



## AP Cabinet Approves Key Initiatives for Industry, Jobs, and Infrastructure in Amaravati Meeting



TPN Bureau | January 08

**A**maravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu chaired a crucial Cabinet meeting at the AP Secretariat today, deliberating on over 38 agenda items. The session focused on boosting industrial growth, employment generation, rural development, and infrastructure, signaling the coalition government's push for economic revival. A major highlight was the approval for establishing the AP Logistics Infrastructure Corporation to streamline supply chains and enhance trade efficiency across the state.

The Cabinet also greenlit the AP Cluster Development Programme under the MSME sector, with an outlay of approximately 200 crore. This initiative aims to set up 45 MSME Common Facility Centres over the next five years, targeting direct employment for 500 people and fostering

small-scale entrepreneurship. Investment incentives took center stage, with the Cabinet endorsing decisions from the State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB) and industrial promotion boards.

Notable land allotments include 55.47 acres to Pioneer Clean Amps Private Limited in Chittoor district's Ramakuppam mandal for a project, and 64.67 acres to Radhika Vegetable Oils Private Limited in Vizianagaram's Rambadrapuram mandal for an oil palm processing plant. Additional allocations were approved for Reliance Consumer Products, Dozko India, and VSR Cirkan Industries.

The government also discussed extensions

for land payment deadlines (EOT) to accelerate grounding of investments. Excise policy reforms were on the table, with discussions on withdrawing additional retail excise tax on bar outlets and permitting microbreweries in municipal corporation limits, based on sub-committee reports. In education and welfare, approvals covered a new government degree college in Kotabommalai, Srikantham district, and 944.53 crore for distributing school kits to students from Class 1 to 10. Rural water supply received a major boost, with Cabinet nod for a 5,000 crore loan guarantee under the Jal Jeevan Mission to ensure potable water in villages. Power sector ad-

vancements included greenlighting non-conventional energy projects and CRDA Authority decisions. Aviation and manufacturing drew attention too: proposals for Hamsa-3 (NG) trainer aircraft production, MRVO, and a flight training school were discussed. Greenfield manufacturing got a strong push, particularly Shiridi Sai Electrics' massive investment project in Kadapa district, with SIPB approval for a 4,914 crore unit expected to create 5,000 direct jobs. Ramco Cements' investment proposal also received the nod. The government committed to providing power, roads, and industrial water infrastructure to support these ventures. These decisions underscore CM Naidu's vision for 'Swarna Andhra Pradesh' by 2047, prioritizing job creation, farmer support like value addition for oil palm cultivators and sustainable development. Officials expect these measures to attract more FDI and stimulate economic activity statewide.



## YSRCP Chief Jagan Meets Gopalapuram Activists, Slams Police Misconduct Over Goat Sacrifice Case



TPN Bureau | January 08:

**A**maravati: In a show of solidarity with party workers facing legal heat, YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) president and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy met with activists from Gopalapuram constituency on Wednesday. The meeting, held at his residence on the occasion of his birthday last month, highlighted growing ten-

sions between the opposition party and the ruling TDP-led government over alleged police overreach.

The activists, hailing from East Chodavaram in Gopalapuram constituency, had performed a goat sacrifice (pottelu bali) near a Plexi (likely referring to a Plexiglass enclosure or polling booth setup) during Jagan's birthday celebrations last month. Police swiftly registered cases against them under rel-

evant sections, possibly invoking laws on animal cruelty, public nuisance, or election code violations.

What escalated the matter was the activists' claim of being publicly humiliated—arrested, paraded on the road, and then taken away in a manner they described as "dramatic and demeaning." Brought to Jagan's residence by Gopalapuram YSRCP in-charge and former Home Minister Taneti Vanita,

the workers recounted their ordeal in detail. They alleged that police dragged them through streets in a deliberate show of force, drawing crowds and damaging their dignity. Jagan listened intently before issuing a strong rebuke against the authorities. "No one should fear," Jagan assured them. "The party's legal wing is providing all necessary assistance with ongoing cases. The government is weaponizing the rule of law.



## Andhra Pradesh High Court Slams Probe Agencies in Parakamani Theft Case, Orders Swift Action

TPN Bureau | January 08

**A**maravati: Andhra Pradesh High Court delivered a scathing verdict on Thursday in the high-profile Parakamani theft case, criticizing police officials for weakening the investigation and directing stringent departmental action against errant authorities. The court highlighted glaring lapses by CID and ACB reports, which clearly indicate that prime accused Ravi Kumar and his family members possess assets far exceeding their known income sources.

In a strongly worded order, the High Court clarified that Ravi Kumar qualifies as a government employee, underscoring the need for rigorous scrutiny. The bench pointed out procedural violations during Ravi Kumar's asset acquisition phase, involving TTD officials, board

members, police, and security personnel who flouted legal protocols. The court granted leeway for CID and ACB DGs to proceed strictly per regulations in the Parakamani incident probe.

It mandated departmental action against responsible officials from TTD, police, and related departments. Additionally, the court issued directives to CID to expedite the inquiry into the death of AVS Sateesh Kumar, emphasizing the case's gravity. Declaring its intent to oversee the investigation until the chargesheet is filed, the High Court invoked Supreme Court orders, urging CID and ACB to adhere to legal standards without compromise.

The bench expressed dissatisfaction with TTD's report on immediate reforms post-Parakamani, calling for innovative ideas to modernize the "kanuka" (offerings) accounting system. This development intensi-

## Amaravati Development Unstoppable Despite Jagan's Efforts, Says Minister Narayana



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**A**maravati: Municipal Administration Minister Narayana firmly asserted that no amount of opposition from former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy can halt the construction of Amaravati as Andhra Pradesh's capital. Dismissing Jagan's recent allegations as baseless propaganda, Narayana accused him of speaking without understanding the project's master plan.

Addressing a press conference here, the minister categorically refuted claims that the government is

building structures in riverbeds, which he labeled as "false propaganda." "They are filing court cases to stall work, but no construction can happen under those conditions anywhere," Narayana said. He urged political leaders to fully comprehend the Amaravati master plan before comment-

ing, criticizing "half-baked knowledge" and calling for clarity on terms like "riverbed" versus "river basin."

Narayana highlighted strong farmer support for the second phase of land pooling, noting that hundreds of acres were handed over to the government within hours. "Farmers are coming forward enthusiastically. Jagan is spreading lies out of jealousy seeing Amaravati moving ahead," he added. He warned that such tactics of misleading the public could reduce YSRCP's current 11 Legislative, and Kurnool as judicial which was struck down by courts. Recent environmental petitions alleging Krishna River violations have been filed, but the government maintains all work adheres to norms. Narayana concluded that Amaravati's progress is inevitable, urging opposition to support state development rather than indulge in "unfounded

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# Andhra Pradesh Braces for Rain and Cyclone Impact Over Next Three Days

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Amaravati: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a rain alert for Andhra Pradesh, forecasting light to moderate rainfall across the state for the next three days due to an emerging cyclonic storm in the southeast Bay of Bengal. As of Wednesday evening, the depression was centered about 570 km from Pottuvil (Sri Lanka), 620 km from Batticaloa (Sri Lanka), 990 km from Karaikal (Tamil Nadu), and 1,140 km from Chennai.

Officials warn it could intensify into a severe cyclonic storm by

Thursday. The cyclone is expected to trigger significant weather changes, particularly in coastal and southern regions. Light to moderate showers are likely on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, with heavier rainfall anticipated in Potti Seeramulu Nellore, Annamayya, Chittoor, and Tirupati districts. Cloudy skies with intermittent rain are forecast statewide, especially in south coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema areas.

IMD's latest bulletin confirms the system, currently a depression, will strengthen into a severe cyclonic storm



within 24 hours. Its influence direct or indirect could affect AP, with coastal districts facing the brunt. Gale-force winds of 40-60 kmph are possible along the coast, potentially roughening sea conditions. Ports including Visakhapatnam, Machilipatnam, Nizampatnam, Krishnapatnam, Gangavaram, and Kakinada have received Cyclone Alert No. 1 warnings.

Authorities urge caution: Fishermen should avoid venturing into the sea, coastal residents must stay vigilant, and low-lying area dwellers should prepare for waterlogging. "Monitor

IMD updates closely, avoid unnecessary outdoor movement during strong winds, and follow local administration advisories," officials emphasized.

Temporary halts to sea voyages are recommended for safety. Such northeast Bay of Bengal depressions frequently impact southern states during the winter-to-monsoon transition. Evolving conditions could alter the track, so real-time bulletins are crucial. District administrations stand ready for preemptive measures to minimize losses for residents, farmers, and fishermen.

## 9th Mr. Andhra Bodybuilding Championships Set for Visakhapatnam on February 23

TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Visakhapatnam: The Andhra Pradesh Bodybuilding Association is gearing up for the 9th edition of the Mr. Andhra bodybuilding championships, aimed at boosting physical fitness and sports enthusiasm among the state's youth. Scheduled for February 23 at Gurajada Kalakshetram in Visakhapatnam, the event will draw around 400 bodybuilders from all 26 districts of Andhra Pradesh.

Association President Eeshwar Rao and General Secretary Vadapalli Srinivas Raju announced the details during

ing a poster launch event at a private hotel on Beach Road. Under the aegis of Shiv Vizag Bouncer, the competitions will kick off at 5 PM, featuring participants showcasing their sculpted physiques across 10 categories.

Top three finishers in each category will receive cash prizes: 5,000 for first place, 3,000 for second, and 2,000 for third. The highlight will be the selection of 'Overall Champions' from the best performers across all categories. They will be awarded 1,00,000 for first place, 50,000 for second, and 25,000 for third, providing a significant incen-

itive for competitors. Key organizers include association representatives S. Rajarao, B. Kotireddy, and S. Babu, who are handling crucial responsibilities.

Shiv, founder of Shiv Vizag Bouncer, emphasized the event's role in promoting bodybuilding statewide. "We're committed to giving this sport the recognition it deserves and encouraging bodybuilders across Andhra Pradesh to participate," he said. He urged sports enthusiasts to attend in large numbers and make the mega event a success.

The poster launch featured live demonstrations of bodybuilding



poses, drawing media attention and setting an energetic tone. This annual spectacle not only celebrates athletic dedi-

cation but also inspires the younger generation to prioritize health and fitness amid rising lifestyle challenges.

Association leaders called for widespread support, noting the championships' growth over nine years as a

platform for talent scouting and discipline. With substantial prizes and statewide participation, the 9th Mr. Andhra

promises to be the biggest yet, reinforcing bodybuilding's place in Andhra Pradesh's sports culture.

### Land Acquisition for Vadarevu-Piduguralla NH-167 Turns Sour for Farmers in Bapatla

TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Parcheuru: The land acquisition process for the Vadarevu-Piduguralla National Highway (NH-167) has become a nightmare for affected farmers, who accuse officials of flouting norms and withholding crucial information.

Agricultural Land Compensation for Non-Agricultural Plots Sparks Outrage Adding to the grievances, several farmers revealed they had purchased lands specifically for non-agricultural purposes, such as layouts, yet officials are offering compensation only in the form of agricultural land. Fearfully, they alleged deception by sellers who failed to convert the plots to non-agricultural status before selling.

"We bought these as residential or commercial plots, investing our life savings. Now, forcing us back to farmland compensation is a massive loss," a sobbing landowner told the gathering. The farmers urged RDO Gloria to conduct on-ground inspections of their properties and classify them as non-

agricultural land for fair valuation. They warned that without this, they face severe financial ruin, as agricultural rates under-value their investments. "Sellers tricked us by not getting the layout approval or conversion done."

Officials must verify and protect us," they pleaded. The meeting exposed deeper systemic issues in the acquisition drive, including inadequate surveys and poor communication. While officials promised to review complaints, farmers remained skeptical, vowing to escalate if unresolved.

This controversy underscores challenges in Andhra Pradesh's infrastructure push, where rapid highway projects often clash with local land rights. Affected families from Upputoor and surrounding villages continue protests, demanding justice before construction advances.



### Bomb Threat Emails Disrupt Courts in Anantapuram and Eluru: Police Launch Probe

TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Anantapuram | Eluru: Panic gripped the Anantapuram district court premises today after receiving a bomb threat email, triggering swift action from police and security squads. The threat, addressed to a Record Assistant and the First Class District Additional Magistrate, spread alarm across the judiciary complex.

In a related incident, the Eluru Court Complex also reported a similar email around 1:35 PM, prompting identical emergency responses in both locations. Police sprang into action immediately upon receiving the alert in Anantapuram. Teams rushed to the site, deploying dog squads and bomb disposal units to conduct thorough searches of the entire court building and surrounding areas.

For safety, all personnel including judges, staff, lawyers, litigants, and visitors were evacuated as officers



combed every corner. Court proceedings came to a complete halt until clearances were obtained, heightening tension in the area. In Eluru, the situation unfolded similarly. The bomb threat email arrived during peak afternoon hours, jolting authorities. Police arrived promptly, coordinating with bomb squads for a comprehensive sweep.

Evacuations were orderly but urgent, with everyone ushered out while experts scanned for any potential explosives. No devices were found in initial checks, but vigilance remained high. The dual threats have sparked a full-scale investigation by Andhra Pradesh police. Officers are tracing the emails' origins, probing who sent them, and from where.

Cyber forensics teams are analyzing sender details, IP addresses, and content for clues. Authorities suspect these could be hoaxes aimed at disruption, but they're leaving no stone unturned.

amid rising concerns over judicial safety. This incident underscores growing worries about bomb threats targeting public institutions in the state. Anantapuram, located in the Rayalaseema region, has seen sporadic security scares before, but back-to-back alerts in two districts signal a potential pattern.

Eluru, in the West Godavari area, adds to the unease, as both courts handle high-volume cases involving civil disputes, criminal matters, and administrative petitions. Local residents and legal professionals expressed shock. "It's terrifying to think courts aren't safe anymore," said a lawyer from Anantapuram who was evacuated. Eyewitnesses described chaotic yet disciplined scenes, with police managing crowds efficiently. Operations resumed tentatively after negative search results, but enhanced security measures like additional patrols and bag checks—are now in place.

Police officials urged the public not to speculate and to report suspicious activities. "We are investigating all angles to ensure no real threat exists," a senior officer stated. More details on the email content and perpetrators are awaited as probes deepen.

Such threats strain resources and erode public confidence in institutions meant to deliver justice. In recent years, India has witnessed a spike in hoax bomb calls to schools, airports, and offices, often traced to pranksters or malicious actors. Andhra Pradesh authorities have ramped up digital surveillance post similar episodes, but today's events highlight vulnerabilities in email-based threats.

As the day progressed, both courts normalized activities under tightened protocols. The incidents serve as a stark reminder for bolstering cybersecurity in government setups. Investigations continue, with updates expected soon.

## YS Jagan Mohan Reddy Slams Coalition Government Over Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Project

TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Amaravati: Former Chief Minister and YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy unleashed a scathing attack on the coalition government, accusing it of spreading misinformation about the Rayalaseema Lift Irrigation Project (RLIP). Speaking at Tadepalli Palace on Thursday, Jagan described the project as a "lifeline" for the drought-prone Rayalaseema region, aimed at delivering much-needed water to parched lands.

He alleged that Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, from his perch in the CM's seat, is sabotaging Andhra Pradesh's interests for personal gains. Jagan highlighted Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's recent remarks as irrefutable evidence

of a secret pact between Naidu and Revanth. "Revanth's statements prove Chandrababu has put AP up for sale. They claim RLIP is unnecessary, but there's a grand purpose behind it," Jagan asserted.

He pointed out that Revanth publicly demanded the RLIP be halted, aligning with the coalition's narrative. Under his YSRCP government, Jagan said they had planned lifts to ensure water reaches Pothireddy padu only at 881 feet from Srisailam—securing 101 TMC allocations. "In 20 years, we've managed to bring all water just three or four times," he noted, criticizing the current arbitrary diversions. Delving into specifics, Jagan accused Telangana of exploiting Krishna River waters unchecked. "At zero



feet, they've built the Palamuru-Rangareddy project to lift 2 TMC. With SLBC, they're diverting 45 TMC. From 777 feet, their Left Powerhouse is emptying 4 TMC," he charged. He claimed Telangana operates powerhouses at Srisailam, Sagar, and Pulichintala, drawing up to 8 TMC daily through lifts and powerhouses leaving AP in distress. "We face shortages while they take water at will, without environmental

clearances for their projects," Jagan fumed. Jagan timed his outburst strategically, linking it to the ongoing 'Votes for Notas' audio-visual evidence against Naidu. "Chandrababu is tongue-tied because we've caught him red-handed," he said, noting that Telangana's lift works gained momentum right after YSRCP's exit from power. Nellore and Rayalaseema people now view Chandrababu as the villain, Jagan claimed,

urging them to recognize the coalition's betrayal. The former CM reiterated RLIP's critical role: a sanjeevani for Rayalaseema's farmers, ensuring equitable water from Krishna despite height challenges. He warned that Naidu's deals prioritize Telangana, stalling AP's welfare. "Our government envisioned lifts to drought bowls; they're killing it for political alliances," Jagan concluded, calling for public awakening.

## BJP MP Purandeswari Defends Viksit Bharat Garanti for Rozgar Scheme, Slams Opposition Misinformation

TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Rajamahendravaram: BJP Rajamahendravaram MP Daggubati Purandeswari made key remarks today on the Centre's newly launched 'Viksit Bharat Garanti for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Grameen)' (VB-G RAM Jee), accusing opposition parties of deliberately misleading the public. Speaking to the media after participating in several programs in Rajamahendravaram on Thursday, she emphasized that laws must evolve beyond being "statues carved in stone," noting that the Constitution itself has undergone numerous amendments.

Purandeswari highlighted reforms introduced to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarant

tee Scheme (MGNREGS), under which the VB-G RAM Jee operates. "We have brought changes to MGNREGS as well," she said, explaining that permanent infrastructure works were not happening significantly under the original scheme, necessitating updates. She pointed out delays in wage payments to laborers in several states and strong demands to link the scheme more closely with agriculture. "To achieve a Viksit Bharat, we need Viksit Gramins—developed villages," she asserted. Gram Sabhas to Decide Development Works The MP stressed the importance of community involvement, urging that all rural development programs be resolved first through gram sabhas. Recent amendments to the Em



ployment Guarantee Act mandate wage payments within 15 days, with penalties added if delayed, ensuring funds reach beneficiaries promptly. "These funds can also be used to support farmers and common people during disasters," she clarified. Under the revised funding model, the Centre will provide 60% of funds, while

states contribute 40%, fostering greater accountability. "This puts responsibility on states too," Purandeswari noted, citing misuse of funds exposed in West Bengal and Punjab. She promised a definite increase in work days and advised opposition parties to introspect. The amendments also allow temporary suspension of works dur

ing peak agricultural seasons to align with farmers' needs. Purandeswari's visit underscores the BJP's push to modernize rural employment schemes amid political debates. Opposition criticism has focused on perceived dilutions, but she countered that adaptive reforms ensure sustainability and real impact.

## YS Jagan Reignites Amaravati Capital Row Amid TDP-Led Revival Push

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Amaravati: Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and YSRCP chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has once again stirred controversy over the state's capital, Amaravati, accusing the current TDP-led government of constructing it in a riverbed and urging the Supreme Court to intervene. Speaking to the media at the YSRCP central office in Tadepalli on Thursday, Jagan dismissed Amaravati as a "so-called capital," claiming it lacks basic infrastructure like roads, water, and electricity.

"Capital is where the CM sits," Jagan reiterated, indirectly targeting Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. He vowed no permissions for buildings in riverbeds and mocked the project as unfeasible. This comes days after YSRCP Rajya Sabha MP and political secretary Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy stated the party has no objection to Amaravati as capital, highlighting internal flip-flops during widespread criticism.

The Amaravati saga traces back to 2014, when Andhra Pradesh bifurcated from Telangana, leaving the new

state capital-less. Naidu's TDP government surveyed regions and selected 28 villages around Thulluru in Guntur district, including Amaravati. Then-opposition leader Jagan welcomed the decision in the Assembly. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone, kickstarting works.

YSRCP's 2019 landslide victory led Jagan to announce three capitals: Amaravati (legislative), Kurnool (judicial), and Visakhapatnam (executive) for "decentralized governance. This sparked farmer unrest, as land donors who gave

33,000 acres felt betrayed. Protests, hunger strikes, and marches faced police hurdles; courts eventually permitted padayatras from Amaravati to Arasavalli. No construction occurred under YSRCP, and opposition leaders faced cases and arrests, fueling public backlash.

The 2024 elections delivered a crushing verdict: TDP-Jana Sena-BJP alliance won 164 seats, reducing YSRCP to 11—denying it opposition status. Naidu's government reaffirmed single-capital Amaravati, accelerating projects with central support.

Works are progressing rapidly between Vijayawada and Guntur. Jagan's latest barbs, contrasting his past support and Sajjala's recent nod, have sparked accusations of opportunism. Critics say he's undermining stability for political gain, even as Parliament considers a bill affirming Amaravati's legal status. TDP leaders dismissed the remarks as "desperate conspiracies," vowing to push ahead. Amaravati remains a flashpoint in AP politics, symbolizing development promises and regional divides.

## Andhra Pradesh High Court Directs ACB, CID to Probe TTD Parakamani Case Strictly per Supreme Court Orders



TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Amaravati: The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Thursday issued strong directives to the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Director General and CID, mandating them to adhere strictly to Supreme Court orders and proceed legally in the high-profile TTD parakamani (offering collection) case. The court also instructed TTD, police, and related department heads to initiate departmental action against errant officials.

These orders came during the hearing of the case involving accused Ravi Kumar and the alleged parakamani scam at Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). The bench criticized TTD and police for their "weak investigation" into Ravi Kumar's role in the parakamani irregularities. Court observations highlighted that CID and ACB reports clearly reveal

disproportionate assets held by Ravi Kumar and his family members, far exceeding their known income sources.

Furthermore, TTD officials, board members, and police failed to follow legal protocols while accepting assets from the accused, the High Court noted. In a related development, the court ordered CID to expedite the probe into the death of former AVSO Satish Kumar, emphasizing the case's gravity. "We will monitor the investigation until the charge sheet is filed," The High Court's intervention aims to enforce transparency and restore public trust in this sacred process. TTD authorities have assured compliance, but the court's firm stance signals ongoing judicial oversight. Political circles in Andhra Pradesh are watching closely, given TTD's significance in the state's religious and administrative landscape.

## JC Prabhakar Reddy Slams Kethireddi Venkata mireddy Over Rayalaseema 'Masculinity' Remarks



TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Tadipatri: Tadipatri Municipal Chairman and former MLA JC Prabhakar Reddy expressed intense outrage today over comments made by Dharmavaram ex-MLA Kethireddi Venkata mireddy questioning the "masculinity" of Rayalaseema people.

Speaking to the media on Thursday, Reddy condemned the remarks as an insult to the self-respect of Rayalaseema residents. "I am a son of Rayalaseema, and I have masculinity. But the Kethireddi family lacks it entirely," Reddy fired back sharply. He challenged YSRCP leaders like Kethireddi, who he accused of issuing threats about "settling scores after three years," to face him now instead. "Not after three years let's settle it today. Come if you dare," Reddy warned vehemently. Reddy labeled

ment on Rayalaseema's? "Escalating the attack, Reddy quizzed the origins of Kethireddi's cars and horses, implying ill-gotten gains. He praised Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's patience and development focus, criticizing YSRCP for petty politics amid Naidu's tireless efforts. "If YSRCP plays politics on water projects, farmers will teach them a lesson," he added. Reddy issued a bold challenge: Debate Rayalaseema projects publicly compare what Chandrababu did versus Jagan.

"If you have blood and guts, come to Tadipatri. I'm even ready to go back to jail if needed," he declared,

warning that underestimating Rayalaseema people would bring consequences. He urged Kethireddi not to invoke Rayalaseema's name again, or face the people's wrath. The exchange highlights simmering TDP-YSRCP tensions in Rayalaseema, fueled by personal barbs and regional pride.

# Manipal Hospital Vijayawada Felicitates Ambulance Heroes on World Ambulance Day

TPN Bureau |  
January 08:

Vijayawada: In a heartfelt tribute to the unsung heroes of emergency healthcare, Manipal Hospital Vijayawada hosted a special appreciation program today to honor ambulance drivers and owners on World Ambulance Day. The event, held at the Police Commissioner Office here, underscored the pivotal role these frontline workers play in saving lives amid medical crises. World Ambulance Day, observed annually on the second Wednesday of September but extended through local

initiatives like this one, celebrates the global network of ambulance services. In Andhra Pradesh, where road accidents and cardiac emergencies claim thousands of lives yearly, ambulance personnel serve as the critical first link in the chain of survival.

Their swift navigation through congested urban traffic, calm demeanor under pressure, and unwavering commitment often mean the difference between life and death. The program was graced by Sri S. V. Rajashekhar Babu, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Vijayawada, along-



side senior Manipal Hospital officials: Mr. J. Ramanjaneya Reddy, Hospital Director; Dr. Utham Sharma, Medical Superintendent; and Dr. Sri Charan, Casualty Medical Officer. Over 50 ambu-

lance drivers and owners from across Krishna district received certificates, mementos, and words of appreciation, recognizing their tireless efforts in the region's healthcare ecosystem. Sri

Rajashekhar Babu lauded their discipline, stating, "Ambulance drivers are among the most critical links in the emergency response system. Their alertness, road discipline, and commitment

ensure that patients reach hospitals on time. They truly serve the community during its most vulnerable moments." His presence symbolized the vital synergy between law enforcement and healthcare, especially in coordinating traffic clearances during emergencies a frequent challenge in bustling Vijayawada. Mr. J. Ramanjaneya Reddy emphasized the groundwork laid by these professionals: "Emergency care does not begin at the hospital it begins in the ambulance. Ambulance drivers and owners are true lifesavers who work

tirelessly, often under challenging conditions. This programme is our way of expressing gratitude and reinforcing our partnership with them." Dr. Utham Sharma and Dr. Sri Charan echoed the sentiment, highlighting coordinated protocols like the 108 emergency services and private ambulances that integrate with hospital systems. "Timely response from ambulances boosts survival rates by up to 30% in cases like heart attacks," Dr. Sharma noted, urging better training and equipment upgrades.

The initiative aligns with Andhra Pradesh's

push for robust emergency infrastructure under the TDP-led government, including expansions in the APAMBULANCE network. Events like this not only boost morale but also raise public awareness about prioritizing ambulance sirens and supporting these workers. Manipal Hospital's effort reaffirms its dedication to pre-hospital care, fostering collaborations that promise safer streets and faster lifesaving interventions. As Vijayawada grows, such recognitions ensure ambulance crews remain motivated backbones of the system.

## e-Office, a new Tech in Government



TPN Bureau | Jan 8

Vijayawada | Visakhapatnam's Andhra Medical College (AMC) and King George Hospital (KGH) are gearing up to switch to a full-fledged e-Office system as part of the Andhra Pradesh government's push for paperless, transparent, and faster governance. The state has directed all departments to implement e-Office from January 16, and the two major health institutions in Visakhapatnam have almost completed their groundwork. In line with government orders, AMC and KGH have launched a series of measures to ensure a smooth transition from manual file processing to a digital workflow. Officials have identified ministerial staff who will directly handle e-Office operations and have focused on intensive training and infrastructure strengthening. According to hospital authorities, four rounds of training sessions have already been conducted for 22 ministerial employees at Andhra Medical College and 67 staff members at King George Hospital. During these sessions, employees were briefed on how to log in to the system, process files digitally, and use electronic authentication tools. All concerned staff have been provided with user IDs and digital signatures, which are essential for secure online approvals and file movement. To support the digital shift, the institutions have procured new hardware. A total of 53 computers and six scanners have been purchased specifically for e-Office implementation. These devices will be deployed across key administrative sections to facilitate scanning of physical documents, uploading into the system, and end-

to-end electronic file handling. Hospital administrator B.V. Rama is personally overseeing the rollout. He has been visiting different departments, guiding staff on practical aspects of e-Office usage. Officials are being trained not only on sending files to higher authorities through the system but also on how to safely store, retrieve, and track files once they are processed and returned. Rama stated that all arrangements for e-Office have been completed and that the hospitals are fully prepared to adopt the system from January 16. He added that the training programmes have helped resolve doubts and address operational problems raised by employees. Officials believe e-Office will act as strong check on negligence and corrupt practices in file processing. Traditionally, some files especially those related to financial transactions—were kept pending for months, allegedly to extract bribes or for personal gain. With e-Office, every file will carry a digital time stamp at each stage. If a file remains pending beyond the stipulated period, the responsible staff member will have to justify the delay.

Senior officers will be able to monitor, in real time, where exactly a file is stuck and for how long. The move is also expected to reduce expenditure on stationery and physical record maintenance, as most processes will become paperless. Ultimately, authorities say, the e-Office system aims to deliver quicker decisions, curb arbitrariness, and ensure that citizens receive faster and better public services from key institutions like AMC and KGH.

Municipal Administration Minister Ponguru Narayana announced the decision at a media briefing, highlighting multiple key resolutions. The pension scheme, originally for landless families contributing to Amaravati's development, will now continue for minor children who become orphans upon their parents' demise. This ensures continued financial aid for those losing both parents, underscoring the

## Woman, Lover Plot Husband's Murder in Visakhapatnam; Four Arrested After Police Crack Case

TPN Bureau | Jan 8

Vijayawada | Visakhapatnam/Kommandi, January 8: In a shocking case of infidelity turning deadly, a woman conspired with her lover to eliminate her husband by hiring contract killers for Rs 50,000. She filed a missing person complaint to deflect suspicion, but relentless police interrogation unraveled the plot. The incident occurred under PM Palem Police Station limits, with Circle Inspector Balakrishna revealing the details.

Allad Nagaraju (40) from Konuru in Garivididi Mandal, Vizianagaram district, married Ramy (34) from Bonda-palli in the same mandal about 10 years ago. Eight years back, seeking employment, the couple moved to Visakhapatnam and set up home in K2 Colony

near Kommandi. Nagaraju worked as a security guard at Panoramic Hills, supporting their two sons aged eight and six. Trouble brewed when Nagaraju befriended Sanjeev Vasantharao (38), a treatment plant worker at Panoramic Hills from Kancherapalem, Dharmanagar. Vasantharao frequently visited their home, leading to an affair between him and Ramy. Viewing her husband as an obstacle, Ramy plotted his murder with Vasantharao. They hired two local men Balakrishna and Praveen alias Pandu from Dharmanagar for Rs 50,000. On November 27 last year, Vasantharao, Balakrishna, and Praveen lured Nagaraju to a lodge in Madhurawada Mithilapuri Woods Colony. They pried him with alcohol before

strangling him to death. Around 1 PM, they transported the body on a bike and dumped it in a stream near Bawikonda hill opposite Timmapuram. To avoid suspicion, Ramy gave evasive responses to Nagaraju's worried parents. On December 17, she filed a missing person report at PM Palem Police Station, then vacated the K2 Colony house and moved in with Vasantharao at a rented place in Bakkapalem.

Nagaraju's parents grew suspicious and informed police of doubts about their daughter-in-law. Under ACP Appalaraju's supervision, officers interrogated Ramy, who confessed to orchestrating the murder with Vasantharao. Police arrested Vasantharao, who led them to Balakrishna and Praveen.

The body was recovered from Timmapuram, identified, and sent for postmortem. All four accused Ramy, Vasantharao, Balakrishna, and Praveen have been remanded. "The case mystery is solved, and investigations continue," CI Balakrishna confirmed.

## Former Bank Manager Misappropriates Deceased Customer's Gold in Krishna



TPN Bureau | Jan 8, 2026

Vijayawada | Guntur : In a shocking breach of trust, a former manager of the Union Bank branch in Ganguru, Krishna district, has been accused of fraudulently claiming gold pledged by a deceased customer. Prabhavati, the ex-manager, allegedly listed herself as the nominee on Nagendra Babu's gold deposit, pawning it off after his death. The victim's family discovered the scam when they approached the bank to retrieve the assets.

Nagendra Babu from Bapulapadu mandal had safely stored his gold in the Ganguru Union Bank locker, trusting the institution's security. Following his untimely death, family members visited the

bank to release the gold. To their horror, Prabhavati's name appeared as the nominee. They were stunned to learn she had used Nagendra's death certificate to withdraw the gold, despite having no relation to him. Questioning bank staff, the family demanded answers: How did Prabhavati obtain the death certificate, and why did officials release the gold without verification?

This isn't Prabhavati's first offense.

The family alleges she has a history of cheating cases, including multiple jail terms. Prior Cheating Case Exposes Pattern This echoes a previous incident involving Prabhavati. K. Yogeshwar Rao from Marribanda village, who knew her since childhood, deposited gold at her bank. When lockers were unavailable, she suggested a gold loan, which he repaid in two months.

Demanding his gold back, he was lured to his home under false pretenses. There, she allegedly proposed marriage and claimed to have pawned his gold for interest income.

Upon rejection, she turned threatening. Yogiешwar filed a complaint with Penamalur police, leading to a cheating case against Prabhavati. Rising Concerns Over Bank Security Many depositors turn to banks to safe-guard gold and cash from home burglaries, viewing lockers as foolproof. Yet, recent scams erode this faith.

Bank employees, meant to protect hard-earned savings, are now accused of exploitation. The Ganguru incident highlights systemic lapses in nominee verification and oversight. The affected family has petitioned police for a thorough probe and justice. Authorities are yet to respond, but the case underscores the need for stricter audits and digital tracking in rural branches. Nagendra's family vows not to rest until the gold is recovered and culprits punished. "Banks should be sanctuaries, not scams," one relative said.

## AP Government Extends Pensions to Orphans in Amaravati; Second Phase Land Pooling Begins Wednesday

TPN Bureau | Jan 8

Vijayawada: In a significant move to support vulnerable families, the Andhra Pradesh government has decided to extend pensions for landless poor in Amaravati to orphaned minor children in those households. The Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) approved relaxing eligibility norms during its 57th Authority meeting on Tuesday, chaired by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu.



government's commitment to social welfare amid capital city projects.

In parallel, the second phase of land pooling kicks off Wednesday across seven villages—Undavalli and Endravalli—for Smart City infrastructure, Inner Ring Road, Amaravati Railway Line, and Sports City. Minister Narayana cited auspicious timing as the reason for starting promptly. "We'll acquire land for Seed Access Road

modifications

approved.

Additionally, proposals to develop Krishna River banks as a marina received the nod, boosting Amaravati's aesthetic and economic appeal. These decisions reflect accelerated momentum for Amaravati's revival under the TDP-led government, balancing development with welfare. Naidu's leadership in the meeting addressed diverse issues, from infrastructure to human resources.

## Vibrant Rangavalli Festival Lights Up Ongole with Mutyala Muggulu Competition



TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Ongole: Ongole transformed into a canvas of colors and creativity as the Quiz Engineering College campus buzzed with excitement during a spectacular Rangavalli festival. Organized by Andhra Jyothi and ABN in association with sponsors like Sunfeast Magic Mom's Biscuit (powered by), Swasthi Masala (taste partner), and Parimal Mandir Bharatvasi Agarbatti (prayer partner), the Mutyala Muggulu (pearl rangoli) competition drew an overwhelming response from women of all ages.

on Tuesday.

The event celebrated Telugu culture and traditions through intricate rangoli designs that mesmerized onlookers. Women adorned themselves in traditional attire, with one participant, Pudamitali, captivating the crowd in a shimmering muggu cheera (rangoli saree). Images of Indra Dhanasu (a mythical serpent) descending from rooftops symbolized prosperity, while designs blended ancient motifs with modern themes, conveying powerful messages on heritage, technology, and social values.

From young girls to elderly women, over 139 participants flooded the venue, transforming the college grounds into a riot of colors. Each rangoli was a masterpiece, meticulously crafted with pearls and vibrant powders, showcasing meticulous artistry and cultural pride.

Local sponsor Quiz Vidyasamstha ensured seamless execution, highlighting community involvement. Dr. Nidamanuri Surya kalyan Chakravarthi, head of Quiz Vidyasamstha, presented cash prizes to winners and gift hampers to every participant, emphasizing the event's role in preserving traditions.

In the fiercely contested competition, G. Lakshmi from Chitamakurthi clinched first place, followed by M. Pratyusha from Medarametla in Korisapadu Mandal (second) and K. Sujata from Addanki town (third).

Prizes included Rs. 10,000 for first, Rs. 6,000 for second, and Rs. 4,000 for third, handed over by Ongole Corporation Commissioner Dr. Koduri Venkateswararao and Quiz Engineering College Vice-President Dr. Nidama Nuri Gayatri Devi. Judges P. Sunitha-

rani, S. Shakuntala, and K. Jayalakshmi commended the participants for their innovation and skill.

"These rangolis not only beautified the campus but also revived our cultural roots in a contemporary way," said Dr. Chakravarthi. The festival underscored the enduring appeal of rangoli as a feminine art form, fostering community spirit amid Ongole's urban hustle. Andhra Jyothi's initiative, as reported on January 6, promises to become an annual highlight, inspiring more such cultural extravaganzas.

## Centre Discriminating on South Coast Railway Zone Gazette: Bhisetti Babji

TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Visakhapatnam: Lok Satta Party State President Bhisetti Babji sharply criticized the Central Railway Ministry for its alleged discrimination against Andhra Pradesh, pointing to the failure to issue the official gazette notification for the South Coast Railway (SCR) Zone even after 12 months since its inauguration.

Speaking at a protest rally near the GVMC Gandhi statue here on Thursday, Babji warned that this delay is causing severe losses to the state. He recalled the timeline of events to underline the Centre's inaction. In February 2019, the Central Government announced the creation of the South Coast Railway Zone headquartered in Visakhapatnam. In 2020, it allocated 170 crore in the budget for its development.

Fast-forward to January 2025: The Detailed Project Report (DPR) received approval, and on January 8 that year exactly one year ago Prime



Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the zone's office during a visit to Visakhapatnam. By June 5, 2025, Sandeep Madhur was appointed as the Zone General Manager (ZGM). The Visakhapatnam Metropolitan Region Development Authority (VMRDA) constructed a deck building, with the 6th and 7th floors fully equipped and ready for operations.

"Despite all these steps, the Railway Ministry has still not released the gazette notification today," Babji fumed. He questioned how employee transfers,

zone boundaries, and administrative functions could proceed without this crucial official document. "The Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Guntur, and Guntakal railway divisions are already lagging behind due to this limbo," he added.

Babji accused Andhra Pradesh's Union Ministers and MPs of failing to pressure the Centre for the gazette's release. "Visakhapatnam Railway Zone is like a kingdom without a king. Even after 12 years since the state bifurcation, we couldn't fulfill Schedule 8 of the Andhra Pradesh Reor-

ganisation Act, which clearly mandates the zone's establishment," he lamented, expressing deep frustration over unkept promises.

The protest highlighted broader concerns about the state's railway infrastructure. Without formal gazette approval, the zone operates in uncertainty, hampering recruitment, fund allocation, and project execution. Babji urged political leaders across parties to unite and demand immediate action from the Centre, warning of escalating agitation if ignored.

The event saw participation from Lok Satta

City President M.S.N. Moorthy, Gottapu Sudheer, I. Anantalakshmi, Rajeshwari, Mohanti, Thatraju Rajarao, Bora Ramesh, Nagaraju, Tummaganti Rammoorthy Rao, Soorappadu Akesh, and others.

They raised slogans demanding justice for Andhra Pradesh's railway aspirations. This development reignites debates on Centre-state relations in infrastructure, especially post-bifurcation commitments. As the one-year anniversary of the inauguration passes without progress, pressure mounts on the Modi government to act swiftly.

## Burglars Strike in Sri Kalahasti: Rs 15 Lakh Looted from Empty Home in Suravaripalle

TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Tirupati: In a brazen midnight burglary, thieves targeted a residence in Suravaripalle village under Sri Kalahasti Rural Police limits, making off with jewelry and cash worth nearly Rs 15 lakh. The incident, which occurred late Wednesday night, has left locals on edge amid growing concerns over rising thefts in the area. According to police sources, the victim, Prasad Naidu, a resident of Suravaripalle, had left for Chennai to attend his niece's wedding ceremony.

Seizing what they perceived as a golden opportunity with the house unoccupied, the burglars broke in under the cover of darkness. They ransacked the premises,

looting valuables estimated at around Rs 15 lakh, including gold jewelry and cash stashed in the home. The theft came to light Thursday morning when a domestic worker arrived for her daily chores. Shocked to discover signs of forced entry and missing items, she immediately alerted Prasad Naidu and the police. Prasad rushed back from Chennai, confirming the extent of the pilferage upon inspection. Police teams from Sri Kalahasti Rural station swung into action, reaching the spot promptly. They secured the crime scene and collected forensic clues with the help of a specialized team, including fingerprints, footprints, and any surveillance footage from nearby areas. A case has been reg-

istered under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code for house-breaking and theft.

Sri Kalahasti Rural Sub-Inspector Venkatesh stated that a detailed loss inventory would be finalized only after the family provides a precise list of stolen items. "Special teams have been formed to track down the culprits using all available resources," he added. Investigations are ongoing,

with police exploring local intelligence networks and checking CCTV from surrounding villages. This incident has sparked anxiety among Suravaripalle residents, particularly as it unfolded in the dead of night. "We're scared to leave homes empty now," said a local shopkeeper, echoing sentiments of fear over emboldened thieves targeting rural outskirts. Authorities have

urged the public to install basic security measures like alarms and report suspicious activities. The burglary underscores vulnerabilities in semi-urban areas near Tirupati, where rapid urbanization has outpaced policing resources. Police assure swift action, but residents demand enhanced night patrols to restore confidence.

## Vizianagaram College Hosts 5K Walkathon to Promote Youth Awareness on Drugs, Betting Apps, and Road Safety



TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Vizianagaram: In a proactive effort to educate youth on critical social issues, the management of Sri Chaitanya Degree & PG College organized a 5K walkathon here on Thursday under the auspices of the Vizianagaram district police department.

The event focused on raising awareness about the dangers of drugs, betting apps, loan apps, and the importance of helmet usage, urging participants to prioritize education, safety, and a secure future. Chanting slogans like "No to Drugs, Yes to Studies," "Wear Helmets, Travel Safely," and "Avoid Betting Apps, Embrace a Golden Future," hundreds of students, faculty, and police personnel marched through the city streets.

The walkathon was inaugurated by District Superintendent of Police (SP) A.R. Damodar, with Janasena

leader Avanapu

Vikram as a special guest. Addressing the gathering, SP Damodar highlighted the severe consequences of consuming ganja and other intoxicants. "These substances destroy lives, health, and futures," he warned, explaining how they lead to addiction, academic failure, legal troubles, and long-term health damage.

He outlined practical strategies for drug control, advising students to recognize peer pressure, report suspicious activities, and seek help from authorities or counselors. "Youth are the backbone of society, stay vigilant and say no to temptation," he emphasized. The SP also stressed women's safety, urging students especially girls to stay alert, share locations with trusted contacts, avoid isolated areas, and use helplines like 100 or 1098 for emergencies.

On road safety, he

issued a stern reminder: "Always wear helmets properly when riding bikes, follow traffic rules, and avoid rash driving. A small habit like this can save lives." The event saw enthusiastic participation from police officials, college correspondent Alluri Narayana Murthy Raju, Principal P.B.B. Lakshminarayana, teaching staff, students, and support personnel. College management expressed gratitude to the police for their support, noting that such initiatives align with broader campaigns to build a drug-free and disciplined youth. This walkathon underscores Vizianagaram's commitment to youth empowerment amid rising concerns over substance abuse and digital vices like betting apps, which have ensnared many young people. Officials hope it inspires similar drives across the district.

## Tragic School Bus Collision Near Palamaneru in Chittoor District: 9 Students Injured, 4 Critical



TPN Bureau | January 8, 2026

Palamaneru, Chittoor District: A horrific road accident occurred near a road in Palamaneru in Chittoor district when a school bus carrying special needs students was rear-ended by a lorry on the Bengaluru-Chennai NH-4 national highway. The incident took place late Wednesday night in Ponnuru Makulapalli under Gangavaram Mandal, leaving nine students injured, four of them in critical condition.

The bus belonged to the Kinder Care Diyyang Trust School. The students, all with disabilities, had just completed medical check-ups in Bengaluru and were returning home when the tragedy struck. At the time of the crash, 11 students were aboard the vehicle. Eyewitnesses reported that the lorry, traveling at high speed, collided violently with the rear of the bus, causing significant damage and overturning the vehicle partially.

Local police and emergency services

rushed to the scene, rescuing the injured and transporting them to Palamaneru Government Hospital for immediate treatment.

Medical authorities confirmed that nine students sustained injuries ranging from fractures to head trauma. Four remain in serious condition under intensive care, while the others are stable. No fatalities have been reported so far, but doctors are monitoring the critically injured closely. The bus driver and any accompanying staff escaped with minor injuries.

The NH-4 highway, a busy corridor linking Bengaluru and Chennai, has seen multiple accidents in recent months, raising concerns over road safety, especially for school transport vehicles. Authorities have urged stricter enforcement of speed limits and vehicle fitness checks for school buses carrying vulnerable children.

The Kinder Care Diyyang Trust School, known for supporting differently-abled students in the region, has yet to issue an official statement. Investigations continue, with forensic teams analyzing the wreckage.



with police exploring local intelligence networks and checking CCTV from surrounding villages. This incident has sparked anxiety among Suravaripalle residents, particularly as it unfolded in the dead of night. "We're scared to leave homes empty now," said a local shopkeeper, echoing sentiments of fear over emboldened thieves targeting rural outskirts. Authorities have

# Zohran Mamdani and the Perils of Performative Politics

As New York City's newly elected mayor, Zohran Mamdani inherits the daunting task of governing one of the world's most complex urban centers. With a population exceeding eight million, the city faces urgent challenges—soaring housing costs, strained public transportation, public safety concerns, and decaying infrastructure. Yet, instead of focusing squarely on these immediate responsibilities, Mamdani has drawn attention for an unusual and controversial fixation: Indian domestic politics, particularly the case of jailed activist Umar Khalid.

This preoccupation is striking not merely because it concerns a foreign country, but because it involves an ongoing judicial process entirely outside Mamdani's jurisdiction. Khalid is accused by Indian authorities of playing a central role in the 2020 Delhi riots, which left 53 people dead and hundreds injured. That an American municipal leader would repeatedly insert himself into such a matter—while grappling with the everyday governance of New York—raises serious questions about misplaced priorities and ideological grandstanding.

Mamdani's association with Khalid did not begin with his mayoral victory. As a junior member of the New York State Assembly, he publicly aligned himself with Khalid during protests against Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the United States in June 2023. At one such event, Mamdani read from Khalid's prison diary, portraying him as a persecuted scholar and student activist rather than acknowledging the grave charges he faces. This framing omitted the extensive case assembled by Indian investigators, including witness testimony, call records, and allegations of coordinated incitement through groups such as the Jamia Coordination Committee.

His advocacy escalated further after assuming office. In December 2025, Mamdani reportedly



sent a handwritten letter to Khalid, delivered through the activist's parents. The note—later shared online by Khalid's partner—expressed emotional solidarity and admiration, stating, "I think of your words on bitterness often... We are all thinking of you."

In India, the gesture triggered sharp reactions, particularly from leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party, who accused Mamdani of interfering in India's judicial process.

The controversy is sharpened by legal developments in India. In January 2026, the Supreme Court denied Khalid bail, citing "prima facie" evidence of his involvement in planning and mobilizing violence during the riots. The court's findings emphasized the seriousness of the charges under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. By continuing to champion Khalid without addressing these judicial conclusions, Mamdani appears to disregard the

victims of the violence and reduce a complex tragedy to a simplistic narrative of oppression that fits his ideological lens.

This selective treatment of facts is not an isolated instance. Mamdani's public record includes several statements that critics argue stretch or distort reality. During his political campaign, he claimed that Muslims were effectively "eradicated" from Gujarat following the 2002 riots, suggesting their presence had nearly vanished.

Census data directly contradicts this assertion: Muslims constituted nearly 10 percent of Gujarat's population in 2011—over six million people—and the number has grown since. The claim was dismissed by figures across the political spectrum in India, including Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who described it as a "blatant lie."

More recently, Mamdani claimed in January

2026 that he had been "briefed" on U.S. military strikes in Venezuela, condemning them as acts of imperial aggression. The assertion bordered on the absurd. As mayor of New York City, Mamdani does not receive national security briefings, nor does his office hold any authority over foreign policy.

His remit includes sanitation schedules, zoning laws, and public transit—not geopolitics. The dissonance between Mamdani's global rhetoric and his local responsibilities has not gone unnoticed. Social media users were quick to mock the contrast, with one X user noting that his primary job is ensuring the city's 10,000 daily tons of garbage are collected on time—not weighing in on international conflicts.

The criticism underscores a broader concern: a mayor seemingly more invested in symbolic activism than the unglamorous, essential work of municipal

governance. Mamdani's background further complicates his messaging. Born to acclaimed filmmaker Mira Nair and prominent academic Mahmood Mamdani, he grew up in elite intellectual and cultural circles.

He has openly acknowledged benefiting from nepotism early in his career, including landing a role in Disney's Queen of Katwe. During an October 2025 debate, former Governor Andrew Cuomo accused him of having "never had a job" outside politics, a remark intended to highlight what critics see as Mamdani's limited exposure to everyday economic realities.

Despite this privileged upbringing, Mamdani frequently condemns capitalism and "rugged individualism," advocating collectivist ideals while enjoying the advantages of inherited status. Political strategist Hank Sheinkopf summarized the contra-

dition bluntly, saying Mamdani grew up with "three silver spoons in his mouth." To critics, his lectures on equality ring hollow when delivered from a position of profound advantage.

By contrast, Mamdani's detractors often embody the self-made trajectories he disparages. Former Mayor Eric Adams rose from poverty in Brooklyn, overcame dyslexia, and built a career in law enforcement before entering politics. Adams has labeled Mamdani a "snake oil salesman" willing to say anything for power. Rapper and entrepreneur 50 Cent criticized Mamdani's proposed tax hikes on high earners, warning they would drive investment out of the city. Elon Musk went further, calling him a "charismatic swindler" whose policies threaten to lower living standards.

Mamdani's rhetoric has also unsettled New York's diverse communities. His defense of the

caption "globalise the intifada," which he framed as a call for Palestinian rights, sparked outrage among Jewish groups. The phrase is historically associated with violent uprisings that killed over 1,000 Israelis in the early 2000s. More than 850 rabbis condemned Mamdani's stance in a joint letter, arguing that it normalized language that incites violence and endangers Jewish New Yorkers.

His policy appointments have compounded these concerns. Mamdani named Cea Weaver, an outspoken communist, as the city's tenant czar. Weaver has described private property—particularly homeownership—as a "weapon of white supremacy" and argued for its seizure for collective use. Eric Adams responded sharply, pointing out that homeownership has historically enabled immigrants and minorities to build stability and generational

wealth. Census data backs this up: by 2024, Black homeownership stood at 45.9 percent and Hispanic homeownership at 51.4 percent, both rising steadily.

Critics warn that such ideological positions risk deepening racial tensions, discouraging investment, and worsening New York's housing crisis by undermining market incentives. They argue that dismantling property rights would erode, rather than expand, economic opportunity.

Mamdani's worldview also reveals a flawed reading of history. In his victory speech, he quoted Jawaharlal Nehru's famous "Tryst with Destiny" address, celebrating India's post-independence idealism. What he omitted was the economic legacy of Nehru's License Raj—a rigid system of state controls that shackled India's economy for decades, limiting growth to roughly 3.5 to 4 percent annually and fostering widespread corruption. Only the liberalization reforms of 1991 dismantled this apparatus, unlocking sustained growth and entrepreneurship.

By romanticizing a model that stifled innovation and rewarded rent-seeking, Mamdani appears disconnected from both economic evidence and America's own foundational values of free enterprise and individual opportunity—the very forces that enabled immigrants, including his own parents, to prosper in the United States.

Ultimately, Mamdani's mayoralty begins under a cloud of distraction and contradiction. His fixation on foreign ideological battles, selective use of facts, and embrace of radical economic ideas suggest a leader more committed to performance than pragmatism. New York City does not need symbolic crusades; it needs effective governance. If Mamdani continues to prioritize spectacle over substance, the city's residents—not distant causes—may bear the cost.

## Can India's Quick-Commerce Industry Survive the Cost of Speed?

India's fast-growing quick-commerce industry is facing its first serious reckoning. On New Year's Eve, more than 200,000 delivery riders across the country participated in a flash strike, refusing to transport food, groceries, and other essentials. While the immediate disruption appeared limited, the protest has exposed a deeper fault line in a sector built on speed, surplus labor, and fragile economics.

At the heart of the strike were familiar demands: better pay, safer working conditions, and basic dignity for gig workers. These issues, at least in theory, can be addressed by the platforms that rely on delivery labor. But the union leading the protest went further, calling for an end to the industry's defining promise—10-minute deliveries. That demand strikes at the core of the quick-commerce model and raises uncomfortable questions about whether India's obsession with instant gratification is sustainable at all.

Like many consumer habits, the desire for ultra-fast deliveries took root during the pandemic. Lockdowns normalized the idea that groceries and essentials could arrive at one's doorstep within min-

utes. In the United States and Europe, however, the model struggled once normal life resumed. Startups such as Fridge No More, Buyk, Jokr, and Getir either shut down or scaled back dramatically, unable to balance speed with profitability.

India, by contrast, doubled down. Instead of slowing delivery times, platforms made them shorter. Instead of limiting product categories, they expanded them—adding everything from pillows to prescription drugs. Companies such as Blinkit, Swiggy Instamart, and Zepeto poured capital into "dark stores," warehouse-like facilities strategically located in dense neighborhoods to shave minutes off delivery times.

The result has been explosive growth. Even traditional retailers and global e-commerce giants that initially hesitated—Reliance Retail under Mukesh Ambani, Amazon, and Walmart-owned Flipkart—are now investing aggressively. According to real-estate consultancy Savills Plc, the number of dark stores in India could triple by 2030, growing from roughly 2,500 today to around 7,500, as 10-minute deliveries spread beyond major metros into smaller

cities.

Yet the New Year's Eve strike has forced a public reckoning over the hidden costs of this speed. Delivery platforms insist they do not impose time pressure on riders. But workers argue that reality tells a different story. Late deliveries often result in poor customer ratings, reprimands from supervisors, or financial penalties.

In practice, riders feel compelled to take risks on India's already dangerous roads—narrow, congested, poorly maintained, and infamous for traffic fatalities occurring roughly every three minutes nationwide.

In cities like New Delhi, the hazards go beyond traffic. Riders spend long hours exposed to some of the world's worst air pollution, compounding health risks that rarely feature in company earnings calls or marketing campaigns.

Even before the strike, investors had begun to worry about rising scrutiny of gig-economy labor practices. India's new labor codes include provisions for social security benefits for gig workers, raising fears of higher costs. Since mid-October, shares of Swiggy Ltd. and Eternal Ltd.—the parent company of Zomato and Blinkit—have fallen by

roughly 20%, even as the broader Nifty 50 index remained largely stable.

The strike has only complicated matters further. If regulators push consumers to be more patient, or force companies to provide stronger worker protections, the economics of quick commerce could unravel before the sector ever becomes profitable.

Industry leaders are keenly aware of this risk. In a series of posts on X, Eternal CEO Deepinder Goyal dismissed the strike as the work of a "small number of miscreants" who were obstructing non-striking riders.

He emphasized that order volumes reached a record 7.5 million on December 31, suggesting the protest had little operational impact. At the same time, Goyal sought to address growing public concern. He argued that 10-minute deliveries do not encourage reckless driving, noting that Blinkit riders travel an average distance of just 2 kilometers at an average speed of 16 kilometers per hour. He highlighted company-funded insurance coverage and claimed that the average worker earns about 102 rupees per hour while logged into the app.

On paper, the math looks reasonable. A rider working 10 hours a day for 26

days a month could earn roughly 21,000 rupees, before fuel and vehicle maintenance.

"Now tell me, is this unfair?" Goyal asked, describing delivery work as unskilled, largely part-time, and accessible to anyone.

But the company's own data reveals the weakness in this argument. Very few workers actually log in enough hours to earn that hypothetical monthly income. Over a year, the average Zomato delivery partner worked just 38 days, at roughly seven hours per day. Only 2.3% worked more than 250 days annually.

If gig work truly offered a reliable pathway out of urban poverty, critics argue, far more people would attempt to maximize their earnings. Instead, churn remains extremely high, with millions of workers cycling in and out of platforms each year.

One explanation lies in India's vast surplus labor pool. With so many people seeking income, platforms rarely face a shortage of riders, even if individual workers are dissatisfied with pay or risk levels. When one group quits, another replaces it. From the consumer's perspective, the system works seamlessly—orders are picked up and delivered on time.

To supporters of India's e-commerce boom, this is simply capitalism at work.

Even if today's riders do not become middle-class, their children might. Interfering with platforms now, they argue, would only spread poverty more evenly rather than creating opportunity.

If critics contend this narrative glosses over a crucial distinction. The consumer-facing side of quick commerce is undeniably capitalist, driven by competition, innovation, and scale. The delivery side, however, resembles something closer to pre-capitalist labor arrangements. Riders supply their own vehicles, pay for fuel, absorb maintenance costs, and have no assurance of

continuity. Unlike even feudal sharecroppers, they lack permanence; a platform can suspend a worker's account without explanation, instantly cutting off income.

This fragility becomes even more concerning when viewed in a global context. By 2030, India's gig economy is expected to employ 23.5 million people—three times today's figure. China already offers a glimpse of what such scale can look like. Despite faster historical job creation, competition among delivery workers there is brutal. In cities like Beijing, missing a bathroom break can jeopardize a courier's chance of hitting a \$1,000 monthly income target.

In both countries, the conclusion is the same: left entirely to market forces, abundance for consumers often translates into precarity for workers. The only entity capable of rebalancing the equation is the state.

Without thoughtful regulation—covering social security, safety standards, and reasonable expectations of speed—the promise of instant delivery risks becoming a system where convenience is purchased at the cost of dignity. If governments fail to intervene, the road to ever-faster service may ultimately lead not to prosperity, but to a modern form of serfdom hidden behind the glow of smartphone screens.



## West Bengal CM Intervenes at IPAC Raid, Sparks Political Clash

Kolkata – West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee became the centre of a dramatic confrontation during a raid by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) at the residence and offices of Pratik Jain, chief of election consultancy IPAC. The ED has alleged that Banerjee, along with state police personnel, forcibly removed laptops, phones, and documents from the premises, obstructing an ongoing investigation into a coal smuggling and money laundering syndicate.

The matter has now reached the High Court, with the ED claiming that Banerjee, despite holding the office of Chief Minister, is "defending those involved in coal smuggling and money laundering" and obstructing justice. The court is expected to hear the case tomorrow.

### The ED's Allegations

According to the Enforcement Directorate, the searches were carried out at 10 locations—six in West Bengal and four in Delhi—in connection with a coal smuggling syndicate allegedly led by Anup Majee. The group is accused of illegally excavating coal from Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) leasehold areas in West Bengal and selling it to factories in districts including Bankura, Bardhaman, and Purulia. Investigators say a portion of this coal was supplied to the Shakambhari Group of companies.

The ED's probe has also uncovered a hawala network allegedly used to layer and transfer the proceeds of the illegal operations. Officials claim that one hawala operator facilitated transactions involving tens of crores of rupees to Indian Pac Consulting Private Limited (I-PAC), linking the consultancy firm to the money trail.

In a statement, the ED said the searches at Jain's residence and offices were part of its anti-money laundering operations under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The agency insisted



the actions were evidence-based, not politically motivated, and stressed that no party offices were targeted.

### Mamata Banerjee's Version

Banerjee, speaking to reporters outside Jain's residence, claimed the raid was politically engineered by the BJP ahead of West Bengal's assembly elections. She accused the ED of taking "party data, laptops, iPhones, tax papers, bank account details, and election strategy," calling it an "insult to the IT sector."

The Chief Minister said she went to Jain's residence after discovering the raid and seeing that he had not answered her calls. "We are gentle, we are sober, but if you give me pain, I won't stay quiet. IPAC is authorised by us and they are our team. If we build the data now, the election will be over," she said.

Banerjee also accused the BJP of undermining democracy, questioning whether it would be acceptable if opposition offices were raided in a similar manner. "In the name of SIR, 1.5 crore voters have

been deleted. If you have the courage, fight with us electorally Amit Shah ji," she added.

### Political Reactions

The raid has sparked a fierce political backlash. The BJP condemned Banerjee's actions, with Swapan Dasgupta posting on X, formerly Twitter, that the Chief Minister is "wilfully putting herself above the Constitution & Rule of Law" by removing allegedly incriminating documents.

The Opposition was quick to hit back. Congress leader Abhishek Singhvi called the ED raid "yet another chapter in the BJP's playbook of coercion," accusing the agency of weaponizing state institutions against political rivals. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav added, "The BJP is losing badly in Bengal. First proof!"

### The Coal Smuggling Case

The ED has stated that its investigation into the coal smuggling syndicate revealed a complex network involving illegal excavation, sales to industrial buyers, and financial transactions routed through hawala

operators. The agency is pursuing the trail under anti-money laundering laws to recover proceeds of crime and hold the perpetrators accountable.

The involvement of IPAC, according to the ED, is tied to alleged financial transactions connected to the syndicate, raising questions about the consultancy's role in the flow of funds.

### Looking Ahead

With assembly elections in West Bengal due early this year, the controversy over the ED raid, Banerjee's intervention, and the alleged coal smuggling network is expected to dominate political discourse. The High Court hearing scheduled for tomorrow will likely determine whether the Chief Minister's actions constitute obstruction of justice or whether her claims of political targeting hold merit.

As the battle unfolds, the incident highlights the intersection of law enforcement, electoral politics, and governance in one of India's most politically vibrant states.

## Justice Varma Challenges Parliamentary Inquiry; SC Reserves Judgment

The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved its judgment on a plea filed by Allahabad High Court judge Yashwant Varma, who is challenging the constitutionality of the parliamentary panel probing corruption charges against him. The case has attracted significant attention, given its implications for judicial accountability and the impeachment process of high-ranking judges in India.

A bench comprising Justices Dipankar Datta and S.C. Sharma heard arguments from senior advocates Mukul Rohatgi and Siddharth Luthra, representing Justice Varma, and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for both houses of Parliament. After extensive deliberations, the court chose to reserve its verdict, leaving the matter pending for a formal judgment.

### Arguments by Justice Varma's Counsel

Rohatgi and Luthra argued that the procedure followed in constituting the parliamentary inquiry committee was irregular and contrary to the Judges (Inquiry) Act of 1968. They contended that only the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha have the authority to admit a motion for the removal of a judge from office. They challenged the constitution of the inquiry committee itself, asserting that the process adopted bypassed statutory provisions and violated Varma's constitutional rights.

### Parliamentary Panel's Defense

Representing both houses, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta defended the formation of the parliamentary panel. Mehta argued that once a motion is admitted in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, the inquiry committee is to be constituted jointly by the Speaker and the Chairman, as



envisioned under parliamentary practice. He emphasized that the action was procedural and constitutionally valid, noting that the committee's role is to examine allegations of misconduct in accordance with the law.

During the hearing, the Supreme Court also observed that there is no legal bar under the Judges Inquiry Act preventing the Lok Sabha Speaker from setting up an inquiry committee to probe corruption charges against Justice Varma, even after a similar motion had been rejected in the Rajya Sabha.

### Background of the Case

Justice Varma, who was serving at the Allahabad High Court, was earlier repatriated from the Delhi High Court after authorities found burnt wads of currency notes at his official residence in New Delhi on March 14. The discovery triggered a series of inquiries into his conduct.

On December 16, the Supreme Court had agreed to hear Varma's plea challenging the parliamentary inquiry and issued notices to the Lok Sabha Speaker and the secretaries-general of both Houses of

Parliament.

Prior to the parliamentary action, then Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna had initiated an in-house inquiry into the allegations. A three-member committee was constituted, comprising Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice Sheel Nagu, Himachal Pradesh High Court Chief Justice G.S. Sandhawalia, and Karnataka High Court Justice Anu Sivaraman. This committee submitted its report on May 4, concluding that Justice Varma was guilty of misconduct.

After Varma declined to resign despite the findings, the CJI forwarded the committee's report and the judge's response to the President and the Prime Minister, setting in motion the impeachment proceedings.

### Parliamentary Proceedings

Following the in-house inquiry, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla admitted a multi-party motion for Varma's removal on August 12. Subsequently, a three-member parliamentary inquiry committee was formed, comprising Supreme Court judge Justice Aravind Kumar, Madras High Court

Chief Justice Manindra Mohan Shrivastava, and senior advocate B.V. Acharya.

Justice Varma has sought to quash the Speaker's action, the admission of the motion, and all consequential notices issued by the inquiry committee. His plea contends that the entire process is unconstitutional and violates the provisions of the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, which governs the removal of high court and Supreme Court judges.

### Implications

The Supreme Court's verdict will have significant implications for judicial accountability in India, particularly concerning the balance of powers between Parliament and the judiciary in impeachment proceedings. Legal experts note that the case could set a precedent for how parliamentary inquiry committees are constituted in future cases against sitting judges.

With the verdict reserved, all eyes are now on the apex court to determine the legality of the parliamentary probe, the limits of judicial review in impeachment-related matters, and the proper interpretation of the Judges (Inquiry) Act.

## Bengaluru Ranked India's Most Women-Friendly City for 2025



Bengaluru has been ranked the best city for women in India for 2025, according to a comprehensive index released by Chennai-based workplace inclusion firm Avtar. The study evaluated 125 cities across the country on how effectively they support women through a combination of social infrastructure and industrial inclusion initiatives.

The Silicon Valley of India claimed the top spot with a City Inclusion Score (CIS) of 53.29, followed by Chennai (49.86) and Pune (46.27). Hyderabad (46.04) and Mumbai (44.49) completed the top five, highlighting the ongoing prominence of southern and western metros in fostering women-friendly urban ecosystems.

The index is based on two main pillars. The Social Inclusion Score (SIS) measures factors such as safety, health, education, mobility, and overall liveability. The Industrial Inclusion Score (IIS) assesses formal job opportunities, corporate diversity and inclusion practices, skill development programs, and women's workforce participation. Cities that score highly on both pillars are considered the most conducive for women's long-term career growth and overall well-being.

While Chennai topped the social inclusion category, thanks to robust safety frameworks, access to quality education and healthcare, and strong public services, Bengaluru led in industrial inclusion. The city's mature corporate ecosystem, extensive formal employment opportunities, and widespread adoption of diversity and inclusion policies gave it a decisive edge over other metros.

Pune and Hyderabad demonstrated relatively balanced performances across social and industrial metrics, suggesting stronger potential for sustained female workforce participation.

In contrast, central and eastern Indian cities lagged behind on industrial

inclusion, highlighting limited formal employment avenues for women despite some improvements in social infrastructure.

Regionally, South India recorded the highest averages across both indices, followed closely by Western India. Cities that combine strong social infrastructure with inclusive corporate practices are identified as the most resilient environments for women's careers.

The study's findings underscore the importance of a dual approach: building safe, supportive urban spaces while simultaneously creating formal employment opportunities and promoting inclusive corporate cultures. Such a framework ensures sustainable conditions for women to thrive professionally and socially.

The top 10 women-friendly cities in India for 2025 are: Bengaluru, Chennai, Pune, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Gurugram, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Thiruvananthapuram, and Coimbatore.

## Vijay's Jana Nayagan Faces Sudden Delay



Thalapathy Vijay's much-anticipated film Jana Nayagan was postponed just two days before its scheduled release after the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) failed to issue the censor certificate in time. Despite the absence of certification, advance bookings had already opened in select Indian theatres as well as across international markets.

The sudden postponement has reportedly resulted in losses of nearly ₹50 crore for the makers and distributors.

Following the announcement, theatre owners have begun cancelling shows and processing refunds. However, the larger concern now revolves around the long-term box office impact of this last-minute delay on one of the biggest Tamil releases of the year.

### Strong pre-sales momentum

Anticipation for Jana Nayagan reached fever pitch after Vijay announced that the film would be his final acting project before entering full-time politics. As the release date approached, ticket demand surged dramatically. In Chennai, black-market ticket prices reportedly soared to as high as ₹5,000 per ticket.

According to trade tracking website Sacnilk, the film collected approximately

₹10.68 crore in domestic pre-sales, including blocked seats. Industry insiders believe that the actual opening-day potential could have been even higher due to the inflated prices in the unoffical ticket market.

Internationally, Jana Nayagan emerged as the top-performing Sankranti/Pongal release in advance bookings, outperforming other major releases scheduled for the same period, including Prabhas' The Raja Saab.

Overseas pre-sales reportedly touched nearly ₹32 crore for the opening day alone, with exceptional traction in markets such as North America, the UK, and Malaysia.

Box office uncertainty after postponement

The abrupt postponement is expected to significantly affect the film's box office prospects, particularly overseas. Trade experts suggest that international exhibitors may now be hesitant to allocate the same number of screens once the film eventually releases, especially with multiple festival releases competing for space.

UK-based distributor Ahimsa Entertainment revealed the scale of the disruption in a public statement. The company had planned releases across more than 260 theatres in the UK, with thousands of

shows and a record number of early-morning premiere screenings. Pre-sales had crossed 65,000 tickets and were trending at levels comparable to Vijay's blockbuster Leo. The distributor noted that the film was on the verge of setting new benchmarks before the postponement.

Industry analysts warn that the delay has forced a major reshuffling of screens in both domestic and overseas markets and could impact the credibility of Tamil releases internationally.

Shows cancelled, refunds underway

Following the CBFC delay, the Jana Nayagan team approached the Madras High Court seeking an expedited clearance. While the court has reserved its order, theatres have already cancelled scheduled shows and initiated refunds. Several cinemas have reassigned screens to The Raja Saab, which is slated for release on January 9.

Theatres across the globe have confirmed that refunds are being processed and will reflect in customers' accounts in the coming days. As fans await clarity on the film's new release date, questions remain over whether Jana Nayagan will be able to reclaim its original scale of release, particularly in overseas markets.

## Hasina Rejects Claims of Indian Involvement in Bangladeshi Student's Death



Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has addressed allegations linking her Awami League party to the assassination of student leader Sharif Osman Hadi last month. In an exclusive interview with NDTV, Hasina called Hadi's killing a tragic outcome of lawlessness and electoral violence under the interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus.

"The killing of Sharif Osman Hadi was a tragic and reprehensible act that was the direct consequence of the lawlessness and electoral violence that have consumed Bangladesh under the interim government," Hasina said. She added that, instead of preventing further violence, the tragedy had been exploited by extremist groups as a "political tool" to advance radical ideologies, inflame tensions, attack democratic institutions, and distract from the interim government's failures in maintaining law and order.

Hasina strongly rejected claims of Indian involvement in the killing, calling such assertions "deliberate and entirely baseless." She said these allegations were propagated by "fundamentalist forces" seeking to recast the Yunus government's shortcomings as foreign conspiracies. "Attempts to link this case to India are deliberate and entirely baseless. They are driven by fundamentalist forces that thrive on hostility toward Bangladesh's closest ally and seek to recast internal governance failures as foreign conspiracies," she stated.

The former premier warned that

Dhaka's "manufactured narrative" connecting Hadi's death to India risked radicalizing public discourse and undermining decades of trust between the two nations. "These views are not representative of the people of Bangladesh and are actively harmful to our country's interests. India is our closest ally, and our two countries have worked together over many decades to build trusted trade and diplomatic relations and ensure the stability of our region," she added.

Sharif Osman Hadi, a prominent student leader during Bangladesh's 2024 protests, was shot in the head by masked gunmen in Dhaka on December 12, 2025. He died six days later at a hospital in Singapore. Hadi had risen to prominence during student-led movements that contributed to the end of Hasina's rule.

Following his death, violent mobs in Dhaka attacked media offices, including Prothom Alo and Daily Star, and targeted cultural organizations like Chhayanat and Udichi Shilpi Goshthi. A Hindu factory worker was also lynched in central Mymensingh. Despite the widespread unrest, Hasina criticized the Yunus administration for failing to take decisive security measures or hold perpetrators accountable.

She concluded that the interim government's handling of both domestic security and foreign policy was "short-sighted and highly dangerous," emphasizing that Hadi's killing should not be used to distort Bangladesh's relations with India.

## US May Tax Countries Buying Russian Energy by 500%



WASHINGTON — U.S. President Donald Trump has reportedly given his support to a bipartisan Russia Sanctions Bill that could penalize countries, including India, China, and Brazil, for purchasing Russian oil, according to Republican Senator Lindsey Graham. The legislation, co-authored by Graham and Democratic Senator Richard Blumenthal, aims to weaken Moscow economically as the Trump administration continues to pursue a negotiated settlement to the war in Ukraine.

The bill would grant the President authority to impose tariffs and secondary sanctions of up to 500 percent on nations that knowingly buy Russian oil, gas, uranium, or other strategic exports. The measure is intended to deprive Russian President Vladimir Putin of funding for his military operations in Ukraine.

Graham, a prominent defense hawk, said he met with Trump at the White House on Wednesday, where the President extended his support for the legislation, which has been under development for several months. A White House official also confirmed the endorsement to the Associated Press.

"This will be well-timed, as Ukraine is making concessions for peace and Putin is all talk, continuing to kill the innocent," Graham said in a statement.

### Legislative Timeline

A Senate vote on the bill could occur as early as next week, although the schedule remains uncertain. The

Senate is expected to take up a scaled-back government funding package that the House is currently considering. A Senate recess for Martin Luther King Jr. Day follows shortly afterward.

The legislation has garnered dozens of co-sponsors in the Senate. A companion bill in the House has been drafted by Republican Representative Brian Fitzpatrick. The White House has indicated that some revisions may be necessary to provide flexibility for the President in applying the sanctions, though details of any adjustments remain unclear.

### Strategic Context

The sanctions package comes as the Trump administration works to finalize a peace deal to end the nearly four-year-long conflict in Ukraine. Special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law, are leading the negotiations.

If enacted, the bill could have wide-reaching implications for international trade, potentially affecting major Russian trading partners. The legislation reflects growing bipartisan consensus in Congress that economic pressure is a crucial tool to weaken Moscow and support Ukraine in its ongoing struggle against Russian aggression.

The Trump-backed bill represents a significant escalation in U.S. efforts to curb Russia's revenue streams while signaling strong support for Ukraine, even as the administration explores diplomatic solutions to the conflict.

### Legislative Timeline

A Senate vote on the bill could occur as early as next week, although the schedule remains uncertain. The

# Notorious CIA Double Agent Aldrich Ames Dead at 84



Aldrich Ames, one of the most damaging spies in American history, has died in federal prison at the age of 84. A former senior CIA officer, Ames betrayed the United States for nearly a decade by selling its deepest intelligence secrets to the Soviet Union and, later, to Russia.

For years, Ames lived a life that far exceeded his government salary. He maintained Swiss bank accounts, drove a Jaguar, and ran up tens of thousands of dollars in credit-card debt—all while working in the CIA's counterintelligence division. That double life came crashing down in February 1994, when he was arrested outside his home in Arlington, Virginia, and quickly confessed.

On April 28, 1994, standing before a U.S. court, Ames admitted that he had handed Moscow "virtually all" of the Soviet agents known to him, along with a "huge quantity" of classified material. When asked why he committed

espionage, he cited money problems, calling his motivations "the basest" and driven by "immediate and continuing" financial pressures. Over nine years, he received more than \$2.5 million for his betrayal.

### A Troubling Career Path

Born in 1941, Aldrich Ames joined the CIA in 1962 and spent more than three decades with the agency, much of it in counterintelligence—the very unit responsible for identifying and neutralizing foreign spies. Despite chronic alcoholism, poor job performance, and serious lapses in judgment, Ames steadily rose through the ranks.

His career included alarming incidents that, in hindsight, should have raised red flags. On one occasion, he left a briefcase filled with classified documents on a subway. Nevertheless, he was eventually appointed head of the CIA's Soviet counterintelligence branch, a position that granted him near-unrestricted access to the

agency's most sensitive information.

### Selling Secrets to the Enemy

By 1985, Ames was drowning in financial trouble. A costly divorce from his first wife and growing expenses associated with his second wife, Rosario, pushed him toward espionage. In April of that year, he walked into the Soviet Embassy in Washington and offered the names of CIA agents operating inside the USSR.

From that moment, the damage was catastrophic. Ames routinely delivered plastic-wrapped classified documents to his KGB handlers, revealing surveillance techniques, intelligence operations, and the identities of American assets. Entire CIA networks inside the Soviet Union were systematically dismantled.

### Human Cost of the Betrayal

The consequences were brutal. Numerous agents were arrested, tortured, and executed. Among the most prominent was General Dmitri Polyakov, a senior Soviet military officer who had secretly worked for the CIA for decades.

British intelligence narrowly avoided similar losses. Oleg Gordievsky, a KGB colonel secretly spying for MI6, later recalled realizing that Ames had likely passed along information that could have exposed him. "Everything, all the new answers of my information, he must have passed to the KGB," Gordievsky said.

### The Long Hunt for a Mole

For years, Ames evaded suspicion while flaunting his wealth. On a modest CIA salary of about \$60,000, he purchased a \$540,000 home, luxury vehicles, and paid for expensive medical procedures for his wife. Meanwhile, U.S. intelligence operations in the Soviet Union were mysteriously collapsing.

By the early 1990s, the

CIA and FBI recognized that a mole was operating at the highest levels. A joint counterintelligence task force was formed, and evidence slowly began pointing to Ames. On February 21, 1994, he and Rosario were arrested.

### Fallout and Legacy

Ames pleaded guilty to espionage and tax evasion in exchange for avoiding the death penalty. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole, while Rosario served five years. The scandal rocked the CIA, prompting the resignation of then-director James Woolsey and a sweeping internal overhaul under his successor, John Deutch. The case also strained already fragile U.S.-Russia relations in the post-Cold War era.

Aldrich Ames's legacy remains a stark reminder of how greed, negligence, and institutional failure can combine to produce one of the most devastating intelligence breaches in American history.

## ICE Officer Kills Woman in Minneapolis, Sparks Mass Protests



MINNEAPOLIS — A U.S. immigration enforcement officer shot and killed a woman on the streets of Minneapolis Wednesday, triggering mass protests and sharp criticism from local leaders who rejected federal claims that she posed a domestic terrorism threat.

The victim, identified by local media as 37-year-old Renee Nicole Good, was reportedly shot at point-blank range after federal agents surrounded her vehicle. Authorities said she had blocked their path, prompting the officer to open fire. Video footage captured the moment a masked Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent fired three shots into Good's Honda SUV, which then careened out of control and collided with stationary vehicles. Onlookers could be heard shouting at federal officers as the scene unfolded. Good's bloodied body was later seen slumped inside the crashed vehicle.

The Trump administration quickly described Good's actions as an attempted attack on ICE agents. "She then proceeded to weaponize her vehicle," said Department of Homeland Security (DHS) chief Kristi Noem, calling the incident "domestic terrorism." DHS added that Good had been impeding ICE's work throughout the day.

However, Minneapolis

Mayor Jacob Frey sharply rejected the federal account, calling the claims "bullshit" and demanding that ICE leave the city. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz echoed concerns over the federal response, labeling it "propaganda" and promising a thorough and expeditious state investigation.

### Protests and Public Response

The shooting prompted thousands of protesters to take to the streets of Minneapolis, braving freezing temperatures and holding signs reading "ICE out of MPLS." The demonstrations came amid ongoing local opposition to federal immigration enforcement, which has intensified under the Trump

administration. Witnesses described a chaotic and grisly scene. Brandon Hewitt, who captured video of the aftermath, said he heard three gunshots and saw Good's body being loaded into an ambulance. Another witness told FOX9 that the surviving passenger exited the vehicle covered in blood, and a man claiming to be a doctor was initially denied access to assist Good.

Good's mother, Donna Ganger, told the Minnesota Star Tribune that her daughter was "probably terrified" and had no involvement in any violent activity.

### Federal Enforcement Context

ICE has been at the fore-

front of President Trump's immigration crackdown, which aims to detain and deport millions of undocumented migrants. DHS launched an aggressive recruitment campaign last summer to add 10,000 new ICE agents to the existing 6,000-member force, sparking concerns over training and oversight.

According to Noem, federal officers in Minneapolis numbered up to 2,000 as part of immigration enforcement sweeps. The shooting comes amid broader tensions between federal authorities and citizens opposing aggressive deportation policies. Earlier incidents include the September killing of an undocumented immigrant in Chicago by an ICE officer after the man allegedly tried to resist detention by driving into the officer.

ICE has defended its officers, stating that the violence against agents is a direct consequence of "constant attacks and demonization." Noem also noted that the officer involved in Wednesday's shooting had previously been rammed and dragged during a June confrontation with an anti-ICE protester.

### Aftermath and Investigation

The ICE officer who fired the shots was treated at a local hospital and released. Local and federal authorities are reviewing the incident, while Minneapolis and Minnesota officials vow to ensure accountability. The case has intensified scrutiny over ICE operations and raised questions about the balance between public safety, federal authority, and citizens' rights in cities resisting aggressive immigration enforcement.

The Minneapolis community remains deeply divided, with residents and activists condemning what they view as excessive use of force, while federal officials maintain that officers acted in self-defense. The investigation is ongoing, and protests continue as tensions over immigration policy in the city show no signs of easing.

## Banks' Treasury Income Expected to Remain Flat in Q3 Amid Yield Hardening, RBI Support

Banks' treasury income is expected to remain largely steady in the third quarter of the current financial year, as modest hardening in government bond yields offsets gains from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Open Market Operation (OMO) purchases, according to treasury heads at leading banks.

Benchmark government bond yields rose by 10-12 basis points during the quarter, pressuring banks' treasury book valuations, particularly in the available-for-sale (AFS) segment. This increase in yields led to mark-to-market stress, limiting the potential for valuation-led gains.

However, RBI's OMO purchase programme, which injected around Rs 1.5 lakh crore of durable liquidity into the banking system, helped cap losses and offered selective trading opportunities. Public sector banks, typically active participants in OMOs, were able to partly offset the impact of yield hardening by selling securities to the central bank. The RBI conducted three major OMO purchases in December 2025, amounting to Rs 50,000 crore each on December 14, 18, and 29.

"Bond yields moved within a narrow range during the quarter, so losses were limited, but there weren't major opportunities to book large profits," said Balasubramanian R, Head of Treasury at Dhanlaxmi Bank. "Compared to Q2, there is no



significant downside, but only marginal trading gains are expected."

Some banks also booked gains by shifting securities from their held-to-maturity (HTM) portfolios into OMOs, partially mitigating valuation pressures in the AFS book. Additionally, coupon inflows from Government of India (GoI) and state development loan (SDL) securities provided further support to treasury income. "Interest income is expected to rise, as many coupon payments from GoI and SDL securities were scheduled during this quarter," Balasubramanian

added.

Despite these supports, treasury performance is likely to vary across banks. Lenders with larger AFS holdings may face valuation challenges, while those with more flexible portfolios could benefit from OMO-related gains.

"The AFS book will certainly face challenges in terms of realizable value. Some of this will be offset by banks that participated in OMOs and realised HTM gains, but overall, industry-level results won't be very strong," said Alok Singh, Group Head - Treasury at CSB Bank.

V. Ramachandra Reddy, DGM and Head of Treasury at Karur Vysya Bank, echoed this view, noting that RBI's liquidity infusion helped mitigate the negative impact of rising yields. "Active participation in OMOs, especially by PSU banks, is likely to support trading gains and improve treasury income despite yield hardening," he said, adding that liquidity comfort and strategic positioning in investment books should aid profitability.

A report by Systematix Institutional Equities indicated that other income growth for banks would vary significantly: Axis Bank is expected to see a 12.6% year-on-year rise, Bank of India 21%, Bank of Maharashtra 8.7%, and HDFC Bank 7.4%. Conversely, IndusInd Bank's other income is projected to decline 28.6%, while Bank of Baroda may see a 1.1% drop.

The report also noted that, for Bank of India, sequential fee income is expected to align with advances growth, but treasury income could be lower due to hardening of average yields, reflecting the mixed outlook across the sector.

Overall, the combination of modest yield pressures and RBI liquidity support suggests that banks' treasury income in Q3 will remain largely flat, with gains and losses balancing out across different segments and lenders.

## Nifty Slides Below 26,000 as Bears Dominate; Sensex Drops 780 Points Amid Global and Tariff Concerns

Indian equity markets continued their losing streak for the fourth consecutive session on January 8, with the Nifty slipping close to the 25,850 level amid broad-based selling, persistent foreign institutional investor (FII) outflows, rising geopolitical tensions, and concerns over potential US tariffs.

Tracking weak global cues, domestic markets opened on a subdued note, with the Nifty hovering around 26,100. Sustained profit booking throughout the session dragged the index to an intraday low of 25,858.45. At close, the Sensex fell 780.18 points, or 0.92 percent, to 84,180.96, while the Nifty dropped 263.90 points, or 1.01 percent, to 25,876.85. Broader indices underperformed, with the BSE Midcap and Smallcap indices each losing around 2 percent.

Sectoral trends were broadly negative, with metals, oil & gas, power, PSU banks, and capital goods shedding 2-3 percent. Top Nifty losers included Hindalco Industries, ONGC, Jio Financial, Wipro, and Tech Mahindra, while gainers were limited to ICICI Bank, Eterna, SBI Life Insurance, and Bharat Electronics.

Export-oriented stocks faced heavy pressure amid concerns over potential 500 percent US



tariff sanctions, with Gokaldas Exports, K.P.R. Mill, Pearl Global Industries, Apex Frozen Foods, and Avanti Feeds falling 4-9 percent. Hindustan Zinc declined 6 percent after silver prices dropped below Rs 2.5 lakh/kg. Meesho fell 4 percent following the GM-Business resignation, and Angel One dropped 2 percent as the board prepared to consider a stock

split.

Over 180 stocks, including Jyothy Labs, Sapphire Foods, IRCTC, Jubilant Foodworks, Colgate Palmolive, Page Industries, Vedant Fashions, United Breweries, and Whirlpool, hit 52-week lows, while more than 100 stocks, including India Cements, AIA Engineering, Eicher Motors, Axis Bank, Bajaj Auto, Polycab, MCX India, and NMDC,

touched 52-week highs.

Technically, the Nifty has broken below its rising trendline and the psychological 26,000 mark, closing below its 50-day exponential moving average (50-EMA) for the first time in three months, signaling a bearish shift. A rising India VIX also points to heightened volatility and panic among investors. Analysts suggest that selling pressure may continue unless the Nifty regains the 26,000-26,100 resistance zone. Key support levels are seen at 25,700 and 25,550, while the immediate resistance remains near 26,000-26,100, coinciding with the 20-EMA.

The bearish sentiment has negated last week's bullish Symmetrical Triangle breakout, with prices slipping below last week's low. The breakdown from the trendline connecting higher bottoms of November and December, along with the close below the 50-DEMA, further reinforces the negative momentum.

Volatility is expected to remain elevated in the near term, particularly amid ongoing geopolitical tensions and concerns over fresh tariffs. Traders are advised to exercise caution and avoid aggressive positions until global and domestic market cues stabilize.

## Sebi Overhauls Stockbroker Rules to Simplify Compliance and Boost Ease of Doing Business

In a major overhaul, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has revamped its more than three-decade-old stockbroker regulations, replacing the Sebi (Stock Brokers) Regulations, 1992 with the updated Sebi (Stock Brokers) Regulations, 2026. The move is aimed at simplifying compliance, promoting ease of doing business, and aligning stockbrokers' activities with other financial regulators.

The new regulations streamline the legal framework, remove outdated provisions, and introduce clearer definitions. One significant change allows stockbrokers to conduct activities under the regulatory framework of other financial sector regulators or specified authorities, with such activities falling under the purview of the respective regulator.

Sebi has restructured the regulations into eleven chapters covering all major aspects of stockbroker operations, from underwriting and professional conduct to proprietary trading. Redundant schedules have been removed, while essential content has been integrated into the main chapters to improve read-



ability and understanding.

Several key definitions have been updated for clarity. "Proprietary trading" now explicitly refers to trading by a stockbroker in its own account across any segment of a recognized stock exchange, while a "proprietary trading member" is defined as a stockbroker whose trades are solely proprietary in nature.

The overhaul also introduces measures to enhance compliance efficiency. Stockbrokers can now maintain books of ac-

counts electronically, and joint inspections by Sebi, stock exchanges, clearing corporations, or depositories are permitted. Brokers are required to inform exchanges about the location of their records, ensuring transparency and ease of monitoring.

The new regulations remove outdated provisions, such as those related to physical delivery of shares, the Forward Market Commission, and sub-brokers, reflecting the modernized structure of securities markets.

Sebi's board had approved the regulatory overhaul in December 2025, highlighting that the simplification reduces complexity for market participants. The new draft reduces the length of the regulations from 59 pages to 29, while cutting the word count from 18,846 to 9,073 words, making the framework more accessible and easier to interpret.

With these changes, Sebi aims to make regulatory compliance simpler, reduce redundancy, and ensure that stockbrokers operate under a clear and cohesive framework while continuing to uphold investor protection and market integrity.

Gabion Technologies India, a manufacturer of gabions, rockfall protection nettings, and geosynthetic materials, is witnessing overwhelming demand for its Initial Public Offering (IPO), which closes today, January 8, 2026. The company's maiden public share sale, valued at ₹29.16 crore, has already been oversubscribed by over 300 times, reflecting strong investor interest.

According to BSE data as of 11:02 AM on January 8, the IPO had been subscribed 303.05 times overall. Non-institutional investors (NIIs) and retail investors are driving the surge, with both categories oversubscribing their respective portions by more than 400 times. NIIs have recorded the highest demand, oversubscribing their reserved portion by 412.86 times, while retail investors followed closely at 406.35 times. Qualified institutional buyers (QIBs) showed relatively lower interest but still oversubscribed their allocation by 9.99 times.

The positive sentiment is also visible in the grey market, where unlisted shares of Gabion Technologies are reportedly trading at a premium. Market sources indicate a grey market premium (GMP) of ₹30 per share, or roughly 37% above the upper end of the IPO price band of ₹81 per share.

**IPO Structure and Pricing**  
Gabion Technologies' IPO is a fully fresh issue of 3.6 million equity shares, with no offer-for-sale component. The price band is set between ₹76 and ₹81

## US Sanctions Bill Sparks Sell-Off in India's Export-Oriented Textile and Shrimp Stocks



Shares of India's export-driven textile and shrimp companies fell sharply on January 8, following news that US President Donald Trump had approved a bipartisan sanctions bill proposing up to 500 percent tariffs on countries continuing to purchase Russian oil, including India. The development sparked fresh volatility in stocks heavily reliant on US revenue.

Gokaldas Exports saw its shares plummet nearly 13 percent to trade at ₹596.65, before recovering partially to close around 8 percent lower. The company derives more than 60 percent of its revenue from the United States, making it particularly sensitive to trade-related policy shifts. K.P.R. Mill shares fell over 4 percent, Pearl Global Industries dropped close to 8 percent, while Apex Frozen Foods and Avanti Feeds declined 8 percent and 9 percent respectively. Analysts attributed the decline to fears that higher tariffs could disrupt exports and squeeze margins for companies dependent on the US market.

The sanctions bill, titled the Sanctioning of Russia Act 2025, is designed to penalise countries seen as "fueling Putin's war machine" by continuing to purchase discounted Russian oil. Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, a key proponent of the legislation, said the bill would provide President Trump "tremendous leverage" over countries like India, China, and Brazil to discourage their purchase of Russian oil, which Washington argues is financing Moscow's war in Ukraine.

Under the proposed legislation, the US president could impose tariffs up to 500 percent on goods and services imported from countries continuing to do business with Russia. The bill would also allow the US to sanction individuals and entities involved in such trade. A bipartisan vote in Congress could

## Gabion Technologies IPO Oversubscribed Over 300 Times, Set to List on BSE SME Next Week



per share, with a lot size of 1,600 shares. Investors can apply for a minimum of 3,200 shares (two lots) and in multiples of 1,600 shares thereafter. At the top end of the price band, a minimum two-lot retail investment would require ₹2,59,200.

With the subscription window closing today, the basis of allotment is expected to be finalised by Friday, January 9. Successful investors are likely to see their shares credited to their demat accounts by Monday, January 12, 2026, ahead of the company's listing on the BSE SME platform on Tuesday, January 13, 2026.

**Use of IPO Proceeds**  
According to the company's Red Herring Prospectus (RHP), Gabion Technologies intends to utilize the net proceeds of the IPO as follows: ₹22.11 crore for working capital requirements, ₹1.05 crore for purchase of plant and machinery, with the remaining funds allocated to general corporate purposes.

**Management and Advisors**  
KFIN Technologies is acting as the registrar for the offering, while GYR Capital Advisors serves as the sole book-running lead manager for the IPO.

With robust subscription numbers, a significant grey market premium, and strong retail and NII participation, Gabion Technologies' IPO has emerged as one of the most successful public offerings on the BSE SME platform this year, signaling strong investor confidence in the company's growth prospects.

## Foreigner Confronts Littering in Meghalaya's Cleanest Village, Video Goes Viral



A viral video circulating on social media has reignited a nationwide conversation on civic responsibility and public cleanliness in India. The clip, widely shared on Instagram, shows a foreign tourist confronting a man for littering in Mawlynnong, a scenic village in Meghalaya that is often celebrated as one of the cleanest villages in Asia.

In the video, the foreigner records a car occupant who allegedly threw plastic waste along the roadside. Calm but firm, the tourist points out the act and notes that the vehicle's registration number is clearly visible. "So this gentleman's just thrown plastic here. And then we also have the registered car number here. I think it is not fine," he says in the clip, expressing concern over the careless disposal of waste in a region known for its pristine environment.

The situation escalates briefly when the man being filmed objects to the

recording and claims that permission is required to film him. The foreigner refuses to stop, explaining that he has been living in Meghalaya and feels a strong responsibility to protect its natural beauty. He emphasizes that maintaining cleanliness is a shared duty, regardless of where one comes from.

During the confrontation, another man—believed to be a local resident—steps in and urges the car's occupants to pick up the plastic bottles they had thrown and dispose of them properly in a nearby dustbin. The intervention appears to defuse the situation, with the waste eventually being collected.

Thanking the local man for his support, the foreigner later says in the video, "Mawlynnong is the cleanest village in Asia. Let's keep it like that," underscoring the importance of preserving the village's reputation and environment.

The video quickly went viral, amassing over 1.1

million views and hundreds of comments within a short span. Social media users overwhelmingly praised the foreigner and the local resident for standing up against littering and promoting civic sense.

Many commenters expressed embarrassment that it took a foreigner to highlight such an issue. Others voiced strong support for Meghalaya's strict cleanliness culture. "They work hard to keep the state clean. If you don't find a dustbin, keep the waste with you," wrote one user. Another commented that the incident should serve as a reminder that public spaces are a shared responsibility.

The viral moment has sparked broader discussions online about accountability, respect for local communities, and the need for stronger civic awareness across the country—especially in environmentally sensitive and culturally significant regions like Meghalaya.

## Gurgaon Techie Claims He Was Fired for Not Replying During Holiday Break



A Gurgaon-based software developer has sparked a heated online debate after claiming he was laid off for failing to respond to his manager's messages during the Christmas and New Year holiday period. The incident, shared in a detailed Reddit post, has reignited discussions around work-life balance, managerial accountability, and the so-called "right to disconnect" in India's tech industry.

According to the post, the 29-year-old developer was travelling in a remote, high-altitude region during the official holiday break, where mobile network connectivity was unavailable for several days. He claimed that despite it being a company holiday, his manager attempted to contact him and later assumed he had deliberately switched off his phone to avoid communication. This assumption, the developer alleged, ultimately led to his termination.

The techie said the decision came without any prior warning, performance review, or placement on a performance improvement plan (PIP).

He further stated that his job performance had never been questioned before the incident and that no formal discussion took place before he was let go. In his post, he attributed the termination to what he described as his manager's "fragile ego," claiming the lack of response was taken as a personal affront rather than a logistical issue.

"I wasn't even given a warning or a PIP," he wrote. "The only thing that hurt them was that I didn't reply during the Christmas and New Year holidays. I was out of the city, and for a few days there was no signal due to high altitude. They thought I intentionally switched off my phone. Basically, it's their ego that landed me in this situation."

The developer also expressed concern about his financial stability, noting that he had no backup source of income. He said he feared the company might delay or withhold his official employment documents, which could further complicate his job search. Since the incident, he has updated his profiles on LinkedIn

and Naukri and has begun applying for roles aggressively, though he admitted the current job market feels unforgiving.

"The market is brutal," he wrote, adding that increasing competition and rising expectations—especially with the growth of AI-related skills—have made interviews more demanding.

The post quickly gained traction on Reddit and other social media platforms, drawing widespread sympathy.

Many users offered emotional support, career advice, and even referrals. Others shared similar experiences, criticizing toxic workplace cultures and the unchecked power some managers wield.

Several commenters described the episode as a harsh reminder of the lack of boundaries in many corporate environments, while others argued that the developer may have already been on the company's "hit list." Overall, the case has sparked renewed calls for clearer holiday policies, healthier work cultures, and stronger employee protections in India's tech sector.

## Ex-ISRO Engineer Explains Why He Left Space Science for a Simpler Life

A chance conversation at a restaurant has gone viral on social media after a content creator revealed that the restaurant manager he was chatting with was once an ISRO scientist. The video, shared on Instagram by a user named Sando, captures an unexpected and thoughtful exchange that has since sparked discussions about career choices, mental health, and redefining success.

In the clip, the restaurant manager casually shares details about his former life as a scientist-engineer at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), where he worked for an impressive 16 years. The video's caption sums up the moment perfectly: "A random restaurant conversation that turned into a chat with an ISRO scientist."

During the conversation, the former scientist explains the intense pressure that came with working on satellite assembly. He describes the extraordinary precision required in his job, noting that the margin for error was almost nonexistent. "Satellite assembly has very high pressure. The tolerance is 0.001," he explains. According to him, even assembling a single



component involved managing multiple parts, each measured down to microscopic accuracy.

To put the stress into perspective, he compares the precision of his work to the thickness of a strand of human hair. "One strand of hair is about 4 microns. We had to work with a tolerance of one micron," he says. He adds that even a single hair falling into the assembly could compromise the entire system, highlighting the immense responsibility engineers shoulder in

space missions.

After years in such a demanding environment, the scientist decided to step away from ISRO in search of a quieter, more peaceful life.

He chose to work as a restaurant manager, a decision he says brought him much-needed mental calm. "There is no pressure here. I feel relaxed," he shares, expressing contentment with his current role.

He also mentions that he once had an opportunity to work in the United States, but a clerical error in his documents

prevented the move. Despite that setback, he appears at peace with where life has led him.

The video struck a chord with viewers, quickly gaining over 1,07,000 likes and thousands of comments. Many users praised his honesty and perspective. Some reflected on how high-stress scientific careers can take a toll, while others admired his courage to walk away from a prestigious role for mental well-being.

One commenter noted that such decisions are not always about money, but about stress and quality of life. Another highlighted the deeper life perspective someone gains after solving complex scientific problems. Many saw the story as a powerful reminder that changing careers—even from highly respected positions—is valid if it brings peace and fulfillment.

The viral moment has resonated widely, offering a refreshing reminder that success is personal and mental peace can be just as important as professional prestige.

## Blinkit Delivery Agent Helps Pune Friends Re-Enter Home at 3 AM

A quirky yet heartwarming incident from Pune has taken social media by storm after two friends found an unusual way out of a late-night predicament—with help from a Blinkit delivery agent. The incident, which occurred around 3:00 am, showcased not only quick thinking but also the calm professionalism of a delivery worker who went well beyond his usual duties.

According to the viral post, a Pune resident and his friend accidentally locked themselves out on their apartment balcony while their parents were asleep inside the house. With no immediate way to get back in and anxious about waking up the family in the middle of the night, the duo decided to think creatively rather than panic. Their solution was unexpected but effective: they placed an order on Blinkit, a quick commerce platform, and hoped the delivery agent could help them regain access to

their home. Once the order was accepted, the friends contacted the Blinkit delivery agent and carefully explained their situation. Over the phone, they calmly guided him on how to reach their apartment, locate the spare key, and unlock the main door—without making noise or disturbing their sleeping parents. The agent listened attentively, fol-

lowed instructions step by step, and successfully helped them get back inside.

The incident was later shared on Instagram by Pune resident Mihir Ghosh, who posted a video capturing the unusual rescue. The post quickly gained traction, drawing thousands of views and comments. Even Blinkit joined the conversation, replying in the comments section with a hu-

morous note that read, "This can only happen in Pune."

Social media users were quick to react, praising both the ingenuity of the friends and the delivery agent's composure. Many joked about Blinkit becoming an emergency service, with one user commenting, "Blinkit is the new 911."

Another wrote, "Some superheroes don't wear capes... they wear Blinkit

## Vietnamese Waiter's Love for 'Balika Vadhu' Wins Hearts Online



many by skipping Bollywood stars altogether and instead focusing on the television serial. He praised Balika Vadhu for its meaningful storyline, explaining that the slow-paced narrative and emotional depth set it apart from fast-action films. According to him, the show's long-running format allowed viewers to form a strong emotional connection with the characters.

Win also fondly remembered the actors' expressive performances, describing their exaggerated emotions as both entertaining and memorable. At one point in the video, he even imitates an over-the-top facial expression from the show, drawing smiles and laughter from those around him.

"I'm a big fan, also with my family," he says in the video. "That's the

reason I'm so impressed with the movie from India. The story is very good... it has been a long time and a long path."

He adds that watching the show together became a cherished family routine.

Sharing the video on social media, Ghodgaonkar tagged actor Avika Gor, who played the beloved character of young Anandi in Balika Vadhu. Along with the

post, she wrote, "Girl, you are popular in Vietnam. Also, he was the sweetest man to discuss his love for this show."

The video soon reached Avika Gor, who was visibly touched by the unexpected admiration from across the globe. Responding in the comments, the actor said the moment had "made her day," expressing gratitude for the love her work continues to receive internationally.

Social media users were quick to react, calling the exchange wholesome and heartwarming. Many shared similar experiences, noting the widespread popularity of Indian daily soaps in countries such as Vietnam, Bulgaria, Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Eastern Europe. The viral clip has once again underlined how Indian television storytelling continues to transcend borders, languages, and cultures.

# India U-19 Crush South Africa to Sweep Series as Suryavanshi, George Hit Centuries

Vaibhav Suryavanshi continued his sensational form with a stunning century, and Aaron George also scored a commanding hundred as India U-19 crushed South Africa by 233 runs in the third youth ODI, completing a 3-0 series sweep on Wednesday at Willowmoore Park.

Sent in to bat, India's captain Suryavanshi, who had previously smashed a 24-ball 68 in the second game, was unstoppable. The 14-year-old from Bihar unleashed a flurry of shots, hitting 10 sixes and nine boundaries in a fluent 74-ball innings, finishing on 127. Opening partner Aaron George complemented him perfectly, scoring 118 off 106 balls. Together, they put on a mammoth 227-run opening partnership, laying the foundation for India's imposing total.

India posted a formidable 393 for 7, a score South Africa struggled to chase. Ntando Soni (3/61) and Jason Rowles (2/59) were the only bowlers to make notable breakthroughs for the hosts.

South Africa's response began disastrously. Kishan Singh struck early, reducing the visitors to 15 for 3 within the first four overs by dismissing Jorich Van Schalkwyk, Adnaan Lagadien, and Le-



thabo Phahlamohlaka. Singh, continuing his strong form from the previous match where he had taken four wickets, once again emerged as India's standout bowler.

The South African middle order offered fleeting resistance. Daniel Bosman (40) and Rowles (19) added some runs, but wickets fell at regular intervals, and the side

slumped to 99 for 6 by the 23rd over. Paul James (41) and Corne Botha (36 not out) managed to delay the inevitable, but India's dominance was unshakable.

Suryavanshi's performance further cemented his status as a rising star in youth cricket. The young sensation has now scored three centuries and four fifties in 18

Youth ODI matches, amassing 973 runs at an impressive average of 54.05 and strike rate of 164.08. His aggressive yet controlled batting has made him a key figure in India U-19's lineup.

Earlier in the series, India had won the first match by 25 runs under the DLS method and claimed the second game by eight wickets. With the

clean sweep, India's U-19 team has displayed consistent dominance both with the bat and ball, signaling strong prospects for future youth tournaments.

Suryavanshi and George's explosive batting, coupled with Singh's incisive bowling, were decisive in India's comprehensive series victory over South Africa.

## Tilak Varma Ruled Out of T20I Series Against New Zealand Due to Abdomen Injury



India's middle-order star Tilak Varma will miss the upcoming five-match T20I series against New Zealand after suffering an abdomen injury, raising concerns ahead of the T20 World Cup beginning next month. The series kicks off on January 21 in Nagpur, and while India may name a replacement, senior batter and India's Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill is unlikely to be considered.

Tilak, who was in Rajkot representing Mumbai in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, experienced severe abdominal pain on Wednesday morning. He was immediately taken to a local hospital, where scans were conducted and the results sent to the Centre of Excellence (COE) in Bengaluru. According to sources within the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), doctors have advised surgery, which is expected to require three to four weeks of recovery. This makes his participa-

tion in the entire T20I series doubtful and casts uncertainty over his availability for India's opening T20 World Cup match against the USA on February 7.

The selection committee and team management are unlikely to consider Shubman Gill as a replacement, as it would be awkward to have India's

senior white-ball captain warming the bench or acting as a temporary substitute. Assam's Riyan Parag, if fully recovered from a shoulder injury, could be a more probable candidate to fill the gap.

In positive news, India's ODI vice-captain Shreyas Iyer has been declared match-fit by the COE Bengaluru medical team.

available for his first ODI since the SCG clash against Australia in August. Yashasvi Jaiswal, his Mumbai teammate, will skip the final league match to join the national team in Vadodara.

Hardik Pandya, meanwhile, will play Baroda's last Vijay Hazare Trophy game against Chandigarh on Thursday. Despite his strong 133-run performance against Vidarbha, he was rested from the New Zealand series to manage workload ahead of the World Cup. The COE has also restricted him from bowling more than 10 overs in a match to preserve his fitness.

Tilak Varma's injury is a significant setback for India, particularly as the team looks to finalize its squad and momentum ahead of the T20 World Cup. With replacements likely to be young talents like Riyan Parag, India will have to adapt quickly to fill the void in the middle order.

## Jhulan Goswami Hails Harmanpreet Kaur's Legacy, Predicts 4-5 More Years of Indian Cricket Brilliance



Mumbai: India's cricketing stalwart Harmanpreet Kaur has set an "untouchable" benchmark in captaincy, says former India pacer and Mumbai Indians (MI) mentor Jhulan Goswami. At 36, Harmanpreet has already led India to its first Women's ODI World Cup title and Mumbai Indians to multiple Women's Premier League (WPL) trophies, and Jhulan believes she still has another four to five years of high-level cricket ahead.

"What she has done for Indian cricket, for Mumbai Indians, and franchise cricket is phenomenal," Jhulan told PTI on Wednesday. "Being the first World Cup-winning captain, along with two WPL titles, makes her record very difficult for anyone to touch in the near future. Her legacy will be immense, and I believe she still has 4-5 years to go to the sport."

Jhulan also recalled the emotional celebration of India's World Cup victory,

where former players like Mithali Raj, Anjum Chopra, and Reema Malik were acknowledged on the field. "It was pure emotion. Harmanpreet, Smriti Mandhana, and the team made it happen spontaneously. Indian cricket has rarely seen such a gesture," she said.

Looking ahead to the fourth edition of the WPL, Harmanpreet will captain

MI once again. The franchise will see a coaching change, with Australia's Lisa Keightley replacing England's Charlotte Edwards. Jhulan expressed confidence in the new coach, saying, "Lisa brings the philosophy of fearless cricket that Charlotte started. She will ensure the team continues to play with that mindset."

The team's ability to re-

Jhulan also backed MI spinner Saika Ishaque, who took 15 wickets during MI's maiden WPL title win in 2023 but faced challenges afterward. "Her first season was outstanding. The following year, she struggled with fitness and opposition teams planned better against her. These are natural ups and downs," she explained.

On the broader WPL competition, Jhulan noted the growing strength of Indian domestic players. "In the first season, domestic players were not fully prepared for the intensity, glamour, and crowd pressure. But they've improved rapidly and now challenge even the most experienced internationals," she said.

With a mix of experienced leaders like Harmanpreet and rising domestic talent, Jhulan believes Indian women's cricket is poised for sustained success both in the WPL and on the international stage.

## Australia Tops WTC Table After Clinching 4-1 Ashes Series Win Against England



Australia solidified their lead atop the World Test Championship (WTC) points table following a five-wicket victory over England in the fifth Ashes Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Thursday. The Steve Smith-led side secured a commanding 4-1 series win, maintaining their dominance in the WTC with a points percentage (PCT) of 87.50.

England, by contrast, slipped to seventh place after their sixth loss in 10 matches, posting a PCT of 31.66. India remained sixth with a PCT of 48.15, keeping them within striking distance of the top four. New Zealand occupy second place with a PCT of 77.78, followed by South Africa (75.00) and Sri Lanka (66.67). Pakistan sit fifth at 50.00 PCT, although they have played just two matches in this WTC cycle so far.

The fifth Test proved memorable for several reasons. After bowling England out for 342 early on the final day, Australia set a modest target of 160 to win. The hosts got off to a brisk start with Travis Head and Jake Weatherald putting together a 62-run opening partnership, laying the foundation for the chase.

## WPL 2026 Begins with Glamorous Opening Ceremony as Mumbai Indians Face RCB in Season Opener



The fourth season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) is set to begin in grand fashion, combining top-tier cricket with Bollywood glamour at a dazzling opening ceremony. As defending champions Mumbai Indians gear up to take on Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the tournament opener, excitement is building not just for the cricketing action but also for the spectacular curtain-raiser planned by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

The WPL 2026 opening ceremony will take place on Friday, January 9, at the iconic DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai. The opening match between Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bengaluru is scheduled to start at 7:30 PM IST, while the cultural festivities are expected to begin around 6:30 PM IST, giving fans an hour of entertainment before the first ball is bowled.

Viewers can watch the ceremony and the match live on the Star Sports Network, with live streaming available on the JioCinema app and website.

Adding glamour to the evening, the BCCI has confirmed a star-studded lineup for the opening ceremony. Popular rapper and music icon Yo Yo Honey Singh will headline the musical performances, promising

an energetic start to the tournament. Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez will also take centre stage, with her performance expected to celebrate the confidence, strength, and courage of women in sports. Further elevating the glamour quotient, Miss Universe 2021 Harnaaz Sandhu is also scheduled to appear, making the ceremony a blend of sport, music, and style.

The WPL has quickly established itself as one of the most exciting women's T20 leagues in the world, and the 2026 edition aims to build on that momentum. The tournament will be played across two venues — Navi Mumbai and Vadodara — with a total of 22 matches featuring five teams. The league stage will be followed by the playoffs, with the grand finale scheduled for February 5 in Vadodara.

This season is expected to be especially competitive, with leadership changes adding intrigue. Jemimah Rodrigues will captain Delhi Capitals, while Meg Lanning takes charge of UP Warriorz, alongside several international and domestic stars eager to make their mark. With rising fan interest, elite talent, and a glamorous opening night, WPL 2026 promises to be a landmark season for women's cricket in India.

## Raja Saab Pre-Release Event Sets the Stage for a Grand Sankranti Spectacle



The pre-release press meet of Rebel Star Prabhas' prestigious upcoming film Raja Saab was held in a grand manner in Hyderabad, setting the stage for one of the most awaited Sankranti releases of the year. Directed by Maruthi and produced by TG Vishwa Prasad and Krithi Prasad under the People Media Factory banner, Raja Saab is positioned as a large-scale horror fantasy-comedy with lavish production values and pan-India appeal.

Speaking at the event, producer TG Vishwa Prasad expressed strong confidence in the film's box-office prospects, stating that the makers are expecting Raja Saab to collect over 100 crore globally on its opening day. He revealed that the project, which began nearly three years ago, evolved from a simple horror-comedy into a massive horror-fantasy spectacle with huge sets

and high-end technical execution. According to him, the final 40 minutes of the film will deliver a "global movie impact," with additional fantasy elements added especially for the festive season.

Director Maruthi described Raja Saab as a film close to his heart, noting that the massive palace set almost became a second home for the team during the long shoot. He promised that audiences would see Prabhas in the kind of role they have been eagerly waiting for, blending charm, emotion, humor, and larger-than-life fantasy. "Viewers will walk into theatres with excitement and walk out with double the happiness," he said, adding that the film has the feel of a Disney-style fantasy entertainer.

Actresses Nidhhi Agerwal and Riddhi Kumar shared warm memories from the shoot, calling the set a joyful and fami-

ly-like space. Nidhhi described Raja Saab as a special film in her career, while Riddhi said audiences would feel transported into a fantasy world filled with romance, action, and horror elements.

Music director Thaman S, who received loud cheers at the event, termed Raja Saab a "pan-world film" rather than just pan-India. He credited Maruthi's vision and strong content for inspiring an intense background score and highlighted the growing popularity of songs like "Nache Nache."

With Prabhas leading a stellar cast that includes Malavika Mohanan, Nidhhi Agerwal, Riddhi Kumar, Sanjay Dutt, and Boman Irani, Raja Saab is gearing up for a worldwide theatrical release on January 9, promising a festive entertainer packed with spectacle, emotion, and fantasy.

## 'Pandaga Ki Alludu Vastunnadu': Anaganaga Oka Raju Theatrical Trailer Promises a Grand Sankranthi Treat



The theatrical trailer of Anaganaga Oka Raju is out now, and it has instantly struck a festive chord with audiences. Opening on a majestic and powerful note, the trailer features the commanding voice of King Akkineni Nagarjuna, whose narration adds gravitas and sets the perfect tone for what promises to be a wholesome, celebratory entertainer. His voiceover elevates the trailer, lending it an epic, fairy-tale-like quality that draws viewers straight into the world of the film.

At the heart of the trailer is star performer Naveen Polishetty, who once again proves why he is one of the most loved entertainers of the current generation. His impeccable comic timing, effortless humor, and boundless energy dominate every frame he appears in. Each punchline lands with precision, offering a clear indication that the trailer is only a small glimpse of the full-fledged entertainment the film has in

store. Naveen's screen presence assures audiences of laughter-filled moments that will resonate across age groups. Meenakshi Chaudhary makes a strong impression with her innocence and natural charm. The fun built around her character is neatly executed, and her chemistry with Naveen Polishetty stands out as one of the highlights of the trailer. The love track is woven seamlessly into the narrative, complementing the family emotions and situational comedy.

Produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under the banners of Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, with Srikanth Studios presenting the film, Anaganaga Oka Raju carries the catchy and celebratory tagline, "Pandaga Ki Alludu Vastunnadu." The film is all set to arrive as a perfect Sankranti family entertainer, inviting audiences to celebrate together when it releases worldwide in theatres on January 14, 2026.

## Yash Treats Fans on His Birthday with Power-Packed Toxic Teaser

Kannada superstar Yash gave his fans a massive birthday treat with the release of the much-awaited teaser of his upcoming film Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups. Marking his return to the big screen after a long gap, the teaser has instantly set social media abuzz, showcasing the star in a strikingly intense and stylish new avatar.

The teaser opens on a dark and atmospheric note, set in a graveyard-like backdrop that immediately establishes the film's gritty tone.

Yash makes a commanding entry as Raya, a ruthless and stylish gangster, sporting long hair, a rugged beard, and an intimidating screen presence. His powerful body language, sharp styling, and the punch dialogue "Daddy is home" have already become a talking point among fans, underlining the mass appeal of the actor

continues to command. Packed with slick visuals and high-octane moments, the teaser hints at a raw and violent world driven by power, chaos, and ambition. The background score adds to the intensity, amplifying the sense of danger and dominance surrounding Yash's character. Every frame reflects scale and ambition, suggesting that Toxic is being mounted as a world-class action drama with uncompromising production values.

Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Geetu Mohandas, Toxic promises to present Yash in a completely new light, far removed from his earlier roles. The director's distinct storytelling style, combined with Yash's mass appeal, has raised expectations for a film that blends artistic depth with commercial spectacle. The teaser offers only a glimpse, but



it is enough to establish the film's dark, edgy universe.

The film also boasts an impressive ensemble cast, featuring leading actresses such as Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, Huma Qureshi, and Rukmini Vasanth, adding further star power and

intrigue to the project. Their roles, though not revealed in the teaser, are expected to play a crucial part in the narrative. Produced on a grand scale, Toxic: A Fairy Tale for Grown-Ups is gearing up for a worldwide theatrical release on March 19, 2026, in multiple languages. With this stylish and intense teaser, Yash has not only celebrated his birthday in style but has also firmly reignited fan excitement, setting the stage for what could be one of the biggest cinematic events of the year.

## Prime Video Announces Telugu Original Crime Thriller Cheekatilo, Starring Sobhita Dhulipala, to Premiere on January 23



Prime Video has officially announced January 23 as the worldwide premiere date of its latest Telugu Original movie Cheekatilo, an edge-of-the-seat crime suspense drama led by Sobhita Dhulipala. Set against the gritty and bustling backdrop of Hyderabad, the film promises a gripping narrative that delves deep into the city's darkest secrets while exploring themes of truth, resilience, and moral courage.

A Prime Original movie, Cheekatilo is directed by Sharan Kopishetty and produced by veteran producer D. Suresh Babu under the banner of Suresh Productions Pvt. Ltd. The screenplay has been jointly written by Chandra Pemmaraju and Sharan Kopishetty. The film stars Sobhita Dhulipala and Viswadev Rachakonda in lead roles, with Chaitanya Visalakshmi, Esha Chawla, Jhansi, Aamani, and Vadlamani Srinivas playing pivotal supporting

characters. The story follows Sandhya, a true crime podcaster portrayed by Sobhita Dhulipala, whose pursuit of justice takes a dark and dangerous turn after the mysterious death of her intern. As Sandhya investigates further, she uncovers a chilling chain of brutal crimes that expose the underbelly of the city. Blending modern storytelling tools like podcasts with a culturally rooted narrative, Cheekatilo presents a contemporary take on the crime suspense genre.

Speaking about the project, Nikhil Madhok, Director and Head of Originals at Prime Video India, said that the platform remains committed to expanding its South Originals slate with bold and emotionally engaging stories. He noted that while thrillers are a familiar genre, Cheekatilo stands out for its emotional depth and cultural authenticity. Madhok added that the film's themes of resilience and sisterhood are universal, making it relatable to audiences beyond the Telugu-speaking regions and across global markets.

Producer D. Suresh Babu described Cheekatilo as a layered and emotionally charged suspense drama. He emphasized that the film highlights the courage required to confront darkness and speak the truth, a message he believes is especially relevant today. Calling the collaboration with Prime Video a meaningful milestone, he expressed confidence that the haunting narrative and strong performances would leave a lasting impact on viewers.

Cheekatilo will premiere exclusively on Prime Video on January 23 across India and more than 240 countries and territories worldwide, with subtitles available in Tamil, Hindi, Malayalam, and Kannada, making it accessible to a wide and diverse audience.

## Constable Kanakam 2 Review: A Gripping Sequel That Deepens the Mystery

Constable Kanakam 2 marks a solid and engaging return to the rural crime drama space, building effectively on the foundation laid by its first season. Set once again in a seemingly quiet village, the second season dives deeper into unresolved mysteries, raising the stakes with darker themes, sharper twists, and stronger emotional undercurrents.

The story picks up from where the first season ended, revolving around the disappearance of Chandrika and the growing suspicion surrounding a series of missing girls. Constable Kanakam, played convincingly by Varsha Bolllamma, finds herself navigating a maze of half-truths, buried secrets, and unsettling revelations.

The narrative unfolds steadily, using flashbacks and new character entries to add layers to the investigation and keep the audience guessing. One of the strengths of Constable Kanakam 2 is its storytelling approach. The makers balance crime investigation with family emotions, ensuring the series does not become overly grim. The suspense is main-



ained through well-placed twists, and the screenplay avoids unnecessary distractions, staying focused on the central mystery. Unlike many sequels that feel stretched, this season offers a sense of closure while still leaving room for future developments. Varsha Bolllamma once again proves to be the backbone of the series. Her portrayal of Kanakam feels natural and grounded, capturing both the vulnerability and determination of a constable caught between duty and emotion. The supporting cast delivers reliable performances, adding authenticity to the village setting and the unfolding drama.

Technically, the series maintains a consistent tone. The rural backdrop plays a crucial role in enhancing the suspense, with effective cinematography capturing the eerie calm of village life. The background score subtly heightens tension without overpowering the scenes, complementing the narrative rather than distracting from it.

The final episodes introduce an unexpected twist that adds impact to the conclusion, making

the viewing experience satisfying. While the pace slows slightly in a few stretches, the overall engagement remains intact due to the strong core mystery. **Verdict:** Constable Kanakam 2 is a worthy sequel that successfully expands its story universe with engaging twists, emotional depth, and solid

performances. It is a recommended watch for audiences who enjoy rural crime thrillers with a strong investigative and emotional focus.