



BUZZ POINTS

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## International Kidney Racket Busted in Maharashtra; Two Doctors Accused, One Absconding

Chandrapur: In a major breakthrough, Maharashtra Police have uncovered an international kidney racket with operations spanning across India, Cambodia, and China. The Chandrapur police exposed the illegal organ trade after receiving a complaint from a local farmer, leading to the arrest of a prominent Delhi-based doctor and the launch of a high-level investigation. According to Chandrapur Superintendent of Police M. Sudarshan, the mastermind duo behind the racket includes Dr. Ravinder Pal Singh from Delhi, who has been arrested, and Dr. Rajarathnam Govindasamy, a surgeon from Tiruchirappalli (Trichy), Tamil Nadu, who is currently absconding.

Police teams have been deployed to trace the fugitive doctor, who is also the Managing Director of Star KIMS Hospital in Trichy — an establishment under scrutiny for allegedly conducting several illegal kidney transplants. The investigation began after Roshan Kule, a farmer from Minthur village in Chandrapur district, filed a complaint alleging exploitation and coercion. Facing severe financial distress, Kule was lured by middlemen who promised to help him sell his kidney abroad for cash.

He was later taken to Cambodia, where transplant procedures were allegedly arranged by an international network of medical professionals and



agents. Following the complaint, the Maharashtra Government formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by Chandrapur police to probe the case.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the racket extended beyond Indian borders and had deep links with hospitals and medical intermediaries operating in Southeast Asia. The police suspect that

dozens of victims may have been trapped in similar schemes, some of whom were transported across countries for the illegal operations.

Police sources revealed a structured profit-sharing model within the racket. For each kidney transplant, recipients were charged between 50 lakh and 80 lakh. Out of this amount, Dr. Ravinder Pal Singh allegedly received 10 lakh

lari. However, Janardhan Reddy's followers reportedly objected to banners being placed near his home, leading to heated arguments that rapidly escalated into violence. Witnesses said that Janardhan Reddy himself arrived at the spot during the commotion, which further intensified tempers. Supporters of both factions soon resorted to hurling stones, sticks, and soda bottles at each other. In an attempt to control the situation, two government-assigned gunmen reportedly fired warning shots into the air to disperse the crowd.

The situation worsened when Satish Reddy allegedly snatched a firearm from one of the gunmen and attempted to open fire on Gali Janardhan Reddy. Sources said Reddy narrowly escaped unhurt. In the subsequent chaos, gunshots were exchanged between both sides. During the

melee, Congress worker Rajasekhar, a supporter of Bharat Reddy, sustained gunshot wounds and succumbed to his injuries, while Satish Reddy was critically injured. He was immediately shifted to Bengaluru for advanced medical treatment.

Following the incident, police registered cases against Gali Janardhan Reddy, B. Sriramulu, Somasekhar Reddy, and more than ten others under multiple charges including rioting, assault, and attempted murder. The complaint was lodged by Channal Shekhar, a close aide of MLA Bharat Reddy, who alleged that Janardhan Reddy's men not only destroyed banners but also attacked their group with stones and weapons such as rods, sickles, and soda bottles. Ballari police, led by senior officials, have since deployed additional forces across sensitive areas of the

city to prevent further escalation. The situation remains tense but under control as of Friday morning.

Reacting to the incident, Janardhan Reddy addressed the media, displaying a bullet purportedly fired at him. He strongly condemned the Congress MLA's faction, accusing Bharat Reddy's associates of provoking unnecessary violence under the pretext of the Valmiki statue installation. Reddy maintained that he had nothing to fear and would fully cooperate with the police investigation. Authorities have launched a detailed inquiry into the shooting, including the alleged misuse of official firearms.

Meanwhile, political tensions in Ballari already high due to local rivalries and upcoming events have deepened further, with both factions trading accusations over the tragic confrontation.



## Kolkata Businessman Sanjay Surekha Creates 60 Shell Companies, Defrauds Banks of ₹6,200 Crore

TPN Bureau | Jan 2, 2026

In a major financial fraud case, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has exposed a massive multi-crore scam involving Kolkata-based businessman Sanjay Surekha, who allegedly created 60 shell companies to defraud a consortium of banks to the tune of 6,200 crore. According to the ED investigation report, Surekha floated dozens of fictitious companies and appointed his drivers, domestic help, office boys, and junior employees as directors to create a façade of legitimate businesses.

These paper firms were shown as having huge turnovers only on record while there were no real commercial activities. With the help of former UCO Bank Chairman and Managing Director S.K. Goel, the fraudulent group obtained massive loans without paying any in-

terest or penalties. The investigation revealed that Surekha's entire group of companies had a real valuation of only 600 crore, far below the claimed worth. Out of this, the ED has managed to recover about 434 crore through the sale of assets so far. The probe found that substantial portions of the loan amounts were diverted for personal use and laundered through various channels, some of which benefited bank officials. The case originally came to light after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered an FIR on charges of criminal conspiracy, fraud, and corruption.

Acting on the CBI's findings, the ED launched a parallel money laundering investigation, leading to the arrest of Sanjay Surekha and several of his associates in 2024. The scam's scope widened when the ED arrested S.K. Goel on May 16, 2024, in New

Delhi. Goel's extensive role in facilitating these bogus loans has been documented, with the ED attaching 106 crore worth of assets linked to him and his family members.

Further investigation shows that Surekha had taken over Concast Standel and Power Limited (CSPL) in 2008, a company operating plants in West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh. Between 2007 and 2010, during Goel's tenure as UCO Bank CMD, Surekha secured large credit facilities without following due diligence norms. In exchange for this help, Surekha allegedly transferred a substantial portion of the laundered funds to Goel under a quid pro quo arrangement.

The ED continues to track the movement of funds across states and has indicated that more arrests are likely as the investigation expands into one of India's biggest bank frauds in recent years.

## Drone Attack on Putin's Residence: Russia Shares Evidence with US Amid Global Condemnation

TPN Bureau | Jan 2

Russia: In a dramatic escalation of tensions between Moscow and Kyiv, Russia has alleged that Ukrainian forces carried out a drone strike targeting President Vladimir Putin's private residence in the Novgorod region. Although attempts are ongoing to de-escalate the war, this incident has become the latest flash point in the already fragile security situation between the two neighbors.

Russia's Defense Ministry on Friday released a video claiming to show remnants of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) used in the attack. According to Moscow, the drones were intercepted and destroyed by Russian air defense systems before they could hit their intended target. However, the debris retrieved from the site, particularly the navigation systems, reportedly remained intact allowing investigators to determine the flight path and possible origin of the attack.

Admiral Igor Kostyukov, head of Russia's military intelligence agency (GRU), disclosed that the evidence gathered from the crash sites points directly to an attempt to strike President Putin's residence. Kostyukov stated this during a high-level meeting in Moscow with U.S. Military Attaché officials.



He said the navigation systems from multiple downed drones had been analyzed by Russian experts, confirming that their programmed destination was Putin's residence in Novgorod. As part of Moscow's ongoing campaign to validate its claims, Kostyukov reported that all technical data and materials related to the attack had been handed over to the U.S. officials "for verification." According to Russia's Defense Ministry, the evidence includes drone fragments, navigation data, and flight path mapping intended to corroborate the allegation that Ukraine was behind the incident.

The Kremlin's accusation comes at a sensitive time when Western nations are urging restraint and dialogue to bring an end to the conflict. Despite Russia's claims, Ukraine has categorically denied any involvement in the alleged attack, asserting that it does not target the personal properties of Russian officials. Kyiv accused Moscow of fabricating the claim to justify in-

tensified military operations in eastern Ukraine.

Meanwhile, NATO member states have refrained from endorsing Moscow's version of events. Officials in several European capitals stated that they have not received independent confirmation of a drone strike near Putin's residence. U.S. intelligence agencies have also communicated to allied media outlets that they have found "no credible evidence" indicating Kyiv's direct role in such an attack. The incident underscores the deep mistrust and propaganda warfare that continue to dominate the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Analysts note that Russia's delivery of purported evidence to the United States is unusual, reflecting an attempt by Moscow to lend international legitimacy to its claims. As global powers assess the authenticity of Russia's presented data, observers warn that the episode could further strain already tense diplomatic relations.



# Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan Launches “Palle Panduga 2.0” for Rural Development

TPN Bureau | Jan 2  
Challapalli, Krishna District: The Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, K. Pawan Kalyan, has initiated the second phase of the state government's flagship rural development program, Palle Panduga 2.0, aimed at improving infrastructure and promoting livelihood opportunities in village areas.

Local MLA Mandali Buddhaprasad formally launched the development works on Friday by laying the foundation stone for a new bitumen road connecting the R&B road near Ramana-gar in Lakshmipuram

Panchayat to the National Highway-216. The road will be constructed with an allocation of 45 lakh under the Employment Guarantee Scheme as part of the Palle Panduga 2.0 program.

Addressing the gathering, MLA Buddhaprasad said that Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan was personally monitoring rural development to restore the traditional prosperity and pride of Andhra Pradesh's villages. “Under his guidance, funds are being released to strengthen rural infrastructure, including roads, community facilities, and livelihood initiatives,” he said.



He recalled that during the first phase of Palle Panduga, around 31 crore was spent to build 50 kilometers of CC roads in the constituency. Under the newly launched Palle Panduga

2.0, an additional 1.90 crore has been sanctioned for constructing six major roads.

Furthermore, with support from centrally released Sasaki funds and Pawan Kalyan's ini-

tiative, 14.57 crore has been allocated for six more tar roads in the region. Buddhaprasad criticized the previous YSRCP government for its neglect of rural roads, saying, “Many roads

were left to decay due to administrative negligence, but the present coalition government is focusing on comprehensive rehabilitation and connectivity to enhance mobility for farmers, students, and commuters.”

**Citizens' and Students' Gratitude**

Local residents and students expressed heartfelt thanks to the MLA for responding swiftly to their long-pending demand for road connectivity. During a recent Praja Darbar public meeting in Challapalli, villagers and students from nearby private schools had submitted a petition seeking road

development.

Recognizing the need, Buddhaprasad prioritized the project and sanctioned funds immediately under Palle Panduga 2.0. The newly sanctioned road will serve as a key link between Challapalli-Machilipatnam R&B road and National Highway-216, significantly improving access for residents and school-going children. Villagers and students felicitated the MLA for fulfilling their longstanding aspiration.

**Support for Dairy Farmers**

As part of the program, the MLA also inaugurated a Gokulam shed constructed by a

dairy farmer, Kanakamada Ranga Rao, in Lakshmipuram, under the Employment Guarantee Scheme. The project, costing 2.03 lakh with a 27,000 beneficiary contribution, is expected to benefit local milk producers.

Participation of Local Leaders

The event saw the attendance of several local officials and party functionaries, including constituency youth leader Mandali Venkatram, AMC Chairman Thota Kanakadurg, Vice MPP Morla Rambabu, Panchayat Raj officials, BJP leaders, and members from the ruling coalition parties.

# Centre Forms High-Level Committee to Resolve River Water Disputes Between Telugu States

TPN Bureau | Jan 2  
Delhi: In a significant move aimed at easing long-standing river water disputes between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the Central Government has constituted a high-level committee to examine and recommend solutions. The Union Ministry of Jal Shakti issued an official notification on Friday declaring the formation of the committee under the chairmanship

of the Central Water Commission (CWC) Chairman.

According to the ministry's order, the committee will include the Chairmen of the Krishna River Management Board (KRM) and the Godavari River Management Board (GRMB), the Chief Engineer of the National Water Development Agency (NWDA), and the Chief Engineer of the Central Water Commission

(CWC).

Senior officials from the Water Resources Departments of both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana will also serve as members of the committee. The primary mandate of the committee is to assess the existing disputes and technical challenges related to the sharing of Krishna and Godavari river waters between the two states. It will also review the implementation sta-

tus of earlier tribunal awards, inter-state agreements, and operational issues faced by the respective river boards. The committee is expected to recommend a framework that ensures equitable water allocation and effective coordination between both boards and the states. This central intervention comes amid renewed tensions over water releases from key reservoirs such as Sri-

sailam and Nagarjuna Sagar. Both states have frequently accused each other of drawing more than their entitled share, especially during the irrigation season.

Officials expressed hope that the newly formed panel will pave the way for a long-term institutional mechanism, reducing political friction and ensuring sustainable management of river resources in the region.



## Another Maoist leader surrendered



TPN Bureau | Jan 2  
Hyderabad: The outlawed Maoist movement suffered yet another major setback today after one of its top leaders, Barsa Deva, formally surrendered before the Telangana police. The surrender, which took place in Hyderabad in the presence of Telangana Director General of Police (DGP) Shivadhar Reddy, marks a significant blow to the CPI (Maoist) organization, already weakened by a series of high-profile surrenders and encounters in recent times.

According to police sources, Barsa Deva had been serving as the chief of the “People's Liberation Guerrilla Army” (PLGA), an armed wing of the Maoist party. After the death of Maoist top leader Hidma in a recent encounter, Deva had taken charge of the group's military operations.

Officials revealed that both Hidma and Deva hail from the same village, and Deva was deeply involved in the procurement and distribution of weapons for the organization's central military commission. Over the past year, the Maoist outfit has witnessed a rapid decline in its cadre strength across Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh. Multiple key leaders have ei-

ther been eliminated in police operations or have chosen to surrender, citing ill health, ideological differences, and disillusionment with the Maoist movement's direction.

Police data indicates that hundreds of members—ranging from foot soldiers to senior commanders have laid down arms in the past 12 months. Security experts describe this trend as the “worst crisis” the Maoist party has faced in the last decade. DGP Shivadhar Reddy, who supervised Barsa Deva's surrender, stated that the government's rehabilitation policy for surrendered Maoists continues to encourage extremists to shun violence and return to mainstream society.

He also commended the role of security forces for their sustained coordination across state borders in containing Maoist activities. “Our approach is focused not just on policing but also on creating opportunities for those who want to lead a peaceful life. The surrender of Barsa Deva will further weaken the outfit's military capabilities,” a senior official said.

Police also confirmed that during the surrender, a mountain LMG (light machine gun) and a few ammunition rounds were recovered from Deva's possession. Accom-

panying him were several members of the Maoist military wing, who too surrendered voluntarily. Intelligence agencies believe Deva's defection will disrupt the party's operational network in Chhattisgarh's border areas, where he had been overseeing logistics and arms routes for several years.

Deva is expected to be presented before the media on Saturday. The Telangana DGP is likely to brief reporters on the details of the surrender, the arms recovered, and future operations aimed at dismantling Maoist remnants in the state.

Meanwhile, analysts note that such major surrenders signify a gradual collapse of the Maoist hierarchy, which has been under pressure from intensified combing operations, improved intelligence sharing, and shrinking local support in tribal belts.

The Telangana Police Department reiterated its appeal to the remaining Maoist cadre to surrender, assuring them of safety and comprehensive rehabilitation measures. Officials expressed confidence that continued efforts combining enforcement and welfare initiatives will bring lasting peace to affected regions of Telangana and neighboring states.

## Sana Sathish seeks toll free travel

TPN Bureau | Jan 2  
Kakinada: Rajya Sabha member Sana Satish has urged Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari to allow toll-free travel for one week from January 11 to mark the Sankranti festival, citing reasons of public convenience, traffic management, and commuter safety.

In a representation submitted to the Union Minister, Sana Satish said Sankranti is the most significant festival for the Telugu people, during which millions of citizens travel between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to celebrate with their families. He noted that the massive movement of vehicles along with the ongoing repair and maintenance works on national highways, particularly the Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway (NH-65), causes severe traffic congestion at toll plazas every year. Highlighting the re-

curring problem, the MP said the combination of festive rush and long queues at toll gates often leads to traffic snarls and travel delays stretching for hours. “Temporary exemption from toll payments during the festival week would help reduce congestion, ease traffic management, and ensure smooth and safe travel for all commuters,” he urged in his letter to Gadkari.

Sana Satish pointed out that the highway authorities have already taken up several expansion and resurfacing works along important stretches of NH-65 and connecting routes, which could further slow down vehicular movement this year. Given these conditions, he said, a toll-free arrangement for a limited period would be a practical measure in the larger public interest. He also emphasized that such a move would provide relief not only to individual travellers but also to public transport



operators who face heavy delays during the festive season. The MP added that hassle-free movement of buses and family vehicles would minimize fuel wastage, reduce stress on the road staff, and enhance overall highway safety. Sana Satish expressed confidence that the Union Minister would consider the appeal favourably and direct the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to implement temporary toll-free access between Janu-

ary 11 and 17 to facilitate smooth Sankranti travel.

The proposal, he said, was intended not as a permanent measure but as a goodwill gesture recognizing the cultural and emotional significance of the festival to the Telugu community. The representation has drawn widespread public attention, with travellers and transport associations welcoming the suggestion as a positive step toward easing holiday traffic chaos.

## Collector of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Konaseema District Escapes Mishap During Boat Race Trials at Atreyapuram

TPN Bureau | Jan 2  
Atreyapuram: A major mishap was narrowly averted in Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Konaseema district on Friday when District Collector Mahesh Kumar accidentally slipped into a canal during a boat race trial run. The incident took place near Pulidindi village in Atreyapuram mandal, where preparations were underway for the upcoming Sankranti festival canoe races, a traditional celebration widely held across the Konaseema region. As part of the festive arrangements, trial runs were being conducted on Friday morning to test the boats and ensure safety protocols for the main event. Collector Mahesh Kumar, who arrived at the venue to inaugurate

the trial competitions, boarded one of the racing boats to personally encourage participants and review safety readiness. However, while the boat was moving swiftly through the canal, it reportedly lost balance due to an unexpected tilt, causing the Collector to lose control and fall into the water.

Eyewitnesses said the incident happened within seconds, creating a brief moment of chaos among the crowd and participants. The security personnel and trained swimmers, who had been deployed as part of the trial's safety arrangements, immediately jumped into the canal and rescued him safely. The Collector was promptly shifted to another boat, and officials later con-

firmed that he was unharmed and in good health. After regaining composure, Collector Mahesh Kumar reportedly smiled and reassured those present that he was fine. He thanked the local swimmers and event organizers for their quick response and professionalism, noting that their preparedness prevented a serious accident. The trial resumed after a short interruption, following a brief review of the safety standards. The incident highlighted both the excitement and inherent risks associated with the traditional boat races that form a vibrant part of Sankranti festivities in Coastal Andhra. Sources in the district administration stated that additional precautions



would now be taken for the main competition, including more life jackets, better balance checks for boats, and real-time monitoring by rescue teams. Local residents praised the Collector's hands-on involvement and expressed relief that the situation ended safely. Officials said the Sankranti boat races will go ahead as planned, with heightened safety awareness following Friday's brief but alarming incident.



# MLA Chadalavada Aravinda Babu Says Government Aims to Make Agriculture Profitable for Farmers

TPN Bureau | Jan 2

Narasaraopet (Palnadu District): Andhra Pradesh government's main objective is to make agriculture profitable and ensure a better livelihood for farmers, stated MLA Dr. Chadalavada Aravinda Babu. He participated in the Praja Samasya Parishkara Vedika (Public Grievance Redressal Forum) organized at Issapalem village on Friday.

During the program, the MLA, along with State Library Chairman Gonuguntla Koteswar Rao, distributed new resurvey pattadar passbooks equipped with the official state emblem to eligible farmers. The event drew the participation of a considerable number of farmers, local public representatives, and officials.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Aravinda Babu asserted that the alliance government is committed to transforming the agricultur-



al sector into a profitable enterprise and improving the financial condition of cultivators. He sharply criticized the previous administration led by Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that it had set the state back by nearly two decades.

The MLA accused the former YSRCP government of widespread land encroachments and misuse of power, claiming that Jagan's administration treated public and private properties as personal assets. "Nowhere else in the country has a leader displayed such arrogance spending 700

crore of public money to print his image on pattadar passbooks and border stones," Aravinda Babu remarked.

He added that several farmers had objected to the presence of Jagan's photo on their land ownership documents and had appealed for neutral official documents bearing only the state's seal. Responding to those demands, the present coalition government has reissued the pattadar passbooks with the authentic state emblem, reaffirming farmers' land rights and ownership.

The MLA emphasized that restoring farmers' confidence and facilitating transparent land administration are crucial steps toward rebuilding trust in governance. The government's resurvey initiative is aimed at creating accurate land records to prevent disputes and facilitate easy access to loans, subsidies, and welfare benefits for cultivators. Prior to the main event, villagers presented petitions to the MLA, outlining various local grievances and infrastructure issues.

Dr. Aravinda Babu assured them that all complaints would be reviewed and resolved promptly in coordination with the concerned departments. State Library Chairman Gonuguntla Koteswar Rao appreciated the government's effort to maintain transparency and accountability, noting that accurate land records are vital for rural development.

He also praised the MLA's proactive approach in addressing constituents' problems directly through the Praja Samasya initiative. Cultural Director Bandarupalli Visweshwara Rao, Narasaraopet Market Yard Chairman Poonati Srinivas Rao, along with government officials, local leaders, and alliance party functionaries, also took part in the program.

The event concluded with a renewed pledge from the district leadership to prioritize agricultural reforms and ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach genuine farmers across villages.

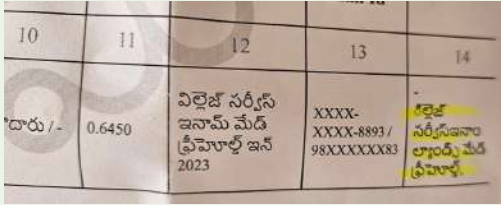
# Illegal Registrations Continue in Kadiyam Despite Government Ban

TPN Bureau | Jan 02

East Godavari: Despite stringent government restrictions, large-scale irregularities in land registrations have once again surfaced at the Kadiyam Sub-Registrar Office in East Godavari district. The latest revelations expose continued violations in registering Freehold Village Service Inam lands properties clearly listed under the prohibited 22-A category.

As per the government's standing orders, lands categorized as Village Service Inam Made Freehold in 2023 cannot be registered under any circumstances until a formal decision is taken by the state government. The authorities earlier clarified that a decision on the Freehold issue would be made by February.

Until then, such registrations were strictly banned. However, evidence suggests that registrations of these prohibited lands are still being carried out at the Kadiyam office, openly flouting government directives. This blatant disregard for rules has sparked widespread criticism



and raised serious allegations of systematic corruption within the registration department.

This is not the first time such irregularities have come to light in Kadiyam. Past investigations revealed instances where government, irrigation, and other restricted lands were fraudulently registered by altering survey numbers. Despite repeated exposures, lack of stringent action against responsible officials has allowed these illegal practices to continue unchecked.

Adding weight to the controversy, Revenue Minister Anagani Sathya Prasad on Friday reaffirmed the government's position on the issue. He stated that the final decision regarding Freehold Inam lands and four other types of lands currently listed under Section 22-A would be taken by a Cabinet subcommittee in February. The minister also clarified that District Collectors now

have full authority to cancel illegal registrations and initiate disciplinary proceedings against erring officials. Even after these clear instructions, the persistence of unauthorized registrations in Kadiyam has raised questions about administrative discipline and accountability. With Collectors empowered to annul such transactions, the legality of recent Kadiyam registrations hangs in balance — leaving bona fide buyers in uncertainty.

Civic organizations and farmer associations have demanded immediate action against officials responsible for facilitating these unlawful deals. The pressing question remains: Who is protecting those enabling these illegal registrations?

Without prompt, high-level inquiries and strong punitive measures, such organized corruption could spread further across registration offices in the state.

# MSME Training Program Concludes Successfully at Krishnaveni Degree College, Narasaraopet

TPN Bureau | Jan 02:

Narasaraopet: A 20-day training program organized under the Central Government's Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) initiative concluded successfully on Friday at Krishnaveni Degree College, Narasaraopet, in Palnadu district. The program was designed to enhance the technical skills of final-year students and boost their employability in emerging technology sectors.



The training comprised two major components — 10 days of Python Programming and 10 days of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. Expert trainers conducted interactive sessions, combining theoretical lessons with practical exercises to ensure that students gained industry-relevant skills.

Speaking at the valedictory function held on the college premises, Principal Nathani Venkateswarlu said that in today's competitive world, students must go

beyond academic learning and focus on developing technological expertise. "Academics alone are not enough to secure good employment opportunities in the current job market. Students need to master emerging technical tools and embrace continuous learning," he remarked.

Dr. Yogeswara Rao, the Academic Director of the institution, appreciated the Central Government's initiative in promoting skill-based education through MSME pro-

grams. He urged students to make the best use of such government-sponsored schemes to expand their professional horizons.

"Programs like these not only help students gain practical knowledge but also prepare them to climb greater heights in their careers," he said. The college's Training and Placement Officer, Balakoteswar Rao, expressed gratitude to the MSME department for extending the program to their institution and highlighted its positive impact on student confidence and employability. He mentioned that the training helped bridge the gap between academic curriculum and real-world industry demands. Faculty members also praised the

students for their active participation throughout the 20-day program. They noted a visible improvement in technical understanding and problem-solving ability among the participants. Students shared positive feedback about the training, calling it a valuable opportunity to learn advanced concepts in Artificial Intelligence and coding. Many said that the sessions motivated them to pursue careers in the IT and data science sectors.

The concluding event witnessed the presence of college staff, trainers, and students, marking the end of an enriching educational experience that successfully blended academic knowledge with cutting-edge skill development.

# Leopard Sighting Near Srisaillam Temple Sparks Panic; Officials Tighten Vigil



TPN Bureau | Jan 2 Srisaillam: Tension gripped devotees and locals near the Srisaillam Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple after a leopard was sighted close to the steps leading to Patalaganga on Wednesday morning. The unexpected appearance of the wild animal in one of the most sacred and heavily visited areas of the Srisaillam Temple complex triggered temporary panic among pilgrims, many of whom frequent the route during the early hours for holy dips in the Krishna River.

According to witnesses, the leopard was spotted prowling near the forested pathway connecting the temple to the Patalaganga bathing ghats. Several devotees reportedly alerted temple authorities and forest officials, prompting an immediate response. Officials swiftly moved to clear the area and issued public warnings through loudspeakers, urging devotees to remain calm and avoid traveling alone,

particularly before dawn or after dusk.

Forest Department personnel, accompanied by local police and temple security, launched an intensive search operation to trace the animal's movements. Surveillance cameras installed along the route have been activated to monitor any further sightings, while patrolling teams have been deployed to prevent potential encounters between the leopard and visitors.

Speaking to the media, Forest Range Officer (Srisaillam) said that the leopard likely strayed into the vicinity from the adjoining Nallamala Forest area in search of food or water. He assured pilgrims that the department was taking all safety measures and using tracking equipment to locate and guide the animal back into the forest.

"We have intensified surveillance and set up additional lighting along key points of the Patalaganga path to ensure devotees' safety," he added. Temple au-

thorities have also taken precautionary steps, including restricting early-morning pilgrim movements temporarily and increasing the number of volunteers at crowded points.

Special announcements are being made repeatedly inside the temple complex to alert devotees about safety protocols. The Srisaillam temple, part of one of the twelve Jyotirlingas dedicated to Lord Shiva, attracts thousands of devotees daily, particularly during auspicious days and weekends. The incident has renewed focus on the need to balance spiritual tourism with wildlife safety measures in ecologically sensitive temple zones surrounded by thick forests.

Forest officials are continuing to monitor the area closely while urging the public not to panic, emphasizing that Srisaillam remains safe for worship under the strict supervision of temple authorities.

# Collector Kritika Shukla Reviews MSME Park Development at Kondaveedu

TPN Bureau | Jan 02:

Kondaveedu: In a move aimed at promoting industrial growth and employment generation in Palnadu district, District Collector Kritika Shukla conducted a review meeting on Friday to assess the progress of the proposed Sri Agni MSME Park at Kondaveedu village in Edlapadu mandal.

The session focused on various aspects of the project's development, feasibility, and infrastructure requirements. During the meeting, project promoter Dr. A.B.S. Shastri, Managing Director of Arshadhatu Green Nanotechnologies India Pvt. Ltd., elaborated on the key features of the proposed MSME park.

He stated that the company already operates a nano-technology manufacturing unit in Guntur, which currently caters to prestigious organizations such as ISRO and the Defence establishments. Building on this expertise,

the Kondaveedu project aims to create a cluster of about 30 nano-technology-based MSME units.

According to Dr. Shastri, the Sri Agni MSME Park is expected to attract an estimated investment of around 200 crore and generate employment for nearly 1,500 people. The project is envisioned as a hub for advanced manufacturing and innovation, positioning Palnadu as an emerging center for nano and green tech-

nology-based industries in Andhra Pradesh.

Collector Kritika Shukla instructed officials from the concerned departments to expedite the preparation and submission of feasibility reports and estimated project costs. She directed the General Manager of the District Industries Centre (DIC) to consolidate the data and schedule the upcoming meeting of the District Industries and Export Promotion Committee

for further evaluation and approval.

Officials from multiple departments, including Irrigation and R&B, participated in the review. The District Revenue Officer, Revenue Divisional Officer, representatives from APIIC, and senior officials from the DIC were also present. The project team members A. Ajay Babu and N. Anil Kumar, along with Dr. Shastri outlined areas requiring departmental coordination such as land develop-

ment, infrastructure support, and access to utilities. The Collector emphasized the importance of inter-departmental coordination to ensure smooth execution of the project and encouraged all concerned departments to provide timely support. The initiative is seen as a significant step toward fostering regional industrialization and creating sustainable employment opportunities for local youth in Palnadu district.





# Liquor Sales Hit 2,767 Crore in December, Driven by Festive Cheer and Digital Payments Surge in Andhra Pradesh

TPN Bureau | Jan 2  
Vijayawada: The festive season and New Year celebrations fuelled a substantial spike in liquor sales across Andhra Pradesh in December 2025, generating massive revenue for the State's Excise Department. Official data revealed that total liquor sales during the month stood at 2,767 crore an 8 per cent jump compared to 2,568 crore in December 2024 — reaffirming the sector's crucial role in state earnings.

Officials attributed the growth to heightened festive demand, increased social gatherings, and an extended spell of year-end celebrations. December continues to be the peak consumption period every year, but 2025 wit-

nessed especially spirited festive activity across urban centres, tourist hubs and temple towns.

The year-end period saw an extraordinary rise in sales volumes. Liquor sales between December 29 and 31 alone touched approximately 543 crore, compared to 336 crore during the corresponding three days of 2024 a sharp 61 per cent surge. The final evening of the year saw record off-take across liquor outlets, bars, and retail stores as revellers ushered in the New Year with large-scale celebrations, particularly in urban areas like Visakhapatnam, Tirupati and Vijayawada.

District-wise figures revealed broad variations in consumption

trends. Visakhapatnam topped the charts with sales of 178.6 crore for the month, driven by tourism, hospitality and beachside festivities. Tirupati followed closely with 169.4 crore, reflecting brisk sales from visiting pilgrims and local celebrations. NTR district, which includes the Vijayawada metropolitan area, ranked third at 155.4 crore.

At the lower end of the spectrum were districts such as Alluri Sitharama Raju (30.7 crore), Parvathipuram Manyam (35.4 crore), and Sri Satya Sai (65 crore), where rural composition and lower population density contributed to smaller transaction volumes. Even on New Year's Day, demand remained robust, with preliminary

data showing that sales figures for January 1, 2026, surpassed those seen on the same day last year.

The Excise Department reported that Visakhapatnam alone recorded 9.91 crore worth of sales on December 31 — the highest single-day total in the state exemplifying the district's dominant share in festive consumption. Significantly, digital payments overtook cash for the first time during New Year's Eve sales, signalling a shift in consumer transaction patterns. Across the Visakhapatnam division, digital payments amounted to 5.05 crore (51 per cent) of the total, slightly higher than cash transactions valued at 4.85 crore. While cash transactions con-



tinued to dominate in localities such as Gopalapatnam, Maharani-peta and Gajuwaka, areas like Seethammadhara and Pendurthi showed a discernible move toward cashless modes. Offi-

cials noted that liquor retailers are increasingly equipped to handle digital transactions, aided by wider internet connectivity, smartphone adoption, and UPI payment systems. The growing use of digi-

tal payments reflects changing consumer behaviour in urban Andhra Pradesh, especially during high-volume festive periods.

With December's strong response and early January trends show-

ing continued momentum, Excise Department officials expect sustained revenue gains in the coming quarter as the state transitions into the Sankranti festive season.

## Andhra Pradesh Leads Nation with 25.3% Share in India's Investments, Says Minister Nara Lokesh



TPN Bureau | January 2  
Amaravati: Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan will visit the famous Kondagattu Anjaneya Swamy Temple in Jagtial district of Telangana on Saturday. His visit marks a major milestone in the temple's development, with the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) sanctioning 35.19 crore for the construction of key amenities, including a pilgrims' rest house and a Deeksha Viramana Mandapam.

The funding initiative, made possible through the cooperation of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and the efforts of Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan, aims to enhance facilities for devotees visiting the temple, one of the most revered shrines dedicated to Lord Hanuman in Telangana. TTD's sanctioned amount will be used to construct a 96-room pilgrim accommodation complex and a large hall to facilitate

the conclusion of religious vows (Deeksha Viramana) for nearly 2,000 devotees at a time.

Pawan Kalyan is scheduled to reach Kondagattu between 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. on Saturday. He will perform Bhoomi Puja (foundation stone ceremony) to formally launch the new development works. TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu, MLC Hariprasad, Choppadandi MLA Medipally Satyam, and TTD Board Members B. Ananda Sai and several other local and state leaders will accompany him during the visit.

Following the temple program, Pawan Kalyan will hold discussions with Telangana Jana Sena Party leaders and cadres to review the party's activities in the state. He will also interact with local representatives who recently won in the Telangana panchayat elections with the support of Jana Sena. These meetings

are expected to take place at Brindavanam Resort near Kodimyal. Notably, after his electoral victory last year, Pawan Kalyan visited Kondagattu Temple to offer prayers and fulfill his vow. During that visit, temple priests and management briefed him about the pending development works.

Subsequently, he held discussions with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and urged him to extend TTD's support for the temple's infrastructure. Acting on this request, the Chief Minister directed the TTD board to consider the proposal, leading to the formal approval of 35.19 crore.

The TTD-funded development is expected to transform Kondagattu into a major spiritual destination in Telangana, offering better amenities for devotees and further strengthening cultural ties between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

## TDP Leader Attacked in Gudivada; YSRCP Leaders Accused of Murder Attempt



TPN Bureau | Jan 2  
Gudivada: Tension prevailed in Gudivada town of Krishna district after a violent attack on a Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader late Thursday night. The incident took place at Gudmen-peta Center, where local TDP leader Veshapogu Emmanuel was reportedly attacked by a group of men allegedly linked to the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP).

According to eyewitness

accounts, Emmanuel was assaulted with knives, stones, and sticks by nearly 15 individuals in a brutal attack that left him and two others injured. Locals who tried to intervene were also attacked with sharp weapons, leading to panic in the area. The injured were immediately shifted to the Gudivada Government Area Hospital, where doctors described their condition as stable.

Preliminary reports suggest that the clash may have been the fallout of a heated argument that took place during New Year's Eve celebrations between Emmanuel and local YSRCP leader Rajesh. Residents claim that the previous night's minor altercation between the two political leaders escalated into a premeditated assault. Speaking from the hospital, Emmanuel alleged that he survived a murder at-

tempt orchestrated by YSRCP leaders.

He named Rajesh and Elisha as the main instigators behind the attack, accusing them of mobilizing a group of around 15 people to carry out the assault. "They came with knives and stones. I thought I would be killed. Only with the help of locals did I manage to escape," Emmanuel told reporters. Following the incident, Gudivada Two-Town Police registered a case un-

der relevant sections related to attempt to murder and unlawful assembly.

Police teams have launched an investigation, and efforts are underway to identify and apprehend the attackers. Officials indicated that CCTV footage from nearby shops is being examined to trace those involved. Local political tension in Gudivada has been on the rise in recent months, with occasional clashes reported between TDP and YSRCP workers over various issues.

The latest attack has once again stirred concern over the deteriorating law-and-order situation in the region. Leaders of the opposition parties, including members of the TDP and Jana Sena alliance, visited Emmanuel at the hospital and condemned the attack, demanding stern action against those responsible.

Police have stepped up patrolling in sensitive localities of Gudivada to prevent further disturbances.

## Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan to Launch TTD-Funded Projects at Kondagattu on Saturday

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# MLA Chadalavada Aravinda Babu Says Government Aims to Make Agriculture Profitable for Farmers

TPN Bureau | Jan 2

Narasaraopet (Palnadu District): Andhra Pradesh government's main objective is to make agriculture profitable and ensure a better livelihood for farmers, stated MLA Dr. Chadalavada Aravinda Babu. He participated in the Praja Samasya Parishkara Vedika (Public Grievance Redressal Forum) organized at Issapalem village on Friday.

During the program, the MLA, along with State Library Chairman Gonuguntla Koteswar Rao, distributed new resurvey pattadar passbooks equipped with the official state emblem to eligible farmers. The event drew the participation of a considerable number of farmers, local public representatives, and officials.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Aravinda Babu asserted that the alliance government is committed to transforming the agricultur-



al sector into a profitable enterprise and improving the financial condition of cultivators. He sharply criticized the previous administration led by Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that it had set the state back by nearly two decades.

The MLA accused the former YSRCP government of widespread land encroachments and misuse of power, claiming that Jagan's administration treated public and private properties as personal assets. "Nowhere else in the country has a leader displayed such arrogance spending 700

crore of public money to print his image on pattadar passbooks and border stones," Aravinda Babu remarked.

He added that several farmers had objected to the presence of Jagan's photo on their land ownership documents and had appealed for neutral official documents bearing only the state's seal. Responding to those demands, the present coalition government has reissued the pattadar passbooks with the authentic state emblem, reaffirming farmers' land rights and ownership.

The MLA emphasized that restoring farmers' confidence and facilitating transparent land administration are crucial steps toward rebuilding trust in governance. The government's resurvey initiative is aimed at creating accurate land records to prevent disputes and facilitate easy access to loans, subsidies, and welfare benefits for cultivators. Prior to the main event, villagers presented petitions to the MLA, outlining various local grievances and infrastructure issues.

Dr. Aravinda Babu assured them that all complaints would be reviewed and resolved promptly in coordination with the concerned departments. State Library Chairman Gonuguntla Koteswar Rao appreciated the government's effort to maintain transparency and accountability, noting that accurate land records are vital for rural development.

He also praised the MLA's proactive approach in addressing constituents' problems directly through the Praja Samasya initiative. Cultural Director Bandarupalli Visweshwara Rao, Narasaraopet Market Yard Chairman Poonati Srinivas Rao, along with government officials, local leaders, and alliance party functionaries, also took part in the program.

The event concluded with a renewed pledge from the district leadership to prioritize agricultural reforms and ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach genuine farmers across villages.

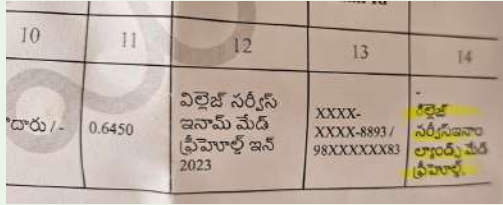
# Illegal Registrations Continue in Kadiyam Despite Government Ban

TPN Bureau | Jan 2

East Godavari: Despite stringent government restrictions, large-scale irregularities in land registrations have once again surfaced at the Kadiyam Sub-Registrar Office in East Godavari district. The latest revelations expose continued violations in registering Freehold Village Service Inam lands properties clearly listed under the prohibited 22-A category.

As per the government's standing orders, lands categorized as Village Service Inam Made Freehold in 2023 cannot be registered under any circumstances until a formal decision is taken by the state government. The authorities earlier clarified that a decision on the Freehold issue would be made by February.

Until then, such registrations were strictly banned. However, evidence suggests that registrations of these prohibited lands are still being carried out at the Kadiyam office, openly flouting government directives. This blatant disregard for rules has sparked widespread criticism



and raised serious allegations of systematic corruption within the registration department.

This is not the first time such irregularities have come to light in Kadiyam. Past investigations revealed instances where government, irrigation, and other restricted lands were fraudulently registered by altering survey numbers. Despite repeated exposures, lack of stringent action against responsible officials has allowed these illegal practices to continue unchecked.

Adding weight to the controversy, Revenue Minister Anagani Sathya Prasad on Friday reaffirmed the government's position on the issue. He stated that the final decision regarding Freehold Inam lands and four other types of lands currently listed under Section 22-A would be taken by a Cabinet subcommittee in February. The minister also clarified that District Collectors now

have full authority to cancel illegal registrations and initiate disciplinary proceedings against erring officials. Even after these clear instructions, the persistence of unauthorized registrations in Kadiyam has raised questions about administrative discipline and accountability. With Collectors empowered to annul such transactions, the legality of recent Kadiyam registrations hangs in balance — leaving bona fide buyers in uncertainty.

Civic organizations and farmer associations have demanded immediate action against officials responsible for facilitating these unlawful deals. The pressing question remains: Who is protecting those enabling these illegal registrations?

Without prompt, high-level inquiries and strong punitive measures, such organized corruption could spread further across registration offices in the state.

# MSME Training Program Concludes Successfully at Krishnaveni Degree College, Narasaraopet

TPN Bureau | Jan 02:

Narasaraopet: A 20-day training program organized under the Central Government's Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) initiative concluded successfully on Friday at Krishnaveni Degree College, Narasaraopet, in Palnadu district. The program was designed to enhance the technical skills of final-year students and boost their employability in emerging technology sectors.

The training comprised two major components — 10 days of Python Programming and 10 days of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. Expert trainers conducted interactive sessions, combining theoretical lessons with practical exercises to ensure that students gained industry-relevant skills.

Speaking at the valedictory function held on the college premises, Principal Nathani Venkateswarlu said that in today's competitive world, students must go

beyond academic learning and focus on developing technological expertise. "Academics alone are not enough to secure good employment opportunities in the current job market. Students need to master emerging technical tools and embrace continuous learning," he remarked.

Dr. Yogeswara Rao, the Academic Director of the institution, appreciated the Central Government's initiative in promoting skill-based education through MSME pro-

grams. He urged students to make the best use of such government-sponsored schemes to expand their professional horizons.

"Programs like these not only help students gain practical knowledge but also prepare them to climb greater heights in their careers," he said. The college's Training and Placement Officer, Balakoteswar Rao, expressed gratitude to the MSME department for extending the program to their institution and highlighted its positive impact on student confidence and employability. He mentioned that the training helped bridge the gap between academic curriculum and real-world industry demands. Faculty members also praised the

students for their active participation throughout the 20-day program. They noted a visible improvement in technical understanding and problem-solving ability among the participants. Students shared positive feedback about the training, calling it a valuable opportunity to learn advanced concepts in Artificial Intelligence and coding. Many said that the sessions motivated them to pursue careers in the IT and data science sectors.

The concluding event witnessed the presence of college staff, trainers, and students, marking the end of an enriching educational experience that successfully blended academic knowledge with cutting-edge skill development.



# Collector Kritika Shukla Reviews MSME Park Development at Kondaveedu

TPN Bureau | Jan 02:

Kondaveedu: In a move aimed at promoting industrial growth and employment generation in Palnadu district, District Collector Kritika Shukla conducted a review meeting on Friday to assess the progress of the proposed Sri Agni MSME Park at Kondaveedu village in Edlapadu mandal.

The session focused on various aspects of the project's development, feasibility, and infrastructure requirements. During the meeting, project promoter Dr. A.B.S. Shastri, Managing Director of Arshadhatu Green Nanotechnologies India Pvt. Ltd., elaborated on the key features of the proposed MSME park.

He stated that the company already operates a nano-technology manufacturing unit in Guntur, which currently caters to prestigious organizations such as ISRO and the Defence establishments. Building on this expertise,

the Kondaveedu project aims to create a cluster of about 30 nano-technology-based MSME units.

According to Dr. Shastri, the Sri Agni MSME Park is expected to attract an estimated investment of around 200 crore and generate employment for nearly 1,500 people. The project is envisioned as a hub for advanced manufacturing and innovation, positioning Palnadu as an emerging center for nano and green tech-

nology-based industries in Andhra Pradesh.

Collector Kritika Shukla instructed officials from the concerned departments to expedite the preparation and submission of feasibility reports and estimated project costs. She directed the General Manager of the District Industries Centre (DIC) to consolidate the data and schedule the upcoming meeting of the District Industries and Export Promotion Committee

for further evaluation and approval.

Officials from multiple departments, including Irrigation and R&B, participated in the review. The District Revenue Officer, Revenue Divisional Officer, representatives from APIIC, and senior officials from the DIC were also present. The project team members A. Ajay Babu and N. Anil Kumar, along with Dr. Shastri outlined areas requiring departmental coordination such as land develop-

ment, infrastructure support, and access to utilities. The Collector emphasized the importance of inter-departmental coordination to ensure smooth execution of the project and encouraged all concerned departments to provide timely support. The initiative is seen as a significant step toward fostering regional industrialization and creating sustainable employment opportunities for local youth in Palnadu district.



# Leopard Sighting Near Srisaillam Temple Sparks Panic; Officials Tighten Vigil



TPN Bureau | Jan 2 Srisaillam: Tension gripped devotees and locals near the Srisaillam Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple after a leopard was sighted close to the steps leading to Patalaganga on Wednesday morning. The unexpected appearance of the wild animal in one of the most sacred and heavily visited areas of the Srisaillam Temple complex triggered temporary panic among pilgrims, many of whom frequent the route during the early hours for holy dips in the Krishna River.

According to witnesses, the leopard was spotted prowling near the forested pathway connecting the temple to the Patalaganga bathing ghats. Several devotees reportedly alerted temple authorities and forest officials, prompting an immediate response. Officials swiftly moved to clear the area and issued public warnings through loudspeakers, urging devotees to remain calm and avoid traveling alone,

particularly before dawn or after dusk.

Forest Department personnel, accompanied by local police and temple security, launched an intensive search operation to trace the animal's movements. Surveillance cameras installed along the route have been activated to monitor any further sightings, while patrolling teams have been deployed to prevent potential encounters between the leopard and visitors.

Speaking to the media, Forest Range Officer (Srisaillam) said that the leopard likely strayed into the vicinity from the adjoining Nallamala Forest area in search of food or water. He assured pilgrims that the department was taking all safety measures and using tracking equipment to locate and guide the animal back into the forest.

"We have intensified surveillance and set up additional lighting along key points of the Patalaganga path to ensure devotees' safety," he added. Temple au-

thorities have also taken precautionary steps, including restricting early-morning pilgrim movements temporarily and increasing the number of volunteers at crowded points.

Special announcements are being made repeatedly inside the temple complex to alert devotees about safety protocols. The Srisaillam temple, part of one of the twelve Jyotirlingas dedicated to Lord Shiva, attracts thousands of devotees daily, particularly during auspicious days and weekends. The incident has renewed focus on the need to balance spiritual tourism with wildlife safety measures in ecologically sensitive temple zones surrounded by thick forests.

Forest officials are continuing to monitor the area closely while urging the public not to panic, emphasizing that Srisaillam remains safe for worship under the strict supervision of temple and forest authorities.



# Breathing Life into Stone: Sculptor Wadayar Rajkumar and the Soul of Art



Art is often described as imitation, representation or beauty carved into form. But true art goes far beyond shaping stone or metal — it breathes life into the inanimate. Few artists embody this philosophy as profoundly as sculptor Wadayar Rajkumar, a name that today resonates with pride not only in the Konaseema region but across both Telugu states.

To call Wadayar Rajkumar merely a sculptor would be an understatement. He is an artist who crowns art with dignity, who transforms statues into

living presences, and who infuses stone with breath. Every sculpture shaped by his hands reflects not just physical likeness but inner personality. His work speaks, feels and connects — a rare quality that separates craftsmen from true artists.

Hailing from Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Konaseema district, Wadayar Rajkumar stands as a shining example of how talent rooted in rural soil can achieve national recognition through dedication, discipline and devotion to craft. His journey is not just personal success; it

is a cultural statement — that art born in villages can command respect on the grandest stages.

Over the years, he has sculpted thousands of statues of eminent personalities. What sets his work apart is his intense attention to natural expression, emotional depth and subtle detailing. His sculptures do not merely resemble their subjects; they represent them. The eyes convey thought, the posture suggests character, and the facial expressions reveal the soul. Each statue becomes a silent storyteller.

A striking example of his mastery is the recently unveiled statue of legendary singer S.P. Balasubrahmanyam at Hyderabad's Ravindra Bharathi. Standing 7.2 feet tall and cast in bronze, the sculpture is more than a tribute — it is an emotion frozen in time. SPB's gentle smile, warmth, humility and musical soul are etched with astonishing realism. Artists, dignitaries and fans alike were left awestruck, praising the sculpture as a living reflection of the legend himself.

Such moments raise an important thought: why do

some statues move us while others merely occupy space? The answer lies in intent. For Wadayar Rajkumar, sculpture is not a profession — it is his breath. He treats every creation as a form of meditation. Before carving, he studies the life, ideology and journey of the individual. Only when he understands the person beyond the face does he begin shaping the form. This spiritual connection is what gives his sculptures timeless value.

In an era dominated by speed, shortcuts and superficial recognition, Wadayar Rajkumar's approach feels

refreshingly sincere. His work reminds us that art demands patience, humility and surrender. It teaches young artists that mastery is earned through discipline, not shortcuts.

More importantly, his success serves as inspiration for countless aspiring sculptors from rural backgrounds. Rising from Konaseema and earning respect at state and national levels, he proves that geography does not limit greatness — commitment does.

Though he belongs to Konaseema, Wadayar Rajkumar today stands as a sym-

bol of pride for both Telugu states. His name is steadily carving its place not just in stone, but in the cultural consciousness of the nation.

As art lovers, one can only hope that his journey continues to shine brighter — that his chisels keep shaping history, that his statues keep breathing life into memory, and that the name Wadayar Rajkumar becomes synonymous with living sculpture across India.

Because when stone begins to breathe, it is no longer stone — it is art.

# Jadav's Political 'Magic' and the Municipal Chessboard of Adilabad

Jadav's Political 'Magic' and the Municipal Chessboard of Adilabad

Politics in Adilabad has suddenly taken on the intensity of a high-stakes chess match, where every move is scrutinised and every misstep punished. The overnight release of the draft voters' list has acted as a political catalyst, unsettling established equations and injecting fresh urgency into the municipal battle. What might appear as a routine administrative exercise has, in reality, exposed deeper demographic shifts and emerging power centres that could decisively shape Adilabad's political future.

At the centre of this evolving scenario is what many observers describe as "Jadav's magic" — a strategic blend of political timing, organisational discipline, and social arithmetic that seems to have left opposition parties momentarily disoriented. Under the leadership of District Congress chief Dr. Naresh Jadav, the party is attempting a calculated transition from rural dominance to urban consolidation. The narrative has clearly shifted from whether the Congress

is relevant in the municipal contest to whether its rivals are prepared to counter its momentum.

One of the most revealing aspects of the draft voters' list is the numerical strength of women voters. With women exceeding male voters by more than 4,000 and forming nearly half of the total electorate of 1,43,773 voters, the electoral dynamics have undergone a subtle but decisive transformation. This is not merely a statistical observation; it is a political signal that demands attention. Women voters today are more politically aware, issue-focused, and independent in their choices than ever before.

For the Congress, this demographic reality appears to work in its favour. The party's campaign emphasis on civic amenities, welfare delivery, and grassroots engagement resonates strongly with women voters who experience governance at the household level. Municipal politics, after all, is less about ideological grandstanding and more about water supply, sanitation, roads, healthcare access, and education. Parties that fail to align

their messaging with these lived realities risk alienating a decisive voter base.

Equally significant is the growing assertion of youth in Adilabad's political space. Social media-driven outreach, ward-level mobilisation, and peer-to-peer campaigning have transformed young voters from passive participants into active influencers. This shift has disrupted traditional campaign models that relied heavily on cadre networks and established voter loyalties. For opposition parties accustomed to predictable voting patterns, this fluid and energetic youth participation has become a source of discomfort.

Dr. Naresh Jadav's strategy draws confidence from the Congress party's recent pan-chayat-level successes. These victories were not accidental; they were built on sustained local engagement, careful candidate selection, and a governance-oriented narrative. By projecting these wins as a mere "trailer" to the upcoming municipal contest, the Congress has successfully boosted cadre morale while applying psychological pressure on its rivals. In politics, perception often

shapes reality, and the Congress is clearly attempting to define the electoral mood even before polling begins.

Another critical factor reshaping the municipal contest is the evolving role of minority voters, particularly Muslims, who have historically been decisive in Adilabad politics. This time, however, the nature of participation has changed. Minority youth are no longer content with symbolic representation; they seek meaningful inclusion in governance and decision-making. The rise of young leaders like Khizer Pasha reflects this generational shift and has injected fresh energy into the Congress campaign.

This renewed assertion has altered long-held assumptions among political veterans who believed minority votes could be mobilised mechanically. The growing organisational role of minority youth has transformed vote banks into active political stakeholders. If effectively consolidated, this support could tilt outcomes in several crucial wards, especially where margins are traditionally narrow.

The opposition's biggest

challenge lies in its apparent lack of a coherent counter-strategy. Administrative uncertainties surrounding voter list revisions have added to the confusion, but they have not translated into political clarity for rival parties. Instead, demographic shifts, combined with the Congress party's aggressive confidence, have resulted in a visible hesitation — a political "mind block" that can prove costly in tightly fought elections.

That said, municipal elections are rarely predictable. Local equations, individual candidate credibility, turnout patterns, and last-minute political manoeuvres can still alter the final outcome. History offers enough examples where early momentum dissolved due to complacency. The Congress, despite its apparent advantage, must guard against overconfidence and ensure disciplined execution at the booth level.

Ultimately, this election is not merely about capturing the municipal chair; it is about defining Adilabad's urban future. The convergence of experienced leadership, women's electoral strength, minority

youth assertion, and Dr. Naresh Jadav's strategic direction presents a rare political moment. Whether this alignment results in electoral victory remains to be seen, but one fact is undeniable: Adilabad's political grammar is changing.

Regardless of the final verdict, Jadav's political manoeuvres have already altered the

rules of the game. Old formulas no longer guarantee success, and new voices are demanding accountability and inclusion. In that sense, this municipal election marks not just a contest for power, but a turning point in the city's democratic evolution.



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## Baloch Leader’s Open Letter Signals A New Geopolitical Undercurrent In South Asia



The open letter written by Baloch leader and human rights activist Mir Yar Baloch to India’s External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar marks a significant moment in South Asian geopolitics. From Pakistani soil, the letter expresses “unwavering support to Bharat” and warns of an expanding China–Pakistan strategic

alliance, particularly in Balochistan. The leader claims that China may soon deploy military troops in the region as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) reaches its final stages. The letter reflects longstanding grievances of the Baloch people, who allege decades of political repression,

enforced disappearances, and human rights abuses under Pakistan’s control. By praising India’s Operation Sindoor and openly engaging with New Delhi, Baloch leadership appears to be seeking international legitimacy and diplomatic recognition. While India has officially maintained restraint on separatist movements beyond

its borders, such communications underline growing regional unease over China’s expanding footprint. The episode also highlights how internal conflicts in Pakistan increasingly intersect with broader regional power rivalries involving India and China.

## Campus Tragedy In Himachal Raises Alarming Questions On Institutional Failure

Ragging has shocked the nation and exposed deep cracks in campus safety mechanisms. The student’s recorded video, detailing inappropriate behaviour by a professor and harassment by senior students, paints a disturbing picture of unchecked abuse of authority. The case is particularly troubling because it involves those entrusted with safeguarding students. Allegations against a faculty member underline how power imbalance can silence victims and delay accountability. The fact that the student’s health deteriorated due to prolonged mental stress suggests systemic failure rather than an isolated incident. This tragedy raises urgent questions about grievance redressal systems in educational institutions. While laws against ragging and sexual harassment exist, implementation remains inconsistent. Fear, stigma, and institutional pressure often prevent students from speaking out.



The incident serves as a grim reminder that academic spaces must prioritise safety and dignity alongside education. Without strict enforcement and cultural change, campuses risk becoming places of silent suffering rather than learning.

## BJP-Congress Clash Over Umar Khalid Reflects Deepening Global Political Polarisation

The BJP’s attack on Rahul Gandhi over US lawmakers’ letter seeking bail for Umar Khalid highlights how domestic politics is increasingly intersecting with international advocacy. By linking Gandhi’s past meetings with American lawmakers to recent human rights concerns raised abroad, the BJP has reinforced its narrative of an “anti-India lobby.” The controversy centres on the Combating International Islamophobia Act and foreign criticism of India’s handling of sensitive legal cases. While the BJP views such interventions as external interference in India’s sovereign legal process, the opposition sees it as part of global human rights discourse. This episode underscores a broader dilemma: how democracies respond when internal issues draw international attention. The absence of a Congress response has allowed the ruling party to dominate the narrative, framing criticism as politically motivated rather than rights-based. The debate reflects growing polarisation, where legal cases are viewed less through judicial lenses and more as ideological battlegrounds, both domestically and internationally.



## Indore Water Crisis Highlights Urban Governance And Public Health Neglect



The Madhya Pradesh High Court’s intervention in Indore’s contaminated water crisis highlights the serious consequences of civic negligence. Reports of deaths linked to unsafe drinking water prompted the court to order additional water tankers and immediate medical care, stressing that a city’s “beauty” cannot exist without basic public health safeguards. Indore, often praised for

cleanliness rankings, now faces uncomfortable scrutiny. The crisis reveals how surface-level achievements can mask deeper infrastructural vulnerabilities. Access to clean water remains a fundamental right, not a privilege dependent on emergency judicial orders. The court’s remarks underline the responsibility of municipal authorities to ensure routine water quality

checks, transparent communication, and swift corrective action. Preventable tragedies caused by contaminated water point to failures in monitoring and accountability. This incident serves as a warning to urban administrations across India: sustainable development is measured not by rankings or aesthetics, but by the safety and well-being of citizens.

## IPL Controversy Shows How Sport Is Increasingly Entangled With National Politics



The objection raised by Shiv Sena (UBT) against Kolkata Knight Riders for including Bangladeshi cricketer Mustafizur Rahman reveals how sport in India is becoming deeply politicised. Framing the issue as one of national security, party leaders demanded a boycott of players from Bangladesh and Pakistan, invoking emotional and nationalist rhetoric. Such statements blur

the line between sport and state policy. The IPL has long positioned itself as a professional sporting league governed by cricketing bodies, not political ideologies. Targeting team owners and players based on nationality risks undermining the league’s credibility and inclusiveness. While geopolitical tensions are real, conflating athletes with state actions sets a dan-

gerous precedent. Cricket has historically served as a bridge between nations, even during diplomatic strains. The episode reflects a broader trend where cultural platforms are increasingly used for political signalling. It raises a crucial question: should sport remain a unifying space, or be shaped by shifting political narratives?



## Trump’s Iran Warning Raises Stakes Amid Widening Middle East Unrest



President Donald Trump’s warning that the US would “come to the rescue” of Iranian protesters if they are violently suppressed has sharply escalated tensions between Washington and Tehran. Issued amid widespread protests in Iran over economic collapse and currency devaluation, the statement has been met with stern warnings from Iran’s leadership.

Iranian officials have accused the US of interference, cautioning that any direct intervention could destabilise the entire Middle East. With recent US strikes on Iranian-linked

targets promotes and Iran’s retaliatory actions still fresh, the rhetoric risks inflaming an already volatile region.

The protests, though not yet at the scale of earlier uprisings, reflect deep-rooted frustration over inflation, governance and political repression. Trump’s comments, while framed as a defense of human rights, blur the line between moral support and military threat. The episode illustrates how domestic unrest in Iran continues to intersect dangerously with global power politics.

## Maduro’s Overture To US Talks Contrasts With Silence On Military Strikes



Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro’s willingness to negotiate with the US on drug trafficking marks a cautious diplomatic opening believe years of hostility. His remarks, however, were notably silent on recent CIA-linked drone strikes on Venezuelan soil — a silence that speaks volumes about the sensitivity of the issue.

Maduro framed the US pressure campaign as an attempt to force regime change and gain access to Venezuela’s oil reserves, while also signalling openness to American investment. The contrast between diplomatic rhetoric and escalating

military actions highlights the complexity of US-Venezuela relations.

The strikes, justified by Washington as part of an “armed conflict” against drug cartels, represent a significant escalation and raise concerns about sovereignty and civilian casualties. Maduro’s calibrated response suggests a balancing act between resistance and negotiation, as Venezuela seeks economic relief without conceding political ground. The situation underscores how counter-narcotics operations can blur into geopolitical power plays.

# Swiss Bar Fire Tragedy Exposes Deadly Risks Of Festive Negligence



The devastating fire at a Swiss bar in Crans-Montana that killed 40 people has cast a harsh spotlight on safety lapses during festive celebrations. Authorities believe the blaze was triggered by sparklers placed on champagne bottles, which were moved too

close to the ceiling, causing flames to spread rapidly across the venue. What was meant to be a moment of celebration quickly turned into one of Switzerland’s deadliest civilian tragedies in recent years.

The incident occurred during the New Year holiday period, when Valais’s population believes to have doubled due to tourism. Hospitals were already stretched with routine emergencies, compounding the crisis response. Despite this, emergency services acted swiftly, treating over 100 injured individuals

and transferring critical patients across Switzerland and neighbouring countries.

The painstaking identification of victims has become the authorities’ top priority, involving international coordination and forensic protocols. Beyond the immediate loss of life, the tragedy raises urgent questions about crowd safety, fire regulations and the unchecked use of indoor pyrotechnics. It is a stark reminder that festive excess, when paired with poor safety enforcement, can have irreversible consequences.

## BYD Overtakes Tesla As Global EV Leadership Shreveled by Competition

China’s BYD surpassing Tesla as the world’s top electric vehicle seller marks a decisive shift in the global EV landscape. With over 2.25 million vehicles sold in 2025, BYD capitalised on aggressive pricing, rapid innovation and strong international expansion, while Tesla saw a nearly 9 per cent drop in annual sales.

Tesla’s struggles reflect more than market cycles. Intensifying competition from Chinese manufacturers, reduced government subsidies and mixed reception to new models have eroded its dominance. Additionally, concerns over Elon



Musk’s divided focus — spanning politics, robotics and social media — have unsettled investors.

BYD’s success highlights China’s growing influence in future mobility, particularly as its vehicles undercut Western rivals on price while matching them on technology. Even as trade barriers rise against Chinese EVs, BYD’s penetration into Europe, Southeast Asia and Latin America signals a new era of competition. The EV race is no longer about who innovated first, but who can scale fastest and adapt globally.

## Expanded US Travel Ban Signals Return To Hardline Immigration Policy

The United States’ decision to impose travel restrictions on citizens from 39 countries beginning January 1, 2026, signals a renewed hardline stance on immigration and border control. Believed to be rooted in national security concerns, the policy extends to immediate family members of US citizens from affected countries, intensifying its human impact.

The White House has justified the move by citing insufficient data-sharing and risk assessment mechanisms in certain countries. However, critics argue that such blanket bans disproportionately affect ordinary civilians, students and families rather than genuine security threats. The inclusion of partial and full bans has also raised fears of diplomatic fallout and legal challenges.



Historically, travel bans have sparked global criticism and domestic debate

over civil liberties. This expansion revives those concerns, particularly as

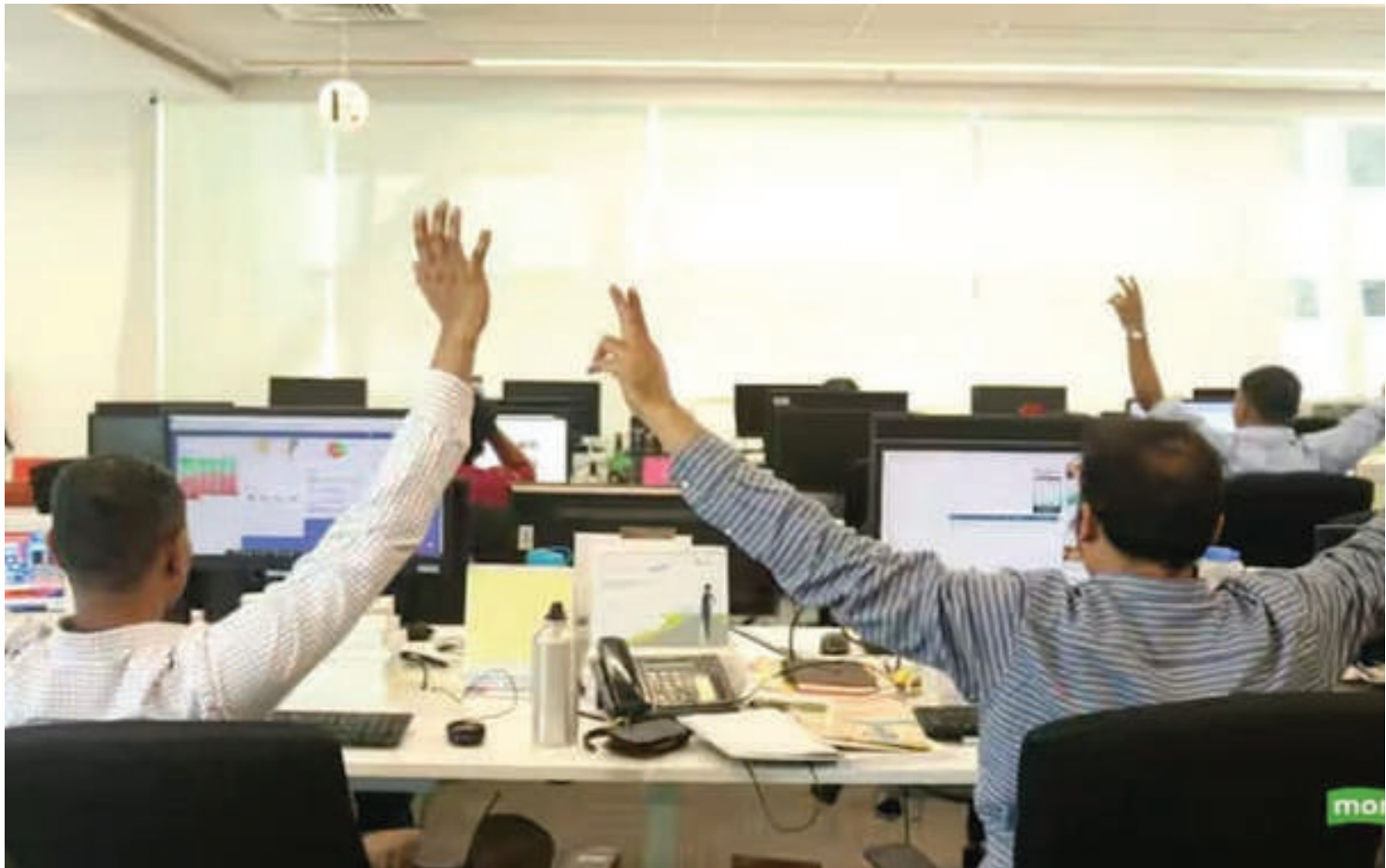
it coincides with heightened geopolitical tensions. The move under-

scores how immigration policy remains a powerful political tool — one that

balances security narratives against humanitarian and diplomatic costs.



# Record Highs On Dalal Street Reflect Domestic Strength Over Global Uncertainty



Indian equity markets began 2026 on a confident note, with the Nifty closing at a fresh all-time high above 26,300 and the Sensex jumping over 570 points. The rally was broad-based, with most sectoral indices ending in the green, signalling strong underlying domestic sentiment despite mixed global cues.

Autos, metals, capital goods, power and PSU stocks led the charge, reflecting optimism around economic activity, infrastructure spending and manufacturing momentum. Strong GST collections for December reinforced confidence in consumption recovery and fiscal stability, acting as a key catalyst for the rally. The BSE midcap and smallcap indices also gained around 1 per cent, indicating wider market participation rather than a narrow large-cap move.

However, FMCG stocks underperformed, reminding investors that consumption recovery remains uneven. Rising input costs, margin pressures and cautious volume growth have weighed on defensive plays. This divergence highlights the market's preference for cyclical and growth-linked sectors at this stage of the economic cycle.

Technically, the Nifty's decisive breakout above the 26,200–26,300 resistance zone signals continued bullish momentum in the short term. Analysts now see higher targets in the coming weeks, provided the index holds above key support levels. While valuations are stretched, the market's resilience underscores a shift toward domestically driven optimism as India enters the new calendar year.

# Auto Stocks' Multi-Year Outperformance Shows Structural Shift In Demand

The Nifty Auto index's three-fold outperformance versus the Nifty over the past four years highlights a structural transformation in India's automobile sector. Strong domestic demand, GST rationalisation, premiumisation and recovery in urban consumption have all contributed to sustained momentum.

Passenger vehicle sales surged sharply in December, driven by pre-emptive buying ahead of price hikes and improving consumer confidence. Analysts believe this is not merely a cyclical rebound but part of a longer-term trend supported by rising incomes, aspirational consumption and better financing availability.

Technically, the auto index has broken out on long-term charts, with analysts projecting further upside if key support levels hold. While risks remain—such as rural demand volatility and cost pressures—the sector's resilience suggests it will continue to outperform in the near term.

The auto sector's performance also reflects a broader policy environment favouring manufacturing, localisation



and infrastructure development. As India positions itself as a global auto and EV hub, the sector's leadership role in the equity market may persist well into 2026.

# IT Sector Faces Short-Term Softness But Eyes AI-Led Revival In 2026

Indian IT stocks may see muted performance in the December quarter due to seasonal furloughs and wage hikes, but investor focus is already shifting beyond short-term noise. According to Motilal Oswal, commentary around client budgets, deal pipelines and AI adoption will matter far more than near-term earnings fluctuations.

While growth remains subdued amid global macro uncertainty, artificial intelligence is emerging as a powerful medium-term driver. Clients are cautious about large transformation spends, but targeted AI investments are gaining traction, especially in productivity enhancement and automation.

Large IT firms are expected to post modest sequential growth, with mid-caps showing relatively better momentum. The divergence reflects agility and faster deal execution among smaller players.



Investors are likely to reward companies that demonstrate early leadership in AI capabilities and deal conversion.

The IT sector's story is no longer about volume growth alone, but about relevance in a rapidly evolving tech cycle.

Those who adapt fastest to AI-driven demand are likely to regain investor confidence in calendar year 2026.

# Devyani–Sapphire Merger Signals Consolidation Phase In India's QSR Industry



The approval of the Devyani International–Sapphire Foods merger marks a pivotal moment for India's quick service restaurant (QSR) sector. By consolidating KFC and Pizza Hut operations under a single operator, the deal creates one of the largest QSR platforms in the country, backed by global brand strength and operational scale.

Analysts have largely welcomed the merger, citing cost synergies, improved unit economics and better negotiating power with suppliers and partners. The estimated annual synergy potential of ₹210–225 crore could significantly boost margins over the medium term. Simplification of operational structures and alignment of regional strengths are expected to enhance efficiency and accelerate expansion.

That said, the fine print reveals near-term complexities. One-time payments, stake realignments and regulatory approvals mean benefits will accrue gradually rather than immediately. Market reactions reflected this nuance, with Devyani shares initially rallying before paring gains.

Strategically, the merger reflects a broader trend of consolidation in consumer-facing businesses, where scale is increasingly vital to absorb costs, invest in technology and withstand competitive pressures. As dining habits evolve and organised food services expand, this deal could set a template for future consolidation in India's consumption-driven sectors.

# Quiet IPO Calendar Signals Cautious Optimism In Primary Markets



The absence of mainboard IPOs and the limited activity in the SME segment suggest a cautious but stable primary market environment. Investors appear selective, focusing on business fundamentals rather than chasing listings indiscriminately.

Upcoming SME issues such as Gabion Technologies, Victory Electric Vehicles and Yajur Fibres indicate continued interest in niche manufacturing and emerging sectors. However, higher minimum investment requirements and selective participation reflect growing maturity among retail investors.

The quiet calendar may actually be healthy, allowing markets to digest recent gains and avoid speculative excess. As valuations remain elevated, disciplined capital raising could strengthen long-term confidence in India's IPO ecosystem.

Overall, the primary market's measured pace aligns with broader market sentiment—optimistic, but grounded in fundamentals rather than exuberance.



## How A Working Mother With A Baby Redefined Professionalism



A recruiter’s viral post about hiring a candidate who brought her eight-month-old baby to an interview has struck a chord online. Faced with sudden childcare issues, the candidate requested permission to attend the interview with her child, displaying honesty and respect for professional boundaries.

During the interview, she answered complex questions while calming her baby, demonstrating composure, multitasking, and emotional resilience. Instead of viewing the situation as unpro-

fessional, the interviewer recognised it as proof of capability. Handling pressure, interruptions, and responsibility simultaneously was central to the role she applied for.

The story challenges deeply ingrained workplace biases that assume parents—especially mothers—are less committed or reliable. In reality, parenting often sharpens skills like time management, prioritisation, empathy, and crisis handling. These qualities are invaluable in modern workplaces but

are rarely acknowledged formally.

The viral response reflects a growing demand for empathy-driven hiring practices. Many users shared similar experiences of discrimination or appreciation at work. The incident serves as a reminder that professionalism is not about rigid appearances, but about responsibility, adaptability, and integrity. Inclusive workplaces that recognise human realities are not just kinder—they are often more productive and resilient.

## World Introvert Day And Why Quiet Strength Deserves Recognition



Observed annually on January 2, World Introvert Day celebrates individuals who draw energy from solitude and reflection rather than constant social interaction. Originating from psychologist Felicitas Heyne’s advocacy, the day aims to correct misconceptions about introversion.

Introverts are often mistaken for being shy or antisocial, but in reality, they are deep thinkers who thrive in calm environments and value meaningful connections.

They recharge through solitude and tend to excel in roles requiring focus, creativity, and thoughtful decision-making. Many writers, scientists, leaders, and innovators identify as introverts.

In workplaces and classrooms that reward loud participation, introverts are often overlooked. This creates unnecessary pressure to conform to extroverted norms, leading to exhaustion and undervaluation of quieter contributions. World Introvert

Day encourages a shift in perspective—one that values listening as much as speaking.

In a world that glorifies constant networking and visibility, the day reminds us that leadership, innovation, and empathy can emerge quietly. Silence can foster clarity, reflection, and depth. Recognising introversion is not about creating divisions, but about embracing diverse personality strengths and building more balanced, inclusive societies.

## When Sick Leave Turns Into Surveillance At The Workplace

A viral Reddit post has reignited debate around workplace boundaries and employee privacy in India. The incident involved an employee requesting sick leave due to a severe headache, only to be asked by their manager to share live location details as proof. The manager claimed this intrusive demand was part of HR policy, raising serious questions about managerial overreach and ethical work practices.

The request went beyond reasonable verification. Medical documents are a standard requirement, but demanding live location crosses into personal surveillance. Employees do not surrender their right to privacy when they join an organisation, especially during medical distress. Such behaviour reflects a deeper trust deficit in certain workplace cultures, where presence is valued more than productivity or well-being.

What disturbed many readers was the normalisation of such control. If a live location is demanded for a sick leave today, tomorrow it could extend to monitoring movements outside work hours. This blurring of professional authority



and personal autonomy creates an atmosphere of fear rather than accountability. In a country where mental health discussions are already limited, such practices discourage employees from

taking legitimate breaks and push them toward burnout.

The incident sparked online outrage, with many users calling it a red flag for toxic management. Legal experts also

pointed out that forcing employees to share real-time location without consent may violate privacy principles laid down by Indian courts. Ultimately, the episode highlights the urgent need for

Indian workplaces to modernise HR policies, focus on outcome-based performance, and prioritise dignity, trust, and employee mental health over surveillance-driven control.

## Can Artificial Intelligence Really Diagnose Better Than Doctors



Elon Musk’s claim that Grok AI can diagnose MRI scans better than doctors has once again stirred global debate after a reported life-saving case. According to a viral post, Grok flagged a serious medi-

cal condition that was initially misdiagnosed in a hospital, prompting timely treatment and recovery.

While such examples underline AI’s growing potential in medical imaging, they also raise

critical questions. Artificial intelligence can analyse vast datasets rapidly and detect patterns that humans might miss, especially under time pressure or staff shortages. In overcrowded hospitals, where radiolo-

gists often face delays and fatigue, AI tools could offer valuable second opinions.

However, medical diagnosis is not just data interpretation; it involves clinical judgement, patient history,

ethical accountability, and emotional intelligence. Doctors assess symptoms in context, something AI still struggles to replicate fully. There is also the risk of over-reliance, where patients may trust AI outputs blindly without proper medical consultation.

Public reaction to Musk’s claim has been mixed. Some users praised AI’s speed and accuracy, while others shared experiences of incorrect assessments. Medical professionals warn that AI should assist, not replace, doctors. The episode reflects both excitement and unease surrounding AI in healthcare, highlighting the need for strict validation, regulation, and transparency before such tools are integrated widely. The future likely lies in collaboration, where human expertise and artificial intelligence strengthen healthcare together.

## Jolin Tsai’s Giant Snake Performance Redefines Concert Spectacle

Taiwanese pop icon Jolin Tsai stunned global audiences with a breathtaking performance atop a 30-metre-long moving snake during the opening of her “Pleasure” World Tour. The visuals, blending symbolism, precision choreography, and theatrical daring, instantly went viral across platforms.

The performance showcased Tsai’s reputation as one of Asia’s most innovative live artists. The giant snake, operated live by crew members, symbolised transformation, temptation, and power—central themes in her artistic identity. Balancing on a moving structure while singing live demanded not just courage but exceptional physical and technical control.



Fans and critics alike praised the act for pushing creative boundaries. In an era where concerts

increasingly rely on digital effects, Tsai’s performance stood out for its tangible risk and craftsmanship. It reminded audiences that live music is not just about sound, but

about storytelling and immersive experience.

Beyond spectacle, the performance highlighted how Asian pop concerts are increasingly matching — and sometimes

surpassing — global production standards. Tsai’s act wasn’t just entertainment; it was a statement on artistic evolution, stagecraft, and fearless experimentation. The vi-

ral response reaffirmed her influence and set a new benchmark for how pop performances can blend music, art, and theatre into a single unforgettable moment.



# Selection Dilemmas Before New Zealand ODIs Reflect India’s Transition Phase



India’s upcoming ODI series against New Zealand is more than just a bilateral contest; it marks a transitional moment for Indian cricket as focus gradually shifts toward the T20 World Cup beginning in February. With the ODIs being the final 50-over assignment before the T20I stretch, the selec-

tion committee faces the challenge of balancing workload management with competitive intent. Key players such as Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya are likely to be rested to preserve fitness, signalling a strategic prioritisation of global tournaments over short-term results. This cautious ap-

proach reflects a broader shift in Indian cricket, where player longevity and peak performance at ICC events now take precedence. The series, starting in Vadodara and moving through Rajkot and Indore, also offers an opportunity to test bench strength and experiment

with combinations. However, the buzz around potential omissions—especially that of Rishabh Pant—has overshadowed other discussions. Selection decisions here will not just shape the New Zealand series, but also indicate how firmly India is committing to defined roles across

formats. In many ways, this ODI squad announcement will act as a preview of India’s post-World Cup planning. The message from the selectors will be closely scrutinised: is India merely rotating players, or redefining its white-ball core altogether

## Sai Sudharsan’s Injury Highlights The Physical Cost Of Domestic Cricket

Sai Sudharsan’s rib fracture during the Vijay Hazare Trophy is a stark reminder of the physical toll domestic cricket places on players striving to break into the national setup. The injury, sustained during a diving run, could sideline the young batter for six to eight weeks, ruling him out of crucial Ranji Trophy fixtures.

For Sudharsan, the timing is particularly unfortunate. Having endured a difficult Test run earlier, domestic cricket represented an opportunity for redemption and rhythm. Instead, injury has once again interrupted momentum—a familiar narrative for many emerging Indian cricketers.

The BCCI’s Centre of Excellence has outlined a cautious rehabilitation plan, reflecting improved injury management systems. However, the broader issue remains: packed domestic schedules, high intensity, and constant performance pressure increase injury risk, espe-



cially for players pushing physical limits to impress selectors. Sudharsan’s likely availability for the IPL

suggests a shift in priorities where franchise commitments may supersede domestic red-ball cricket. While understandable,

this trend raises concerns about the long-term health of India’s first-class structure. His recovery will be watched

closely, not just for his return, but for what it signals about workload management in Indian cricket.

## Selection, Injuries, And Identity: Indian Cricket At A Crossroads

The narratives surrounding India’s New Zealand ODIs—from selection dilemmas and player philosophy to injuries and IPL controversies—collectively point toward a sport in transition. Indian cricket today is balancing legacy with longevity, flair with structure, and global ambition with domestic realities.

Whether it is Pant fighting for his ODI identity, Sudharsan recovering from injury, or Mustafizur navigating controversy, each story reflects broader questions about how modern cricket is managed. As formats multiply and stakes rise, decisions are no longer just about form—they are about vision. The coming months, especially with a T20



World Cup looming, will test the selectors’ ability to think

beyond immediate results. Indian cricket’s challenge is not tal-

ent scarcity, but choice clarity. How those choices are

made will define the next phase of its evolution.

## Rishabh Pant And The Cost Of A High-Risk Batting Identity



Rishabh Pant’s uncertain place in India’s ODI squad for the New Zealand series highlights a deeper philosophical divide within team management. According to reports, at least one influential voice in the Indian setup remains unconvinced by Pant’s high-risk, high-reward batting template—an approach that has brought him fame as well as inconsistency.

Pant’s ODI career has been fragmented by circumstances beyond his control, including the COVID-19 disruption and a horrific car accident. Despite flashes of brilliance, he has played just 31 ODIs since debuting in 2018, hardly enough to establish long-term rhythm. Since his return, opportunities have been minimal, making a potential omis-

sion without a recent run appear harsh.

What complicates matters is the emergence of alternatives like Ishan Kishan and Dhruv Jurel, both of whom offer different skill sets. With KL Rahul firmly established as the first-choice wicketkeeper-batter, the luxury of carrying three keepers becomes questionable.

Pant’s case raises an uncomfortable question: should individuality be reshaped to fit system preferences, or should systems adapt to extraordinary talents? His batting philosophy may defy convention, but it has also delivered match-changing impact. Dropping him now risks not just sidelining a player, but narrowing India’s tactical diversity in white-ball cricket.

## Mustafizur Rahman And When Cricket Crosses Into Geopolitics



Mohammed Shami’s prolonged absence from India’s white-ball squads may finally be nearing an end, with selectors signalling a possible rethink as the 2027 ODI World Cup enters long-term planning. Once considered indispensable in global tournaments, Shami has not represented India since the Champions Trophy in March 2025, despite finishing that event as India’s joint-highest wicket-taker.

The fast bowler’s continued exclusion has puzzled many, particularly given his impressive domestic returns. Shami’s recent performances across the Ranji Trophy, Vijay Hazare Trophy, and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy demonstrate that his wicket-taking instincts remain intact. His 17 wickets in six limited-overs domestic games and 20 wickets in four Ranji matches have reignited debate about his omission.

The sticking point has never been skill, but fitness. Recurring ankle and knee injuries since the

2023 World Cup led to surgeries and prolonged rehabilitation, creating uncertainty around workload management. That uncertainty strained relations earlier this year, when Shami publicly questioned the selection logic after being overlooked despite playing domestic cricket.

Selectors, led by Ajit Agarkar, have maintained that fitness clearance remains the only barrier. Recent comments suggest that stance is softening as Shami continues to bowl regularly and recover rhythm. A return as early as the New Zealand ODI series is now being discussed, with the longer-term lure of World Cup experience hard to ignore.

For India, the equation is simple but delicate. Younger pacers offer athleticism and durability, but Shami offers proven excellence on the biggest stage. His potential recall reflects a pragmatic approach—experience, when fit, still carries immense value in tournament cricket.



‘Godari Gattupaina’ Official Teaser Wins Hearts with Rustic Charm and Youthful Energy



The official teaser of the upcoming Telugu film Godari Gattupaina has been released, creating a strong buzz among cinema lovers and setting expectations high for this vibrant rural entertainer. Featuring Sumanth Prabhas in the lead role, the film promises a refreshing mix of friendship, romance and village-rooted storytelling, presented against the scenic backdrop of the Godavari riverbanks.

The teaser opens on a lively note, capturing the pulse of rural life with colourful festivities, energetic celebrations and carefree moments shared by a close-knit group of friends. These opening visuals immediately establish the film’s tone — cheerful, relatable and deeply connected to local culture. The narrative revolves around a group of youngsters fondly referred to as the “Oscarrrrr Gang,” whose bond forms the emotional backbone of the story.

Sumanth Prabhas is

seen as Raju, a spirited and fun-loving youth who values friendship above everything else. His performance in the teaser reflects natural ease and youthful enthusiasm, reminding audiences of the charm he displayed in his earlier outing. The actor appears confident and comfortable, carrying the film’s light-hearted mood effortlessly.

Making her Telugu debut, Nidhi Pradeep plays the female lead Maya. Though her screen time in the teaser is brief, her presence leaves a pleasant impression. The glimpses of romance between the lead pair hint at a simple and sweet love story that unfolds organically within the village setting.

The film also boasts a strong supporting cast, including Jagapathi Babu and Rajeev Kanakala, who lend depth and credibility to the narrative. Comedic elements are well-supported by Sudarshan and Raj Kumar Kasireddy, whose appearances suggest situational

humour rooted in everyday village life.

On the technical front, the teaser stands out for its visual appeal. The cinematography beautifully captures the lush greenery, riverbanks and festive atmosphere of the Godavari region, enhancing the film’s earthy feel. The background score complements the visuals, adding warmth and emotional resonance without overpowering the scenes.

Directed by Subash Chandra, Godari Gattupaina appears to be a celebration of friendship, youthful dreams and rural traditions. The teaser has been well-received on social media, with viewers appreciating its freshness, cultural flavour and feel-good vibe.

With its strong emotional core and engaging presentation, Godari Gattupaina is shaping up to be a wholesome entertainer. If the film delivers on the promise shown in its teaser, it could strike a chord with audiences across age groups when it arrives in theatres.

‘Vaammo Vaayyo’ Song Launch Adds Festive Spark to Upcoming Telugu Entertainer

The grand launch of the song “Vaammo Vaayyo” from the upcoming Telugu film Bhartha Mahasayulaku Wignyapathi has created a lively buzz in Tollywood, adding fresh excitement to the film’s promotional campaign. Unveiled in a colourful and energetic event, the song has quickly caught the attention of fans for its festive flavour and mass appeal.

Composed by popular music director Bheems Ceciroleo, Vaammo Vaayyo is a high-spirited folk-based number infused with vibrant rhythms and catchy beats. The song reflects strong regional influences and is designed to strike a chord with audiences during the festive season. Its energetic tempo and celebratory mood make it an instant crowd-pleaser, especially among mass music lovers.

The song is picturised on Mass Maharaja Ravi Teja, who once again showcases his trademark energy and charisma. His dynamic screen presence elevates the number, making it visually engaging and entertaining. Sharing the screen with him are leading actresses Ashika Ranganath and Dimple Hayathi, whose glamour and expressive dance moves add to the song’s appeal. The choreography, packed with lively steps and colourful visuals, enhances the festive atmosphere.

The launch event witnessed enthusiastic participation from fans and industry personalities, reflecting the growing anticipation around the



film. Clips from the song and the event have been widely shared on social media, with many praising the music, choreography and Ravi Teja’s energetic performance.

Directed by Kishore Tirumala, Bhartha Mahasayulaku Wignyapathi is being positioned as a wholesome family entertainer that blends humour, romance and relatable emotions. The film is expected to explore contemporary relationships while retaining traditional values, a combination that has generated curiosity among audiences.

Produced by Sudhakar Cherukuri under the SLV Cinemas banner, the film

features a strong ensemble cast and promises high production values. With promotional content being released at regular intervals, the makers are steadily building momentum ahead of the theatrical release.

The release of Vaammo Vaayyo has further strengthened expectations for the film, setting a celebratory tone and increasing excitement among moviegoers. As the release date approaches, the song is expected to dominate playlists and add to the festive mood, positioning the film as a promising entertainer for Telugu audiences.

Vishnu Manchu Launches ‘10 Minutes to 10 Crore’ – A Game-Changer for Emerging Filmmakers

AVAA Entertainment has unveiled an exciting new initiative for 2026, titled 10 Minutes to 10 Crore, spearheaded by actor-producer Vishnu Manchu. Designed to provide a transformative platform for budding filmmakers and storytellers across India, the project promises to redefine how fresh talent enters the cinematic world.

The initiative stems from Vishnu Manchu’s long-standing dedication to nurturing original voices in cinema. Rejecting traditional barriers and conventional entry points, 10 Minutes to 10 Crore emphasizes storytelling, creative vision, and merit above all. The concept is simple yet powerful: ten minutes of cinema has the potential to change a life. A brief story, told with clarity and passion, could open doors to opportunities previously considered out of reach.

Unlike standard competitions or industry contests, the program is structured as a carefully curated pathway for young creators. AVAA Entertainment underscores that impactful cinema is not about scale, budget, or industry connections, but about emotional truth, innovative



thinking, and creative courage. Emerging filmmakers will be evaluated on the strength of their ideas and their ability to communicate them effectively.

Vishnu Manchu, known for his hands-on involvement in cinematic ventures, has personally overseen the initiative. According to AVAA Entertainment, the pro-

gram has been designed with credibility, transparency, and fairness at its core, ensuring that participants—especially those outside mainstream networks—re-

ceive genuine opportunities to showcase their talent.

While full details of the initiative will be officially revealed on January 15, AVAA Entertainment has already issued a call to action for young storytellers and dreamers. The message is clear: stay alert and be ready to seize this unique opportunity.

The campaign tagline—10 minutes. One vision. A future waiting to unfold—captures the spirit of the initiative, highlighting the transformative power of concise, heartfelt storytelling. With Vishnu Manchu’s guidance and AVAA Entertainment’s backing, 10 Minutes to 10 Crore aims to empower a generation of filmmakers, challenging them to break norms and push creative boundaries.

As the countdown begins, India’s cinematic community is watching closely. This initiative could well mark a turning point for aspiring filmmakers who have long sought an equitable and merit-based platform to launch their careers. With innovation, passion, and opportunity at its core, 10 Minutes to 10 Crore is poised to become one of the most talked-about programs of 2026.

Teaser of ‘Asura Samhaaram’ Released by Legendary Actor Tanikella Bharani

The much-anticipated teaser of Asura Samhaaram, starring legendary actor Tanikella Bharani, was recently unveiled in a grand event hosted by the actor himself. The film is presented by Sri Sai Pravartika Boyyala and produced under the Sri Sai Tejo Celluloids banner by Sai Srimanth and Shabrish Boyyala. Kishore Srikrishna has directed the movie, while also handling the story, screenplay, and dialogues.

Tanikella Bharani, known for his versatility in over 750 films, plays the lead role in this project. Asura Samhaaram is described as a gripping village-based crime drama, blending suspense, action, and intense emotions. Alongside Bharani, actress Mithun Priya plays a key role, promising strong performances and an engaging on-screen dynamic.

Speaking at the event, Tanikella Bharani shared, “Asura Samhaar-

am is about the triumph of good over evil. Director Kishore Srikrishna has crafted a compelling subject. I play a detective in a village setting, which is a different character for me. Shabrish Boyyala and Mithun Priya have been extremely supportive throughout the production and shooting, which made the process smooth and enjoyable.”

Director Kishore Srikrishna highlighted Bharani’s unique portrayal, stating, “Tanikella Bharani will be seen in a fresh avatar as a village detective. We are confident that Asura Samhaaram will be remembered as a landmark film in cinema. Executive producer Mithun Priya played a crucial role in supporting the film, and post-production is progressing at a fast pace. We are planning for a theatrical release in March.”

Mithun Priya, the executive producer, added, “I have worked on several films before, but this is a



big project for me. Most of the shooting was done around Nellore, and the team gave their full support. We are eagerly looking forward to audience appreciation and blessings when the film releases in March.”

The teaser launch event was well-received,

with fans and media praising the intense visuals and storytelling promise of the film. With its rural backdrop, thrilling narrative, and strong performances, Asura Samhaaram is generating considerable buzz ahead of its release.

As the team gears up

for post-production and final preparations, expectations are high for March, when audiences will finally witness Tanikella Bharani’s compelling performance as a village detective navigating crime, justice, and morality in a gripping cinematic journey.

Nayanthara’s New Year Special Video Delights Fans, Creates Buzz Across Film Circles

Lady Superstar Nayanthara welcomed the New Year on a cheerful and engaging note by featuring in a special video that has quickly captured the attention of fans and film lovers. The festive clip, released to mark the beginning of the New Year, stands out as a rare and refreshing promotional appearance by the star, who is known for maintaining a low profile and staying away from routine publicity activities.

In the video, Nayanthara is seen in a relaxed and playful mood, conveying New Year wishes with her trademark grace and warmth. The clip blends humour, charm and festive spirit, offering audiences a glimpse of the actress in a light-hearted avatar. Her natural screen presence and subtle expressions once again underline why she continues to enjoy immense popularity across

South Indian cinema.

What makes the video particularly special is Nayanthara’s self-aware humour. She is seen joking about promotions, a clear nod to her reputation for selectively choosing public appearances. This candid and amusing approach has struck a chord with fans, who have welcomed the video as a pleasant surprise to kick off the New Year.

Soon after its release, the video began trending on social media platforms, with fans widely sharing and praising it. Many viewers appreciated the actress for stepping out of her comfort zone and connecting with audiences in a fun and festive manner. Comments highlighted her elegance, simplicity and the effortless way she commands attention even in a short video.

The New Year special video is also seen as part



of the promotional build-up for her upcoming projects. While details of her next releases are being closely guarded, the timing of the video has added to the excitement surrounding her film lineup. Industry observers believe such creative promotional content helps strengthen audience anticipation while maintaining the star’s unique image.

Nayanthara’s career has been marked by strong female-centric roles and consistent box office success. Her ability to balance commercial appeal with content-driven cinema has earned her a loyal fan base. The New Year video reinforces her connection with audiences, reminding fans of her versatility and star power beyond the big screen.

As the New Year be-

gins, the special video has set a positive tone for both fans and the film industry. With several projects lined up and renewed enthusiasm surrounding her appearances, Nayanthara’s New Year message has not only spread festive cheer but also reaffirmed her status as one of the most influential and admired actresses in Indian cinema today.