian players at the Under-15 level are as talented as their European counterparts. Speaking at the launch of the Athlead Ingolstadt Juba Sangha academy in Delhi-NCR, Barreto expressed concern over why this potential fails to translate into senior-level success.

"It's a total organisational problem," Barreto told NDTV. "Players have nothing to do. I understand expectations are high, but it's all about structures. Players are like a product. There are many stages and structures you need to build to develop them. That's what we are lacking today."

Barreto highlighted the persistent challenges facing Indian football despite the presence of raw talent at the grassroots. He noted that while plans exist for 2030 and 2050, disruptions in domestic competitions such as the Indian Super League (ISL) have hindered player development. "Football cannot stop. The league

stoppages have exposed that things aren't going in the right direction," he said.

Having travelled with youth teams to England, Barreto observed, "At the U15 level, Indian kids and European kids are exactly the same. The gap comes after that." He attributed the decline in performance at higher levels to the lack of structured pathways, coaching, and opportunities rather than individual talent.

Despite the challenges, Barreto offered encouragement for India's future footballers. "You can't focus on the negatives. Your passion has to be bigger. Even in Brazil, I faced many obstacles without proper structures or coaches. I just had myself," he said.

Barreto's candid assessment underscores a critical need for systemic reform in Indian football. With the right support, infrastructure, and competitive exposure, the country's young talents could bridge the gap with global peers and help India rise in the international football arena.

## Akhanda 2: Last-Minute Shock for Fans!

Premieres Cancelled Due to Technical Issues



The much-awaited Akhanda 2 premiere shows, scheduled to take place today, were abruptly cancelled, leaving fans disappointed yet hopeful for tomorrow's grand release. Throughout the day, fans were concerned about the delay in the commencement of advance bookings. However, when the Telangana government issued a new GO approving ticket price hikes, the mood brightened—only to be followed by the official announcement of premiere cancellations.

The production house confirmed the development on social media, stating:

"Akhanda 2 Premieres in India scheduled for today are cancelled due to technical issues. We've tried our best, but a few things are beyond our control. Sorry for the inconvenience. The overseas premieres will play as per the schedule today."

The last-minute setback created anxiety among both the production team and moviegoers. Sources indicate that the issues were unavoidable, prompting the makers to cite

Chiranjeevi-Nayanthara's 'Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu' 2nd Single Out December 8



Megastar Chiranjeevi's much-anticipated mass-and-family entertainer, Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu, directed by hitmaker Anil Ravipudi, is set to delight fans with its second musical offering. The film stars the gorgeous Nayanthara opposite Chiranjeevi, with both actors promising high-energy performances and on-screen chemistry. Produced by Sahu Garapati and Sushmita Konidela under Shine Screens and Gold Box Entertainments, and presented by Smt. Archana, the movie has already created a buzz with its first single, Meesala Pilla, which garnered over 75 million views.

The second single, titled Sasireshka, is slated for release on December 8, with the promo dropping on December 6. The track promises a melodic yet foot-tapping vibe, showcased in a vibrant poster where Chiranjeevi is seen dancing with infectious energy while Nayanthara strikes a stylish pose. Set against a picturesque port backdrop, the song hints at visually rich cho-

reography and a colorful cinematic presentation.

The film also features Victory Venkatesh in a pivotal role, who has completed his portions, bringing the production closer to completion. The mass dance number featuring both Chiranjeevi and Venkatesh is expected to be one of the major highlights of the film.

The technical crew includes Bheems Ceciroeo as music composer, Sameer Reddy handling cinematography, Tamiraju overseeing editing, and AS Prakash managing art direction. The story is co-written by S. Krishna and G. Adi Narayana, promising a mix of mass appeal and family-oriented entertainment.

With its vibrant music, star-studded cast, and Sankranti 2026 release, Mana Shankara Vara Prasad Garu is shaping up to be one of the most eagerly awaited films of the festive season. Fans are eagerly waiting for the second single Sasireshka to experience the film's energetic and colorful world.

## Arnold Schwarzenegger Joins James Cameron at 'Avatar: Fire and Ash' LA Premiere

Hollywood icon Arnold Schwarzenegger reunited with longtime friend and director James Cameron at the star-studded premiere of Avatar: Fire and Ash in Los Angeles. Their friendship spans decades, dating back to their collaboration on The Terminator franchise, which cemented both as legends in action cinema. Schwarzenegger's presence at the premiere added a nostalgic touch while celebrating Cameron's latest cinematic milestone.

The premiere was a high-energy affair, attracting fans, industry insiders, and global media. Excitement buzzed throughout the venue as anticipation for Avatar: Fire and Ash reached fever pitch. The film promises to expand Cameron's landmark sci-fi universe with cutting-edge visuals, immersive world-building, and thrilling new characters, making it one of the year's most eagerly awaited releases.

Early reactions to the film have been overwhelmingly positive. Critics praised its breathtaking visuals,



ambitious scale, and emotional depth, highlighting Cameron's ability to blend spectacle with heartfelt storytelling. Audiences worldwide have expressed enthusiasm for the next chapter in the Avatar saga, which

pushes the boundaries of cinematic technology while maintaining a compelling narrative.

Schwarzenegger's attendance symbolized a meeting of two generations of blockbuster filmmaking, bridging the legacy of action

classics like The Terminator with Cameron's ongoing innovation in science-fiction cinema. Fans and industry observers noted the camaraderie between the actor and director, emphasizing the lasting impact of their col-

laborations on Hollywood.

Avatar: Fire and Ash is set for release in Indian theatres on December 19 in multiple languages, including English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam. With its global appeal, visual spectacle, and star-studded premiere, the film is expected to make a significant mark at the box office and continue James Cameron's tradition of redefining cinematic experiences.

## Horror Thriller Isha Glimpse promises haunting experience in cinemas on Dec 12

Isha is an upcoming horror thriller directed by Srinivas Manne, featuring an impressive ensemble that includes Thirugun, Akhil Raj, Hebah Patel, Siri Hanmant, and Babloo Prithveeraj in key roles. Backed by Pothula Hema Venkateswara Rao under the HVR Productions banner.

The team recently unveiled a gripping teaser that gives audiences a first glimpse into the eerie world of Isha. The newly released glimpse opens with a group of schoolchildren discussing ghost stories before plunging into a series of disturbing visuals and a tense soundscape.

As the narrative hints at the characters' haunting encounters and the terrifying mysteries surrounding an abandoned house, the film promises an intense cinematic experience. Isha is scheduled to hit the big screens on December 12th, 2025.

Presented by KL Damodar



Prasad, the film boasts music by RR Dhruvan and visuals crafted by cinematographer Santosh Samaneni. Producers Bunny Vas and Vamsi Nandipati, who delivered consecutive successes with Little Hearts and Raju Weds Rambai, are now set to bring this chilling project to

theatres.

Known for supporting strong, content-first storytelling, the duo is backing Isha to continue their streak of impactful and engaging films. Their involvement has already raised expectations for the movie among industry circles and audiences alike.

## Vaibhav Reddy's The Hunter - Chapter 1 Streaming Successfully On Aha



Telugu audiences are buzzing about the latest thriller sensation, The Hunter - Chapter 1, which has started streaming exclusively on Aha. This gripping suspense drama, starring the very talented Vaibhav Reddy, has quickly captured viewers' attention, generating massive appreciation and chatter across social platforms. Cinegoers are praising its edge-of-the-seat narrative, and the film's impressive digital debut is setting new benchmarks for Telugu thrillers on OTT.

Originally made in Tamil as Ranam Aram Thavare, The Hunter - Chapter 1 finds new life with its Telugu dub, expertly crafted to engage audiences who love taut mysteries and unexpected twists. Directed by Sherief, the story centers on Aadhi (Vaibhav Reddy), a man haunted by a traumatic past, who's thrust into a dark web of disappearances that shake the city

to its core. The chase unravels layers of secrets, testing every character's limits and blurring the line between good and evil. The film's success owes much to Vaibhav's intense, nuanced performance. Nandita Swetha adds emotional gravitas, while Tanya Hope's enigmatic portrayal leaves a lasting impact. Critics and viewers alike have lauded the ensemble's chemistry and the film's tight pacing, noting that the suspense remains unrelenting from start to finish. Music is composed by Arrol Corelli, while Balaji K Raja handled cinematography.

At just two hours, The Hunter - Chapter 1 wastes no time in drawing audiences into its atmospheric, moody world. As word of mouth spreads, the film has emerged as a must-watch for lovers of enthralling crime dramas and cleverly plotted thrillers.

## Veteran Producer AVM Saravanan Passes Away at 86

AVM Saravanan, the legendary Tamil film producer and driving force behind AVM Studios, passed away early Thursday morning at the age of 86 following age-related ailments. He had been undergoing treatment for several months and breathed his last at 5:30 a.m. at his residence within the AVM Studio premises in Chennai. His passing comes just a day after his 86th birthday, marking a poignant moment for the Tamil film fraternity.

Born as the third son of iconic filmmaker A.V. Meiyappan Chettiar, Saravanan took over AVM Productions in 1958 and went on to become one of the most influential figures in Tamil cinema. Under his stewardship, AVM produced landmark films that combined commercial success with technical innovation, including Naanum Oru Penn, Samsaram Adhu Minsaram, Sivaji, Vettaiyadu Vilaiyada, Minsara Kanavu, and Ayan. These films not only set new benchmarks in the industry but also helped shape the careers of stars like Rajini-Kanth and Kamal Haasan, cementing AVM Studios' reputation as one of India's oldest and most trusted production houses.

In recent years, Saravanan had faced declining health and had been unable to walk for nearly two years. He was treated at a private hospital a month ago and later shifted home under medical supervision. Despite his physical struggles, his contributions to cinema remained celebrated and influential.



AVM Saravanan's body will be kept for public homage on the third floor of AVM Studios until 4 p.m., followed by funeral rites at the AVM Electric Crematorium this evening.

His son, M.S. Kugan, now manages AVM Studios, continuing the family legacy. The Tamil film industry, fans, and cultural icons have expressed their condolences, remembering Saravanan as a visionary who skillfully blended tradition with innovation, leaving an indelible mark on Indian cinema for over six decades.