



# TRUE POINT

## BUZZ POINTS

Guntur Police Innovate with 'Walk of Shame' Counseling for 100 Rowdy-Sheeters

Amaravati to Become World's Top-5 Capital: Can't Compare to Hyderabad Secretariat, Fires Back Minister Narayana

Amaravati Farmers Slam YSRCP Chief Jagan Over Capital Remarks

Amaravati Water Minister Briefs Team Ahead of Supreme Court Hearing on Polavaram-Nallamala Sagar Link Project

Kashi Bugga DSP Issues Sankranti Safety Guidelines Amid Rising Thefts



## ISRO Gears Up for PSLV-C62 Launch from Sriharikota, Chairman Seeks Divine Blessings at Tirumala and Srikalahasti

TPN Bureau | January 11

**S**ullurupeta, Andhra Pradesh: In a blend of cutting-edge science and age-old tradition, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set for a major milestone tomorrow. The space agency will launch the PSLV-C62 rocket from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota at 10:17 AM on Monday, January 12.

Scientists have confirmed all preparations are complete, with the countdown commencing 24 hours earlier on Sunday at 10:17 AM. This mission marks the ninth full-stack commercial satellite for NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), ISRO's commercial arm. At its core is the EOS-N1 Earth observation satellite, critical for India's defense sector. Speaking to me-

dia after darshan at Tirumala Temple on Saturday morning, ISRO Chairman Dr. V. Narayanan highlighted its importance:

"Through PSLV-C62, we're placing the EOS-N1 satellite into orbit. This is vital for national defense. It's ISRO's first launch of 2026 and the 64th in the PSLV series. The mission will also deploy eight foreign satellites, adding to the 442 foreign satellites ISRO has launched so far. The pre-launch rituals underscored the cultural reverence that accompanies India's space endeavors.

Dr. Narayanan, accompanied by key scientists, availed VIP break darshan at the Tirumala Sri Venkateswara Temple. They then visited the Mukanti Temple in Srikalahasti and the Chengalamma Temple in Sullurupeta, performing special pujas. Rocket and satellite

models were placed at the feet of the deities for blessings, symbolizing the fusion of devotion and innovation that has defined ISRO's successes.

The PSLV-C62, a reliable workhorse of India's space program, will carry the primary EOS-N1 payload alongside international satellites.

EOS-N1, part of the Earth Observation Satellite series, promises advanced imaging capabilities for surveillance, disaster management, and strategic monitoring key for defense applications amid evolving geopolitical needs.

The foreign payloads further boost India's stature in the global commercial launch market, where NSIL has emerged as a competitive player post-privatization reforms. This launch comes at a pivotal time for ISRO, following a stellar 2025 with successes like the

Gaganyaan test flights and Aditya-L1's solar insights. With 2026 underway, PSLV-C62 sets the tone for an ambitious calendar, including heavier GSLV missions and private sector collaborations.

Local excitement is palpable in Sullurupeta, Tirumala, and Srikalahasti, where residents anticipate the thunderous roar echoing through the region. Security has been tightened around Sriharikota, with coastal alerts for fishing communities. Weather forecasts predict clear skies, ideal for the polar sun-synchronous orbit insertion. Dr. Narayanan expressed confidence:

"Our teams are primed. This mission reinforces India's self-reliance in space. As the countdown ticks, all eyes turn skyward, where tradition meets technology in pursuit of the stars."



## 27 Andhra Telangana Youths Rescued from Myanmar Trafficking Trap Through Union Minister Rammohan Naidu's Intervention

TPN Bureau | January 11

**N**ew Delhi/Srikakulam: In a swift display of governmental efficiency, Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinnarapu Rammohan Naidu orchestrated the safe return of 27 Indian youths from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana who were lured to Myanmar with false job promises and trapped in exploitative conditions.

The victims, who reached Myanmar a few months ago, endured forced cyber scams, physical abuse, and other hardships before their desperate video pleas prompted Naidu's decisive action. The ordeal began with deceptive offers of lucrative employment. Youths from districts including Vijaynagar, Visakhapatnam, Annamayya, Hyderabad, and Jagital fell for the bait, only to face a grim reality.

In videos sent directly to Naidu, they described being coerced into illegal cyber fraud operations, subjected to physical mistreatment, and fearing human trafficking at the borders. "We were promised good jobs, but they've turned us into slaves,"

one victim recounted in the footage, highlighting their dire predicament.

Moved by their plight, Minister Naidu wasted no time. He penned a letter to External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, urging immediate steps to repatriate the 27 Indian nationals safely. The Ministry of External Affairs, in coordination with the Indian Embassy in Yangon, sprang into action. On Saturday, the group was rescued and flown back to India, landing in New Delhi that morning amid tears of relief and joy.

Upon arrival, the victims expressed profound gratitude to Naidu for his personal intervention. "We are alive today because of the Minister's efforts," said one, as the group was provided arrangements to travel to their hometowns from Delhi. The full list of rescued individuals includes Ramu Gunnugukella, Sai Kumar Kanakavalli, Ajay Dubba, Jagadish Sahu, Brahmaji Alugolu, Bhuvaneswari Gandoiboyina, Dinesh Gandoiboyina, Dhanunjaya Rao Guvvala, Chinu Deepak Moradaboodi, Sriharsh Allu, Jayakrishna Chatala, G. Ramakrishna, S.A. Nazma Begum, Arunendra

Mathi, Mastan Gagguturi, Jaswanth Kumar Reddy, Chaitanya Kumar Reddy, Joy Vignan Salaga, Vijay Kumar Isukapat, Sai Nikesh Devar, Ramesh Pallevonu, Rakesh Mantri, Tejaswi Tunga, Murali, B. Chinna Mallayya, M. Suma Lakshmi, and J. Shekhar Babu.

Naidu emphasized the NDA government's unwavering commitment to every Indian's safety, dignity, and welfare abroad. "Our coalition stands firmly with those in distress, ensuring no citizen is left behind," he stated from his camp office in Srikakulam. This rescue underscores the perils of unregulated overseas job schemes and highlights the critical role of prompt diplomatic channels. Indian authorities have issued fresh advisories against unverified foreign job offers, particularly in Southeast Asia, where cyber scam syndicates have ensnared thousands. The Ministry of External Affairs continues to monitor similar cases, with Naidu's office vowing ongoing support for affected families. (Report from Union Civil Aviation Minister's Camp Office, Srikakulam)

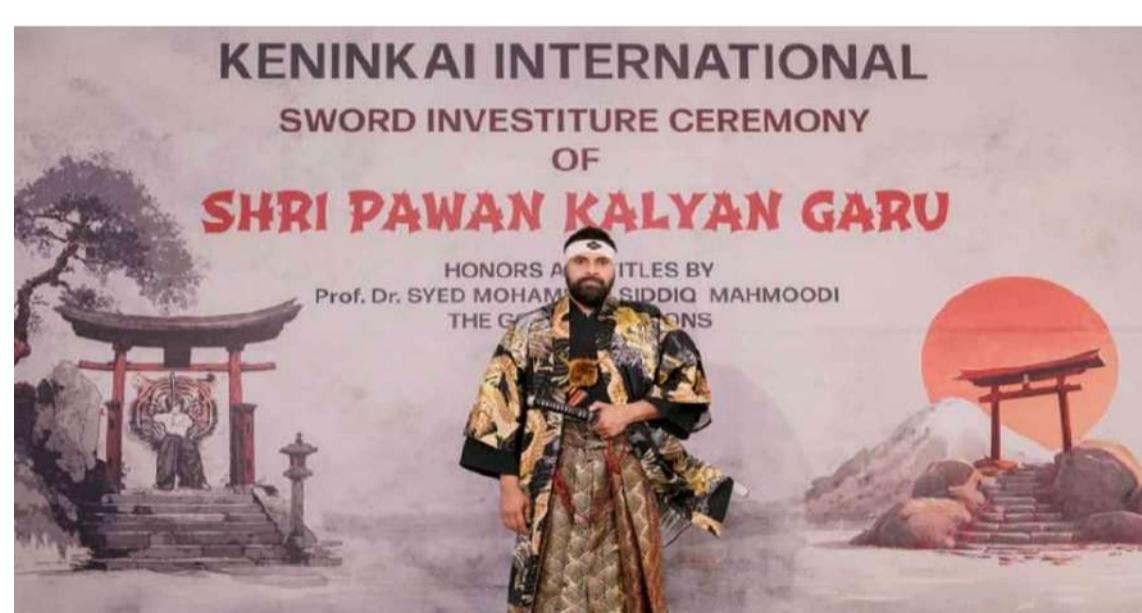
## Pawan Kalyan Achieves Historic Milestone in Japanese Martial Arts with 5th Dan Black Belt

TPN Bureau | January 11

**A**maravathi, Andhra Pradesh: Deputy Chief Minister and superstar Pawan Kalyan once again stunned the world with his multifaceted talents, officially entering the ancient Japanese swordsmanship art of Kenjutsu. This rare achievement marks a historic first for an Indian, and particularly a Telugu individual, in Japanese martial arts history. After over three decades of disciplined training, unwavering dedication, and rigorous research, Pawan Kalyan has earned an extraordinary recognition.

The prestigious Japanese organization Sogo Budo Kanri Kai awarded him the 5th Dan (black belt) honor, a testament to his mastery in Kenjutsu. In a groundbreaking move, under the leadership of Soke Muramatsu Sensei, he became the first Telugu-speaking person outside Japan to join the elite Takeda Shingen Clan a distinction rarely bestowed on non-Japanese practitioners.

Adding to the accolades, the Golden Dragons organization conferred upon him the distinguished title of "Tiger of Martial Arts." This makes Pawan Kalyan the first Indian celebrity to receive such an honor, further cementing his global stature.



Pawan Kalyan's journey into martial arts reflects his deep passion and ironclad discipline. Known for his roles in Telugu cinema that often showcase action prowess, his off-screen commitment to Kenjutsu rooted in samurai traditions highlights a pursuit far beyond the spotlight. Sources close to the actor-politician reveal he has trained

meticulously for years, balancing his demanding roles in governance and filmmaking. This feat not only elevates Pawan's personal legacy but also strengthens cultural ties between India and Japan. As Deputy CM of Andhra Pradesh and a key figure in the TDP-Jana Sena alliance, his accomplishment inspires pride among Tel-

ugu people worldwide. It bridges cinema, politics, and martial arts, infusing fresh energy into these fields. Social media erupted with congratulations from fans, political leaders, and martial arts enthusiasts. "A proud moment for Andhra Pradesh and India," tweeted Jana Sena Party supporters. Pawan's achievement underscores how personal

discipline can transcend borders, fostering Indo-Japanese goodwill amid growing bilateral relations. Pawan Kalyan, ever the multifaceted icon, continues to redefine excellence.

From blockbuster films to state administration and now international martial arts mastery, he remains a beacon of inspiration for millions.



## Nara Bhuvaneswari Honored with Outstanding Dairy Professional Award 2025

TPN Bureau | January 11

**K**ochi, Kerala: Heritage Foods Bags India's recent accolades, including the Distinguished Fellowship-2025 from the Institute of Directors and a Golden Peacock Award for Heritage Foods. The IDA South Zone specifically recognized her innovative leadership in dairy industry advancement and farmer empowerment. In a statement, Bhuvaneswari expressed deep honor at receiving the award, viewing it as recognition of Heritage Foods' relentless efforts, strong ties with farmers and stakeholders, and commitment to innovation.

The accolade celebrates her exceptional contributions to the dairy sector, particularly in empowering padu (smallholder) farmers, fostering sustainable growth, and building a robust dairy ecosystem. The award was presented during the inaugural session of the Southern Dairy and Food Conclave 2026 at the Calicut Trade Centre in Kozhikode's Dr. Verghese Kurien Nagar. Heritage Foods CEO Keshavan accepted it on Bhuvaneswari's behalf from Kerala Animal Husbandry Minister J. Chinchu Rani.

The jury praised Heritage Foods' focus on sustainable dairy development under her leadership, strengthening farmer systems, and delivering high-

quality products to consumers, earning the company a distinguished position in the industry. This honor adds to Bhuvaneswari's recent accolades, including the Distinguished Fellowship-2025 from the Institute of Directors and a Golden Peacock Award for Heritage Foods.

The IDA South Zone specifically recognized her innovative leadership in dairy industry advancement and farmer empowerment. In a statement, Bhuvaneswari expressed deep honor at receiving the award, viewing it as recognition of Heritage Foods' relentless efforts, strong ties with farmers and stakeholders, and commitment to innovation. "This accolade boosts our resolve to promote new innovations, implement sustainable policies, and strengthen rural economies," she said. It elevates the Heritage Foods brand, motivates employees, and underscores the company's leadership in dairy and FMCG sectors. Bhuvaneswari reaffirmed dedication to sustainable practices and ecosystem strengthening.

The conclave drew ministers from Kerala and Tamil Nadu dairy development departments, Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister K. Achchennaidu, and other dignitaries. Heritage Foods' success stems from collaborative farmer support and team efforts, as emphasized in the release.





## Amaravati Farmers Slam YSRCP Chief Jagan Over Capital Remarks

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Amaravati: Members of the Farmers Welfare Association expressed fierce outrage against YSRCP leader Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy today, countering his recent comments on Amaravati as the state capital. At a meeting here, they accused Jagan of flip-flopping: supporting Amaravati development while in opposition but undermining it once in power. "The coalition government has kickstarted Amaravati projects right after coming to office," they emphasized, slamming Jagan for now trying to stall progress.

The gathering, attended by former Intelligence Chief A.B. Venkateswara Rao as chief guest, turned into a platform for sharp rebukes. Farmers questioned Jagan's logic: "If the Chief Minister stays anywhere, does that make it the capital? Is that sensible?" They

highlighted how YSRCP's defeat reduced to just 11 seats was a public rebuke for leaders like Botsa Satyanarayana calling Amaravati a "crematorium" or "desert."

"Jagan speaks against the state and Constitution," they charged, demanding the Andhra Pradesh government take immediate action against him for disrespecting constitutional norms. Association members credited the Amaravati agitation as the key factor behind the coalition's rise to power. "Jagan shouldn't provoke people like this," they warned, issuing a bold challenge:

"If he has the guts, come to the Assembly with his 11 MLAs." They urged him to highlight real government lapses instead of divisive rhetoric. Recalling Jagan's five-year tenure, they asked: "Where was he governing from? His own house is in Am-



aravati." They pointed out that as early as 2015, Jagan had pushed a case against Amaravati in the Green Tribunal, which later gave it a clean chit. The farmers clarified they have no objection to a second land pooling phase for the capital's expansion.

References to other YSRCP figures sharpened the attacks. "Former MP Nandigam Suresh still lives in Amaravati," they noted,

warning that if Jagan continues this way, "Amaravati women are ready to bury his political career." They branded him "deceptive Reddy," mocking his governance as mere "button-pressing" and his inconsistent statements—often followed by clarifications from Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy.

"Drop the 'so-called' jabs," they satirized, threatening to "teach

him a lesson" otherwise. Farmers fumed that Jagan even hesitates to utter "Amaravati's" name. The meeting underscored ongoing tensions over Andhra Pradesh's capital saga, with farmers rallying behind the coalition's revival of stalled projects. They affirmed support for Amaravati as the singular capital, rejecting three-captals rhetoric.

## CM Chandrababu Naidu Warns Against Tarnishing Visakhapatnam's Image, Praises Swift Police Action in Woman's Assault Case

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu issued a stern warning on Sunday, stating he would not tolerate any attempts to damage Visakhapatnam's brand image. The remarks came in response to a brazen daylight assault on a young woman near Jagadamba Centre in the city, where police arrested the perpetrator within hours. Speaking in Amaravati, Naidu commanded the Visakhapatnam city police for their prompt action.

"Visakhapatnam's reputation is our pride. We won't allow anyone to tarnish it," he declared, handing over a citation to the officers despite the lack of concrete evidence initially linking the accused to the attack. The CM's praise highlighted the force's efficiency in using CCTV footage to nab the suspect. The incident unfolded on Sunday morning in a busy area near Jagadamba Centre's theatre zone.

The victim, a young woman heading to her office, paused to photo-



graph a poster for the film Raja Saab. A man loitering nearby suddenly approached her aggressively. She initially thought he was yelling at nearby auto-rickshaw drivers. Moments later, he turned on her, slapping her cheek hard, verbally abusing her with lewd remarks, and fleeing the scene. The assault left the woman traumatized, with her eyeglasses shattered.

Shaken and confused about the unprovoked attack, she recorded a video detailing the ordeal—crying as she noted how no bystanders intervened despite the crowded spot. She shared the clip on social media, expressing anguish over the lack of public response. She also called her office colleagues, who rushed to the scene, took her to safety, and accompanied her to file a complaint with local police.

Officers arrived promptly at Jagadamba Centre, reviewed nearby CCTV footage, and identified the assailant. Within a few hours, they arrested him and transported him to the

police station. Authorities revealed the accused was mentally unstable, adding a layer of complexity to the case. Naidu's intervention underscores the state government's zero-tolerance stance on crimes against women, especially in high-profile urban areas like Visakhapatnam, a key hub for Andhra

Pradesh's development ambitions. The city has been positioning itself as a major investment destination, and such incidents risk undermining public confidence. Police officials confirmed the accused would face charges under relevant sections for assault and public nuisance. The victim received medical attention, and investigations continue to ascertain if mental health issues played a role. This swift resolution serves as a reminder of the importance of surveillance infrastructure and responsive policing. Naidu's commendation boosts morale among ranks, signaling strong political backing for law enforcement.

## YS Jagan's Flip-Flops on Amaravati Draw TDP Fire from Yanamala Ramakrishnudu

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Amaravati: TDP senior leader and former minister Yanamala Ramakrishnudu sharply criticized YSRCP chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy over his inconsistent statements on Amaravati as the state's capital. Speaking to the media at the TDP office in Amaravati on Sunday, Ramakrishnudu accused Jagan of making absurd claims that are drawing ridicule from the public.

Ramakrishnudu mocked Jagan's assertion that the word "capital" does not appear in the Indian Constitution, calling it a glaring example of the YSRCP leader's ignorance about the foundational document. "Jagan claims that as opposition leader, only 33 acres are needed for Amaravati's development, but as Chief Minister, he introduced the three-captals theory," Ramakrishnudu pointed out, highlighting the contradiction.

He further lambasted Jagan for repeatedly changing his stance on Amaravati's location along the riverbank. "In three different instances, he has uttered three entirely different words on the same issue this reflects his utter confusion," Ramakrishnudu said.

**Global Capitals Thrive on Riverbanks**

To counter Jagan's objections, Ramakrishnudu cited numerous world-renowned capitals and major cities that have flourished on riverbanks. He explained that rivers have historically driven the growth of capitals due to their vital resources for water, commerce, and transportation.

A striking example, he noted, is the Danube River, which flows through four national capitals: Austria's Vienna, Slovakia's Bratislava, Hungary's Budapest, and Serbia's Belgrade. Other iconic cases include Egypt's Cairo on the Nile, London's Thames, Paris on the Seine, and Washington DC on the Potomac.

"These cities didn't just survive; they prospered because of their riverfront locations," Ramakrishnudu emphasized.

### Jagan's Real Agenda Exposed

Ramakrishnudu alleged that Jagan's true motive is to stall Amaravati's development entirely. "It's clear from his remarks that he doesn't want Amaravati to grow. His goal is to block central government investments and funds from flowing to the state," he charged.

He argued that a thriving Amaravati would spark economic activity across Andhra Pradesh, creating jobs, expanding opportunities, and building a robust ecosystem for overall development.

"It's unfortunate that Jagan opposes this progress," Ramakrishnudu lamented. The TDP leader urged the public to see through Jagan's tactics, which he said aim to deprive the state of its due growth. As debates over the capital intensify, Ramakrishnudu's rebuttal underscores the ongoing political tug-of-war between TDP and YSRCP.



## CPI(M) Veteran B.V. Raghavulu Urges YSRCP Chief Jagan to End Amaravati Capital Row



TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Vijayawada: CPI(M) Politburo member and senior leader B.V. Raghavulu on Sunday sharply criticized YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for reigniting the Amaravati capital controversy, calling his remarks and the ensuing debates unnecessary and counterproductive. With Andhra Pradesh marking 15 years since its formation from Telangana bifurcation, Raghavulu emphasized that prolonging disputes over the capital serves no purpose and urged all stakeholders to focus on development.

Addressing a press conference here, Raghavulu recalled that Amaravati, located along the Krishna River basin, had once garnered unanimous support from all political parties and the public.

"Everyone agreed on Amaravati as the capital. Jagan himself accepted it initially," he pointed out, referencing Reddy's earlier endorsements. He advised the former chief minister to change his stance now, arguing that dredging up old issues like whether Amaravati qualifies as a "Krishna riverbank area" is irrelevant today. Instead of stirring controversy, Raghavulu called for constructive

criticism.

"If there were flaws or corruption in the capital's construction works under the previous TDP government, question those specifics," he said. He exhorted the ruling TDP-Janasena-BJP alliance and the central government to expedite Amaravati's development, pressing Jagan and YSRCP to cooperate rather than obstruct. "The NDA government and Centre should face pressure to complete the capital swiftly. YSRCP must lend support," he added.

Raghavulu's intervention comes amid renewed sparring over Andhra Pradesh's long-pending capital. Post-2019 elections, Jagan's YSRCP shelved the Amaravati masterplan, proposing a three-captals model (Amaravati as legislative, Visakhapatnam as executive, Kurnool as judicial). The TDP-led coalition, returning to power in 2024, has reaffirmed Amaravati as the sole greenfield capital, resuming land pooling and infrastructure works with central backing.

Jagan's recent barbs, accusing Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu of mismanagement, have fueled protests from farmers who surrendered land for the project. The CPI(M) leader didn't

## Minister Slams Jagan Over Amaravati Criticism, Accuses YSRCP of Capital's 'Destruction'

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh: Andhra Pradesh Minister Mandipalli Ramprasad Reddy launched a scathing attack on former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, accusing him of suffering from "indigestion" over Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's efforts to revive Amaravati as the state's capital.

Reddy fumed. The minister's outburst comes amid renewed momentum in Amaravati's development under the TDP-led NDA government. Since returning to power in June 2024, Naidu has fast-tracked infrastructure projects, allocating 15,000 crore in the latest budget for the capital region's revival.

This includes land acquisition, road networks, and greenfield developments envisioned in the original master plan by Singapore-based consultants.

Supporters hail it as a return to Naidu's 2014-2019 vision of a world-class green capital, but it has reignited political tensions. Jagan, now YSRCP president and Leader of Opposition, has repeatedly questioned the single-capital focus, arguing it burdens farmers whose lands were pooled earlier. In a recent public speech, he claimed the government's push ignores rural distress and revives a "failed dream." YSRCP leaders echo this, pointing to the 2021 Govern-



ment Reorganisation Bill that proposed Visakhapatnam as executive capital, Amaravati as legislative, and Kurnool as judicial. A plan scrapped by the high court, Reddy dismissed these claims as post-facto excuses.

"They mocked Amaravati, stalled projects, and scared away investors. Now, with Naidu Babu restoring investor confidence, Jagan's frustration is evident," he added. The exchange underscores deepening divides ahead of local body elections, with TDP positioning Amaravati as a symbol of governance revival, while YSRCP rallies around decentralized development.

Political analysts see this as a classic TDP-YSRCP rivalry, with Amaravati remaining a flashpoint in Andhra's fractured polity. As construction ramps up, all eyes are on whether Naidu can deliver on promises amid legal and political hurdles.

## Minister Kollu Ravindra Hails Superstar Krishna as Telugu Pride at Vijayawada Statue Unveiling

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026:

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Vijayawada | Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Minister for BC Welfare Kollu Ravindra praised legendary actor Superstar Krishna as the "pride of Telugu people" during the unveiling of his statue at Lenin Centre in Vijayawada on Sunday. Describing Krishna as a figure reminiscent of the iconic Alluri Seetarama Raju, the minister lauded his enduring legacy in cinema and culture. The event drew a galaxy of political and

film personalities, including AP Assembly Deputy Speaker Raghuraam Krishnamraju, Machilipatnam MP Kesineni Sivanath, hero Jay Krishna, Gadde Rammohan, Bonda Uma, and Buddha Venkanna. Minister Kollu Ravindra, who inaugurated the bronze statue, spoke glowingly about Krishna's deep connection to Vijayawada. "Telugu people will cherish Krishna's name forever," he declared. "Every hero shares an inseparable bond with him."

Back in the day, spotting a Krishna movie poster meant we rushed to the theaters that's a



pull unique to him alone. "MP Kesineni Sivanath highlighted Krishna's strong ties to Vijayawada, noting that his blockbuster film Eennadu was shot there. "Krishna didn't just

make movies; through Eennadu, he reshaped the history of state politics," Sivanath remarked. He drew parallels with Krishna's grandson, actor Mahesh Babu's son Jay Krishna,

predicting, "Just like Mahesh Babu, Jay Krishna will rise as a superstar and bring glory to the family."

"Deputy Speaker Raghuraam Krishnamraju went further, as

serting, "No one surpasses Superstar Krishna." He marveled at Krishna's feat of starring in 350 films in a remarkably short span, calling him an unparalleled actor. Krishnamraju also celebrated the emergence of Jay Krishna as the third-generation heir. "It's heartening to see Jay Krishna acting under prominent producer Ashwanidit's banner," he added, emphasizing the statue's placement along Vijayawada's bustling BUND Road as a fitting tribute. The ceremony underscored Krishna's monumental impact on Telugu cinema, which

spanned over five decades. Born Ghattamaneni Siva Rama Krishna Murthy in 1943, he debuted with Tenali Ramakrishna in 1966 and became a household name with hits like Mosagallaku Moga-gadu, Alluri Seetarama Raju, and Simhasanam.

His versatility across genres—action, mythology, and social dramas earned him the "Superstar" moniker. Krishna's political foray, including founding the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) alongside son Mahesh Babu, further cemented his influence, as echoed by speakers. Krishna passed away in

November 2022 at 78, leaving a void, but events like this keep his spirit alive.

Participants expressed joy over the statue immortalizing him in Vijayawada, a city he cherished. As Kollu Ravindra put it, seeing Krishna evokes the valor of freedom fighter Aluri a testament to his heroic screen persona. This unveiling not only honors a cinematic icon but also bridges generations, with Jay Krishna carrying forward the legacy. It reflects Andhra Pradesh's ongoing celebration of its cultural heroes amid political festivities.

### Andhra Pradesh Witnesses Record-Breaking National Highway Construction Post-Coalition Government



TPN Bureau | Jan 11

Vijayawada | Amaravati: In a remarkable boost to infrastructure development, national highway construction across Andhra Pradesh has gained unprecedented momentum since the coalition government took office. The state is now achieving record levels of progress in national highway projects, highlighted by the swift advancement of the Bengaluru-Kadapa-Vijayawada Economic Corridor.

This surge has propelled the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to secure Guinness World Records, underscoring the state's commitment to rapid, high-quality road building. A standout achievement unfolded in Sri Sathya Sai and Puttaparthi districts, where non-stop construction occurred from 10:07 AM on January 6 to the morning of January 11, 2026. Over these six days,

workers laid an astonishing 52 kilometers of road (equivalent to 156 lane kilometers), setting a new benchmark in highway development. The record was forged in the Vanavolu-Vankaragunta-Odulapalle section under Packages 2 and 3, where intensive concrete pouring and paving operations clinched two Guinness Records. Construction firm Rajpath Infracon supplied a staggering 57,500 metric tons of concrete, ensuring top-tier quality throughout. The operation mobilized an impressive fleet: 70 tippers, 5 mixing plants, and 17 rollers worked relentlessly around the clock.

This milestone comes amid broader highway expansions in Andhra Pradesh, where daily progress rivals national highs. Previously lagging projects have revived, signaling a new era of efficiency. Experts hail it as a game-changer for logistics, tourism, and employment in the region.

celeration, promising enhanced connectivity, trade, and growth for Andhra Pradesh.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu extended heartfelt congratulations to NHAI, state officials, and Rajpath Infracon for this feat. In a statement, he praised their dedication, noting how such initiatives align with the government's vision for world-class infrastructure. "This record not only boosts our highways but ignites development across the state," Naidu remarked, emphasizing the coalition's focus on timely project delivery.

He instructed the legal team to present robust arguments on behalf of the state government. Minister Ramanaidu directed wa-

ter resources department officials to furnish the legal team with all records related to the case. He explained that the project proposes utilizing just 200 TMC of the 3,000 TMC of water that flows wastefully into the sea annually. Citing the Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal (GWDT) award, he asserted Andhra Pradesh's right to use the surplus water.

"As the lower riparian state in the Godavari basin, Andhra Pradesh can harness the remaining floodwater without infringing on other states' rights," he clarified to the officials. The minister noted that the state has already submitted a feasibility report to the Centre and is

incorporating their suggestions. He stressed that tenders related to the Detailed Project Report (DPR) are merely preparatory steps. "We will proceed with construction only after obtaining all legal clearances," Ramanaidu declared.

The project seeks to link the Godavari River—flowing through Andhra Pradesh as its final state with Nallamala Sagar to pump surplus waters to Rayalaseema, preventing their merger into the sea at Antarvedi. This initiative aligns with efforts to maximize underutilized resources for agricultural prosperity. However, Telangana has vehemently opposed the project, approaching the Supreme Court to block its construction. The court last adjourned the hearing to January 12. In this context, Sunday's meeting included Irrigation Special Secretary Sai Prasad, Advisor Venkateswararao, ENC Narsimhamurthy, lawyers, and Inter-State Irrigation senior officials. The Polavaram-Nallamala Sagar Link under-scores Andhra Pradesh's push for inter-basin water transfer amid ongoing disputes. With the Supreme Court set to deliberate, the state is gearing up for a strong defense, balancing development needs with legal and federal protocols.

## Vijayawada Brims with Sankranti Cockfight Fever Amid Festive Preparations

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Vijayawada: The three-day Sankranti festival has ignited a unique wave of excitement across Vijayawada and its surrounding areas, blending tradition with vibrant celebrations. Even before the official festivities begin, the city outskirts are buzzing with preparations for massive cockfights, drawing crowds that rival those in the Godavari districts. Thousands of spectators are expected at these events, set up on a grand scale near major highways in orchards and open layouts.

While women and children revel in home-based festivities, men uphold age-old customs by flocking to cockfight and bullfight arenas. Despite their illegality under the law, these generational traditions persist, turning Sankranti into a high-stakes spectacle. Organizers are readying arenas for cockfights and potta



(bull) fights, complete with robust birds and bulls trained for the bouts. Massive venues accommodating 4,000 to 5,000 people at once are under construction, featuring elevated platforms and gallery-style seating arranged like sports stadiums. Entry is strictly token-based only those with organizer-issued tokens gain access, ensuring controlled crowds. Spectators will enjoy free chilled drinks and full meals, enhancing the festive experience. The events go beyond fights, offering family-friendly attractions. Exhibition matches

highlight top contenders, while women compete in rangoli (muggulu) contests. Children can thrill on giant wheels and play areas. Food courts serving traditional pindi vantalu (steamed rice cakes) and other Sankranti delicacies add to the allure. Venues sparkle with colorful decorations, transforming empty fields into festive hubs that pulse with energy.

Police presence is expected to maintain order, focusing on traffic and public safety rather than enforcement against the fights. As Vijayawada gears up, the air fills with anticipation, promising an unforgettable Pongal season.

## Drunk YouTuber Hits Three in Vijayawada Exhibition Grounds Chaos; Child in Critical Condition

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Vijayawada: A horrifying incident unfolded at the Bobburi Grounds exhibition area in Bhavanipuram, Vijayawada, late Sunday evening when an inebriated YouTuber from Rajarajeshwari Pet rammed his car into three pedestrians, leaving one child in critical condition.

The accident, which occurred amid the bustling grounds often used for public events, has sparked outrage over reckless driving and hit-and-run tendencies in the city. Eyewitnesses described a scene of sheer panic around 9:30 PM as the driver, identified preliminarily as a local content creator known for YouTube videos, sped through the crowded premises in a state of intoxication. The vehicle struck three victims a young boy, a woman, and another adult causing severe injuries. Bystanders

rushed to aid the victims, who were promptly shifted to a nearby government hospital via a 108 ambulance service.

Medical sources confirmed the child's condition as critical, with head injuries and internal bleeding requiring immediate intensive care. The other two victims are stable but under observation for fractures and lacerations. Instead of stopping to assist, the driver fled the scene at high speed, abandoning the wreckage and sparking a frantic police pursuit.

Vijayawada Police Commissionerate teams arrived swiftly, securing the site and launching a manhunt. CCTV footage from the exhibition grounds and surrounding areas is being reviewed, with vehicle registration details aiding the search. "We have formed special teams to apprehend the accused. Preliminary inquiries point to alcohol con-

sumption as the primary factor.

Strict action will follow under relevant IPC sections for rash driving, drunk driving, and hit-and-run," stated a senior police official at the scene. Local residents expressed fury over the growing menace of drunk driving in Vijayawada's busy outskirts. Bhavanipuram, home to exhibition grounds that host frequent fairs and gatherings, has seen multiple such incidents, prompting calls for enhanced night patrols and sobriety checkpoints.

Activists from road



safety groups urged the Andhra Pradesh government to enforce stricter penalties under the Motor Vehicles Act, including lifetime license suspensions for repeat offenders. The incident underscores persistent challenges in urban traffic management, especially during evening hours when crowds swell at public venues.

As investigations continue, authorities have appealed to the public for any leads on the absconding driver. Updates on the victims' conditions are awaited, with the boy's family urging swift justice.



# Sankranti Spectacle: Stone-Lifting and Dragon Boat Thrills Light Up Andhra's Rural Heart

B a p t l a | Atreyapuram, Andhra Pradesh: As Sankranti ushers in harvest joy across Andhra Pradesh, rural areas explode with festive fervor. Villages buzz with time-honored rituals, drawing NRIs from abroad alongside locals for bullfights, cockfights, and cockroach races. But in Bapatla district's Eepurapalem Panchayat at Savarapalem, one tradition stands out: the thrilling "Gundu Rayi" stone-lifting competition, a test of raw strength passed down through generations.

A week before Sankranti, competitors flock to practice, honing their skills under the winter sun. Village elders organize categories for sub-juniors (70kg stone)

and seniors (120 kg stone). Each round lasts five minutes, where athletes hoist the massive round stone overhead, rotate it behind their back, and release it repeating as many times as possible. The one with the most reps claims the title of "Village Bahubali" for the year, along with cash prizes: Rs 20,000 for sub-juniors and Rs 30,000 for seniors.

These events foster

community bonds in a smartphone-dominated era, locals say. "Such competitions revive fading human connections and spark mental joy," notes a resident. Teachers add that they build physical fitness, focus, and resilience. Drawing over 70 participants per category from 15 districts, the contests double as state-level senior meets and district junior showouts dispute-free spectacles cheered by crowds.

Three-time senior winner Gorla Gopinath, a local gym trainer who's competed six times, shares his secret: "It sharpens focus and

clear thinking. Our village has become the go-to address for these games pure celebration without drama." Meanwhile, in the picturesque Atreyapuram on the Godavari, between Vashishta and Gautami rivers, another highlight awaits: the 2026 Atreyapuram Festival's

"Sir Arthur Cotton Godavari Trophy National Dragon Boat Races."

Echoing Kerala's famed boat races, this three-day extravaganza at Tadipudi's main canal draws national crowds to Konaseema's lush beauty. Around 30 teams and 300 aquatic athletes from Andhra

ond, Rs 50,000 for third, plus trophies.

Swimming events span 16 categories from 100m sprints and 1000m endurance to 4x100 relays featuring ages 10 to 60. New this year: kayaking and boating add extra thrill. After a 2024 hiccup, organizers have



## Collector Cracks Whip on Revenue Staff Over Delayed Pattadar Passbooks in Prakasam

TPN Bureau | January 11

Ongole Collectorate: Severe delays in the distribution of pattadar passbooks have plagued United Prakasam district, drawing sharp criticism against the revenue department's negligence. While other districts have nearly completed the process, Prakasam lags far behind with a massive backlog, making it one of the worst performers statewide. Collector Raja Babu held a teleconference with tahsildars on Saturday morning, blasting them for the lapses.

Sources indicate he ordered them to complete the remaining distribution in a single day, akin to social pension payouts. The department has geared up to achieve full distribution by Sunday evening. The issue stems from the previous YSRCP government's hasty survey and distribution of



passbooks featuring then-Chief Minister Jagannath Reddy's photo, which faced widespread farmer backlash over inaccuracies. Upon assuming office, NDA alliance leader and current Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu promised to scrap those passbooks, correct survey errors, and issue new ones with the state emblem. Accordingly, re-surveys were conducted in select villages, and distribution has now commenced. The

government approved 72,841 passbooks for Prakasam.

### Distribution Kicks Off from January 2

Officials scheduled village-wise distribution from January 2 to 9. After a strong start, the revenue machinery slacked off, leaving a huge pendency compared to other districts. So far, only 49,532 passbooks have been handed out, with 23,309 still pending. In the teleconference, the Collector reviewed progress mandal-wise with RDOs and

tahsildars, demanding completion by Sunday evening.

### Social Pension-Style Push

Joint Collector R. Gopalakrishna echoed the urgency in a separate teleconference with ZP CEO, DPO, district secretariat officers, and MPDOs. He instructed MPDOs to coordinate with tahsildars, use secretariat staff for e-KYC verification from farmers, and distribute the pending passbooks in one day like social pensions.

### Allegations Mount Against Revenue Lapses

Revenue officials face accusations of lethargy, forcing other departments to step in. As the lead agency in government programs, their failure underscores poor performance—now relying on MPDOs for passbook distribution. Farmers have welcomed the new, accurate passbooks but expressed frustration over delays disrupting land records and transactions.

## Kashi Bugga DSP Issues Sankranti Safety Guidelines Amid Rising Thefts

TPN Bureau | January 11

Kashi Bugga: Kashi Bugga DSP Sheikh Saha Baj Ahmed advised residents heading to their native villages for Sankranti to avoid leaving valuables at home. Speaking to reporters on Saturday, he outlined stringent measures against the surge in thefts across the district. He directed police stations within the sub-division to implement robust actions. Surveillance has been intensified in key areas, including the Palasa-Kashi Bugga twin towns and all major localities.

"People traveling to their villages for Sankranti must prop-

erly lock their homes," he emphasized. He urged the public not to venture outdoors after 10 PM. Residents should utilize the Interlocking System app to connect directly with police for prompt services, he added. Citing adverse fog conditions, the DSP recommended avoiding travel during evenings and early mornings. "If you spot anyone suspicious moving around, inform the police immediately," he instructed. Special Vigil on Ganja and Drunk Driving The DSP warned of strict legal action against drunk driving. He cautioned youth against falling prey to

ganja and drugs, which ruin lives. "We won't tolerate groups gathering in open areas during Sankranti for such activities," he asserted firmly.

Reports indicate youth congregating in groups at major junctions in Palasa-Kashi Bugga towns, creating disturbances. Special surveillance has been established to curb this. He specifically highlighted concerns over children accessing two-wheelers. These directives aim to ensure a safe and secure festival season amid rising petty crimes. The DSP's proactive steps reflect heightened police readiness to maintain law and order.



## Special Memu train for regional connectivity

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Visakhapatnam: In a move to enhance regional connectivity and cater to the growing travel demand in north coastal Andhra Pradesh, the South Central Railway (SCR) has announced the operation of special MEMU trains between Visakhapatnam and Parvathipuram. The initiative, effective from January 14 to 18, 2026, aims to provide convenient and affordable transport options for daily commuters, pilgrims, and festival-goers during the peak season.

The outbound train, numbered 08565, will depart from Visakhapatnam Junction at 10:00 hrs daily, arriving at Parvathipuram at 12:20 hrs. This two-hour journey covers key intermediate stations, ensuring accessibility for passengers from surrounding areas. In the return direction, train No. 08566 will leave Parvathipuram at 12:45 hrs, reaching Visakhapatnam at 16:00 hrs, offering a swift afternoon turnaround for those returning to the port city.

These special trains will halt at prominent stations including Simachalam, Pendurthi, Kottavalasa, Vizianagaram, Gajapathinagar,



am, Komati palli, Donkinavalasa, Bobbili, and Sitanagaram. This extensive stoppage network is designed to serve the dense population along the Visakhapatnam-Parvathipuram route, which falls under the Waltair Division of SCR. Commuters from these junctions can now avoid long waits for regular services and benefit from punctual, short-distance travel.

Both trains will operate with all general class coaches, prioritizing economy and comfort for unreserved passengers. No reservation quotas or AC facilities will be available, align-

ing with the MEMU (Mainline Electric Multiple Unit) model's focus on high-frequency, mass transit services. Each trainset typically accommodates around 1,000-1,200 passengers, making it ideal for peak-hour rushes.

Railway officials highlighted the strategic importance of this service amid rising demand due to local festivals, agricultural activities, and workforce mobility between urban Visakhapatnam and rural Parvathipuram.

These specials are a direct response to passenger feedback, reducing road congestion on NH-16 and promoting

greener rail travel," said a SCR spokesperson. The route, spanning approximately 100 km, traverses scenic Eastern Ghats terrain, connecting industrial hubs like Vizianagaram with temple towns such as Parvathipuram, famous for its Veeragharam and nearby shrines.

This initiative underscores SCR's commitment to Andhra Pradesh's infrastructure growth, complementing ongoing projects like rail electrification and station redevelopment under Amrit Bharat Stations Scheme. Similar MEMU specials have proven successful in

## Kurnool High Court Bench Confirmed, Ministers Collaborate on Proposal: TG Bharat

TPN Bureau | January 11, 2026

Kurnool: Andhra Pradesh Industries, Commerce, and Food Processing Minister TG Bharat today assured that the establishment of a High Court bench in Kurnool is now certain. Speaking at a Sankranti celebration organized by local advocates here on Sunday, the minister revealed ongoing discussions with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Minister Nara Lokesh on this long-standing demand.

"We are actively coordinating with the CM and Lokesh to finalize the details," Bharat stated, emphasizing that proposals for setting up the bench in one of the A, B, or C camps in Kurnool will soon be submitted to the higher authorities. In a significant announcement, he added that alongside the High Court bench, a new Collectorate building will also be constructed to bolster administrative infrastructure in the region. This develop-

ment is expected to enhance judicial access for residents of Rayalaseema, reducing the burden on the main High Court in Amaravati. The event, attended by Government Pleader Yalamanchi Balaji, several Public Prosecutors (PPs), and a large gathering of advocates, turned into a platform for addressing key local issues. Bharat reaffirmed his commitment to resolving advocates' long-standing problems, promising proactive intervention.

Stern Warning to YSRCP Leaders on Tirumala Sacrilege In a fiery address, Minister Bharat urged YSRCP leaders to immediately cease petty antics targeting the sacred Tirumala hills. He accused the opposition party of staging a drama with liquor bottles to tarnish the current TDP-led government's image, a ploy that has now been exposed through advanced technology.

"Using technology, we've uncovered their liquor bottle stash—they never imagined it

would come to light like this," Bharat remarked, slamming the YSRCP's tactics as desperate mudslinging. Despite securing only 11 seats in the recent Assembly elections, he lamented, YSRCP leaders show no inclination to change or connect with the people. "They're not interested in getting closer to the public; they persist with these fake antics," he said, expressing frustration. Bharat made it clear that the government will not tolerate such disruptive actions.

"Our administration is committed to safeguarding Tirumala's sanctity," he asserted, highlighting ongoing efforts to protect the holy site's purity. The remarks come amid heightened political tensions in Andhra Pradesh, where the ruling TDP-Jana Sena-BJP alliance continues to push governance reforms while countering opposition narratives. Kurnool, a key Rayalaseema district, has long advocated for decentralized judicial facil-

# Parasakthi: When History Becomes a Political Weapon

Parasakthi is not merely a period film rooted in the past; it is history consciously repurposed for the political present. From its opening frames, the film declares its intent with striking clarity, anchoring itself in the anti-Hindi imposition agitations of the 1950s and 1960s. These protests were not marginal episodes in Tamil Nadu's past but seismic movements that reshaped the state's political landscape, ultimately catalyzing the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) into power and redefining the relationship between language, identity, and governance in the region.

Subtlety is neither the ambition nor the strength of Parasakthi. It is an openly ideological work that seeks to provoke fear, pride, anger, and resistance—emotions deeply woven into Tamil collective memory whenever questions of language and cultural survival arise. The anxiety surrounding Hindi imposition, and the perceived threat it poses to Tamil and other regional languages, is not confined to history textbooks. It continues to act as a powerful undercurrent in contemporary politics, particularly in opposition to the Bharatiya Janata Party's larger Hindutva project. The film understands this emotional and political continuity and exploits it with calculated precision.

Though its narrative unfolds during the Nehru-Indira Gandhi era, complete with references to the uncompromising and often violent resistance to central language policies, Parasakthi is unmistakably a film of the present. It functions almost pedagogically, explaining the historical roots of the DMK's staunch opposition to the three-language formula and portraying the party as the principal, if not sole, defender of Tamil identity against what it frames as north Indian cultural dominance. The past is not merely recreated; it is selectively curated to serve a contemporary ideological purpose.

The film foregrounds Dravidian stalwarts such as C N Annadurai and M Karunanidhi, presenting them as towering champions of the Tamil cause. Yet its protagonist, Sezhian—played by Sivakarthikeyan—is not a direct biographical stand-in for any one leader. Instead, he is a symbolic construct, embodying the spirit of the student and youth movements that formed the emotional and organisational backbone of the anti-Hindi agitations. Through Sezhian, the film collapses individual histories into a singular, heroic narrative of resistance.

Even the choice of the name "Sezhian" is politically loaded. Rooted in Tamil and meaning "prosperity," it reflects the Dravidian movement's long-standing rejection of caste- and religion-marked names derived from Hindu mythology. This tradition, exemplified by figures such as the late Era Sezhian—who abandoned his birth name R. Sreenivasan in favour of a secular Tamil identity—underscores how even personal naming becomes an act of ideological assertion. In this political culture, names are not neutral; they are dec-

larations of resistance. The title Parasakthi itself is a deliberate provocation. It immediately evokes the iconic 1952 film scripted by Karunanidhi, widely regarded as a cinematic manifesto of Dravidian rationalism and social revolution. The borrowing of this title is no coincidence. It is designed to trigger memory, loyalty, and ideological nostalgia, functioning as political branding of the highest order. The film does not merely tell a story; it invokes a legacy.

That the film is produced by Red Giant Movies further sharpens its political edge. The company's CEO, Inbanidhi, is the son of Deputy Chief Minister Udhaynidhi Stalin, whose name is conspicuously

highlighted in the opening credits. To argue that Parasakthi is apolitical would be disingenuous. It is cinema as political communication—crafted, timed, and positioned with remarkable strategic awareness.

One of the film's most crucial interventions is its reiteration of a central DMK argument often misrepresented by opponents: the resistance is not against Hindi as a language, but against its imposition. A striking scene depicts the protagonist protesting in Delhi while holding Tamil placards that read "Hindi Vazhga" (Long Live Hindi). The message is unambiguous—this is a struggle for federalism, dignity, and choice, not linguistic hostility. The film repeatedly stresses

that unity does not require uniformity, a line that resonates strongly in India's current political climate.

This theme is reinforced through dialogues in which the protagonist confronts a central government minister—clearly a reference to Indira Gandhi during her tenure as Information and Broadcasting Minister after Nehru's death. He asserts his commitment to national unity while accusing the Centre of confusing unity with enforced sameness. In this framing, the conflict is not between patriotism and separatism, but between competing visions of the nation.

Intriguingly, the film's antagonist is a fiercely patriotic police officer determined to crush the

Tamil agitation through brute force. The narrative thus stages a confrontation between two forms of nationalism: one rigid, centralised, and coercive; the other rooted in regional dignity and democratic resistance. In this inversion, the defender of Tamil identity emerges as the truer patriot.

By extending solidarity to Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, and Bengali voices, Parasakthi broadens its canvas beyond Tamil Nadu. It reframes Hindi imposition as a pan-Indian issue of regional identity versus cultural centralisation, lending the film resonance far beyond state borders. The struggle is no longer portrayed as parochial but as a national debate.

about the nature of India's federal structure.

None of this ideological weight would matter if the film failed as cinema. It does not. Parasakthi is gripping, emotionally charged, and accessible across generations. Its narrative momentum ensures that ideology never feels like a dry lecture but rather an immersive experience. The dramatization is heightened, sometimes exaggerated, but always effective.

Commercially, the film appears poised for an unchallenged box-office run. Politically, it feeds directly into the DMK-versus-BJP language narrative at a strategically crucial moment. Cinema alone may not swing elections, but as a tool of political mobilisation, it is undeniably potent. The film may even compel non-DMK supporters to reconsider fundamental questions of language, identity, and federalism in contemporary India.

Ultimately, Parasakthi strengthens the political standing of Udhaynidhi Stalin and his family, positioning them not merely as administrators but as custodians of the Dravidian ideological legacy. In Tamil Nadu, where politics has long found its loudest voice on the silver screen, this is cinema with intent, impact, and impeccable timing.

Directed by Sudha Kongara—already acclaimed for her cinematic craft—Parasakthi stands as both a powerful film and a calculated political statement. It is an exaggerated, fiercely dramatized version of history. But as the film itself seems to argue, in the charged atmosphere of an election season, facts often matter less than the narratives built upon them.



## Rashtriya Khanij Chintan Shivir-2026: Telangana's Vision for a Future-Ready Mining Sector

The Rashtriya Khanij Chintan Shivir-2026 emerged as a significant and timely initiative aimed at strengthening India's mining sector through cooperation, shared learning, and policy alignment. At a time when minerals—especially critical minerals—are central to economic growth, industrial expansion, and the global energy transition, the Shivir provided a rare and valuable platform for states to engage in open dialogue rather than operate in isolation. By bringing together mining ministers and senior officials from across the country, the forum enabled honest discussions on challenges, best practices, and solutions grounded in real-world experience.

More than a ceremonial gathering marked by prepared speeches, the Chintan Shivir encouraged meaningful exchange. States were able to candidly present what is working on the ground and where reforms require course correction. This collective approach reinforced an important reality: mining reforms cannot succeed through top-down directives alone. They require active and confident participation from states as equal partners, not merely as implementers of central policies. The Shivir effectively highlighted the importance of Centre-state coordination in building sustainable, efficient, and secure mineral supply chains for the future. A key focus of the discussions was the growing importance of critical

minerals in India's development journey. With global supply chains under pressure and geopolitical uncertainties affecting mineral availability, domestic mineral security has become a national priority. The Shivir underscored the need for strategic planning, improved exploration, and responsible mining practices to support India's ambitions in manufacturing, renewable energy, electric mobility, and advanced technologies.

Among the participating states, Telangana stood out for the clarity and confidence of its approach. Labour and Mines Minister Dr. Gaddam Vivek Venkateswamy played a strong and constructive role, articulating Telangana's vision with precision and purpose. He clearly outlined the state's focus on strengthening domestic mineral security, expanding exploration activities, promoting self-reliance in critical minerals, and aligning mining reforms with long-term economic development goals. His interventions reflected not only policy clarity but also a deep understanding of the sector's complexities.

One of the most practical and relevant points raised by Dr. Vivek was the need for smoother coordination between the Centre and the states, particularly in areas such as approvals, land acquisition, and forest and environmental clearances. These processes often become bottlenecks, delaying projects and increas-

ing costs. Faster, transparent, and predictable clearances—without compromising environmental safeguards—are essential for improving efficiency and investor confidence. This concern resonates strongly across states and highlights the need for systemic reforms rather than piecemeal solutions.

In his detailed address at the Shivir and in interactions with the media, Dr. Vivek spoke extensively about identifying critical minerals, improving exploration strategies, refining auction mechanisms, and strengthening domestic mining and processing capacities. Importantly, he stressed the need for value addition within India, rather than limiting the sector to raw

material extraction. This holistic approach recognises that mining must be integrated with downstream industries, research institutions, and innovation ecosystems to deliver long-term economic benefits.

From a broader perspective, Telangana's participation demonstrated that the state is thinking beyond short-term gains. It is engaging with the entire mining ecosystem—from exploration and extraction to processing, logistics, and supply chains. This comprehensive outlook positions Telangana as a serious and forward-looking contributor to the national mining conversation.

A particularly notable aspect of Telangana's approach is its firm stance

against illegal mining. The state has openly acknowledged that illegal mining harms public resources, damages the environment, and undermines governance. Instead of downplaying the problem, Telangana has chosen to confront it decisively. Under Dr. Vivek Venkateswamy's leadership, the state has gradually adopted modern technological tools such as GPS-based vehicle tracking, drone surveillance, and satellite mapping. These systems enable real-time monitoring of mining operations, helping authorities detect violations early and prevent large-scale damage.

What stands out most

is not a symbolic slogan but a clear policy commitment reflecting transparency, sustainability, and accountability. Such clarity is essential if mining is to become a driver of development rather than a source of environmental degradation and social conflict. Dr. Vivek has also effectively linked mining reforms to Telangana's broader economic vision. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has articulated an ambitious goal of building a \$3 trillion economy by 2047. If managed responsibly, the mining sector can play a crucial role in achieving this target by supporting infrastructure development, industrial growth, employment generation, and energy security. Telangana's approach seeks to balance economic expansion with environmental care and social responsibility, recognising that sustainable development is the only viable path forward.

Examples from other states further reinforce the importance of strategic mineral planning. Projects such as the Ambaji Copper Project in Gujarat demonstrate how domestic mineral development can reduce import dependence, strengthen industrial capabilities, and create local employment. India currently relies heavily on imports for many critical minerals, exposing the economy to global supply disruptions. Well-planned domestic mining projects, supported by clear policies and strong governance, can signifi-

cantly improve national resilience.

In this context, Telangana's leadership deserves national attention. By combining strict enforcement, advanced technology, and a clearly articulated long-term vision, the state is emerging as a leader in mining reforms.

Dr. Gaddam Vivek Venkateswamy's emphasis on innovation, transparency, and accountability reflects a modern and responsible approach to governance. His contributions at the Rashtriya Khanij Chintan Shivir-2026 underline the idea that mining reforms succeed best when states lead with confidence and clarity.

If more states follow Telangana's example—embracing cooperation, technological innovation, and ethical governance—India's mining sector can become cleaner, stronger, and genuinely future-ready. The Chintan Shivir has shown what is possible when dialogue replaces isolation and vision replaces inertia. Telangana's role in this process stands as a reminder that meaningful reform begins with leadership willing to think ahead.



**Sagar Vanaparthy, Policy Analyst.**

## PM Modi Slams 'Colonial Mindset', Says India's Glorious Past Was Erased After Independence

Somnath, Gujarat — Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday strongly criticised what he described as a "colonial mindset" in post-Independence historical narratives, accusing certain historians and politicians of attempting to erase or distort India's civilisational past. Addressing a massive gathering after the culmination of the Shaurya Yatra at Somnath, the Prime Minister said India's history had been deliberately misrepresented in textbooks, particularly regarding religious invasions.

PM Modi alleged that the brutal invasions and destruction of sacred sites were downplayed or mislabelled as mere acts of looting. "Those who fought for the Somnath Temple were not given their due recognition and importance. Some historians and politicians even tried to whitewash the history of invaders. Religious invasion was labelled as loot. We were taught that Somnath was demolished only to loot treasures, while the cruel history of hate, atrocities, and terror was hidden from us," he said.

Referring to the reconstruction of the Somnath Temple after Independence, the Prime Minister recalled how Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's resolve to rebuild the shrine faced opposition. "After Independence, when Sardar Patel pledged to renovate the Somnath Temple, he was stopped from doing so. Objections were raised even to President Rajendra Prasad's visit to Somnath in 1951," PM Modi said. He warned that the



same forces were still active today, though their methods had changed. "Those who opposed the redevelopment then are present even now. Swords have been replaced with hidden conspiracies against India," he cautioned.

Calling for unity and vigilance, the Prime Minister urged people to remain alert to such forces. "We need to strengthen ourselves and stay united. We must defeat every power that tries to divide us. The journey of the last 1,000 years should inspire us to prepare for the next 1,000 years," he added.

PM Modi also highlighted the significance of India's ancient sacred sites, describing them as symbols of resilience and civilisational strength. "India has thousands of sacred sites like Somnath that are

thousands of years old. Unfortunately, after Independence, people with a slave mentality tried to distance themselves from this heritage. Despicable attempts were made to forget this history," he said.

The Prime Minister participated in the Shaurya Yatra as part of the four-day Somnath Swabhiman Parv, commemorating 1,000 years of unbroken faith since Mahmud of Ghazni's first attack on the Somnath Temple in 1026. The symbolic procession, marked by the participation of 108 horses from the Gujarat Police Mounted Unit, represented courage, sacrifice, and the indomitable spirit that preserved Somnath through centuries of destruction and revival.

Despite repeated attacks and demolitions over centuries, Somnath remained alive in the

collective consciousness of the people. Its repeated reconstruction stands as a unique example in world history, symbolising faith, identity, and civilisational pride.

The present Somnath Temple was rebuilt following Sardar Patel's resolve expressed on Kartik Sud 1, Diwali day, November 12, 1947. The reconstruction, funded by public participation, culminated in the consecration ceremony on May 11, 1951, attended by then-President Rajendra Prasad. In 2026, India will mark 75 years of this historic moment, reaffirming its civilisational self-respect. Revered as the first among the 12 Aadi Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva, the Somnath Temple stands majestically along the Arabian Sea as a lasting symbol of faith and national resolve.

## Suvendu Adhikari Sits on Dharna Inside Chandrakona Police Station, Demands FIR Over Alleged Attack

West Bengal Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari on Saturday night staged a protest inside the Chandrakona police station, demanding the immediate registration of an FIR after alleging that his convoy was attacked by workers of the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) in Paschim Medinipur district.

Adhikari accused the TMC of orchestrating the attack as part of an attempt to intimidate and eliminate the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) from the state ahead of upcoming elections. Speaking to TPN from inside the police station, the BJP leader said he would not leave until action was taken against those responsible.

"We are here for justice. The elections are not far, and they know they are about to lose. That is why they want to demolish the BJP," Adhikari said. He alleged that senior leaders from the TMC's youth wing and labour union were involved in the incident and claimed that he had provided the police with the names of those responsible. "I am urging that an FIR be registered



immediately and that these people be arrested," he added.

Earlier, Adhikari had taken to social media platform X to describe the alleged attack. He claimed that the incident took place around 8:20 pm on Chandrakona Road while he was returning from Purulia. According to him, his convoy was "viciously attacked" by TMC workers in the presence of police personnel.

"These cowards, emboldened by the Mamata Banerjee regime's culture of violence and impunity, attacked me right in the presence of the Mamata Police," Adhikari wrote. He further alleged that the police remained silent spectators during the incident. "This is not just an attack on me; it is an assault on every voice of opposition in West Bengal," he said.

Accusing the ruling party of political desperation, Adhikari claimed that the TMC was resorting to violence because it could not

counter growing public anger. He reiterated that he was sitting on a dharna inside the police station demanding immediate action and arrests. "I will not budge until accountability is enforced. The people of Bengal deserve better than this lawless dictator," he stated.

Reacting to the incident earlier in the day, West Bengal BJP president Samik Bhattacharya alleged a complete collapse of law and order in the state. Speaking to ANI, Bhattacharya said the situation amounted to a "total breakdown of constitutional machinery" and called for immediate intervention by constitutional authorities.

"What is happening in

West Bengal is not merely the absence of law and order. It amounts to a total breakdown of constitutional machinery.

The custodians of the Constitution must intervene immediately," he said.

As of late Saturday night, there was no official response from the state police or the Trinamool Congress regarding the allegations.

## Alleged Audio of Masood Azhar Surfaces, Claims Thousands of Suicide Bombers Ready to Strike

An audio recording allegedly featuring Masood Azhar, the chief of the banned terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), has surfaced, in which he claims that a large number of suicide attackers are ready to strike at any moment. Masood Azhar is a UN-designated terrorist who has long been accused of orchestrating attacks against India while operating from Pakistan.

In the purported audio, Azhar is heard boasting about the strength and preparedness of his cadre, claiming that thousands of suicide bombers are awaiting his approval to infiltrate India. He suggests that the actual number of fighters at his disposal is far greater than what is publicly known and that revealing the full figure would shock the international community.

In the recording, Azhar says in Urdu, "These suicide bombers are not one, not two, not 100, not even 1,000. If I reveal the complete number, there will be an uproar in the world's media." He further



claims that these individuals are highly motivated and eager to carry out attacks, describing their intent as achieving what he calls martyrdom for their cause.

However, the date, location, and authenticity of the audio clip could not be independently verified. There has been no official confirmation from security agencies so far regarding when the recording was made or whether it genuinely features Azhar.

Masood Azhar has a long

history of issuing inflammatory statements against India. He is accused of being the mastermind behind several high-profile terror attacks, including the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament and the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. JeM has been responsible for multiple suicide bombings and militant strikes in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country over the years.

The emergence of this audio comes months after Indi-

an armed forces carried out targeted strikes on Jaish-e-Mohammed infrastructure inside Pakistan. Among the locations hit was the group's headquarters in Bahawalpur. Those strikes were part of India's response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, in which 26 people lost their lives. Reports indicated that several of Azhar's close relatives were killed in the strikes.

Separately, Delhi Police sources have linked Umar Mohammad, a suspect in a recent blast in the national capital that killed at least 15 people and injured around 20 others, to the Pakistan-based terror group.

Masood Azhar has not made a public appearance since 2019. That year, his hideout in Bahawalpur was reportedly targeted in a powerful blast by unknown assailants, which he survived. Since then, he has largely remained out of public view, though intelligence agencies continue to monitor his ac-

## Trust India, Not Speculation: Piyush Goyal Responds to Claims on India-US Trade Talks



Union Minister Piyush Goyal on Sunday urged citizens to place their trust in India rather than "foreign statements," responding to speculation around the status of the India-US trade agreement. His remarks came a day after the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) firmly rejected claims that the proposed trade deal failed to materialise because Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not make a phone call to former US President Donald Trump.

Speaking at the NDTV Power Play conclave, Goyal addressed comments made by United States Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, who had suggested that negotiations with India did not progress while Washington moved ahead with trade agreements with other countries. Lutnick had compared trade negotiations to a staircase, claiming that countries that acted first secured better terms. "The first stair gets the best deal," Lutnick had said, implying that late movers faced less favourable outcomes.

Responding to this, Goyal said trade negotiations are complex and cannot be

judged through public remarks. "Nobody is an outsider in Mumbai," he said.

In a conversation with NDTV's CEO and Editor-in-Chief Rahul Kanwal, Managing Editor Padmaja Joshi, and Associate Editor Puja Bhardwaj, Goyal spoke about ongoing infrastructure projects aimed at easing Mumbai's chronic traffic problems. He said residents were prepared to endure short-term inconvenience for long-term benefits. "The people of Mumbai are willing to suffer short-term pain for long-term gain," he said, describing the infrastructure push as part of the futuristic vision of Prime Minister Modi and Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Goyal also made political remarks, claiming that Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar and his daughter, Lok Sabha MP Supriya Sule, regret aligning with the opposition against the BJP. He alleged they are now attempting a political course correction by aligning with Ajit Pawar ahead of the Pimpri Chinchwad municipal corporation elections.

## Fadnavis Says Shinde Is Easy to Work With, Calls Uddhav Thackeray Unpredictable



Maharashtra Chief Minister and senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis has drawn a sharp contrast between his experiences of working with Shiv Sena leaders Uddhav Thackeray and Eknath Shinde, describing the former as difficult to handle and the latter as relatively easy to work with.

Speaking at NDTV's Power Play programme on the upcoming elections to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Fadnavis shared insights from his political journey alongside both leaders. The interaction was moderated by NDTV CEO and Editor-in-Chief Rahul Kanwal, Managing Editor Padmaja Joshi, and Executive Editor Jitendra Dixit.

Fadnavis, who has been part of alliances with both leaders spans several years. His first term as Chief Minister was in alliance with the undivided Shiv Sena led by Uddhav Thackeray. However, following the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly elections, Thackeray exited the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and formed a government with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress. In 2022, a rebellion led by Eknath Shinde

and manage. "Shinde ji is an emotional person, and I am emotional too, though perhaps more practical. If you understand his emotional side, working with him becomes easy," Fadnavis said.

In contrast, he described former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray as unpredictable. "Uddhav ji is unpredictable. To understand him, I would probably need to appoint a researcher. That is why handling him is difficult," he remarked, underlining the challenges he faced while working with the Shiv Sena leader.

Fadnavis' political association with both leaders spans several years. His first term as Chief Minister was in alliance with the undivided Shiv Sena led by Uddhav Thackeray. However, following the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly elections, Thackeray exited the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and formed a government with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress. In 2022, a rebellion led by Eknath Shinde

split the Shiv Sena, resulting in the collapse of the Thackeray-led government. Shinde then aligned with the NDA and assumed office as Chief Minister. After the NDA returned to power in the state elections last year, Fadnavis took over as Chief Minister, with Shinde serving as his deputy.

Addressing speculation about possible tensions within the NDA, Fadnavis dismissed such claims, asserting that the alliance remains stable. "We are in a strong alliance and will continue together for the next five years as well," he said.

He also brushed aside interpretations of Shinde's frequent visits to Delhi as signs of discord. Fadnavis clarified that Shinde often travels to the national capital to meet his grandson and party leaders. "He is meeting BJP leaders in Delhi. I would be concerned only if he were meeting leaders from another party," he added, reaffirming confidence in the unity of the NDA government.

## Iranian Hospitals Overwhelmed Amid Deadly Nationwide Protests



Hospitals across Iran are struggling to cope with a surge of casualties as anti-government protests continue to spread nationwide, medical workers have reported. Emergency wards in multiple cities, including Tehran, are overwhelmed, with some hospitals describing "bodies piled on top of one another" following a violent crackdown by security forces.

At Poursina Hospital in Rasht, northern Iran, 70 bodies arrived on Friday night alone. A hospital source said the morgue quickly reached full capacity, forcing staff to temporarily store bodies in the hospital's prayer room. "The bodies were placed on top of one another," she said, underscoring the severity of the situation.

In Tehran, medics reported that many of the injured were young protesters arriving with fatal gunshot wounds. One emergency worker told the BBC that approximately 38 people died immediately upon reaching hospital beds, often before CPR could be administered. "There were direct shots to the heads of young people, to their hearts as well. Many didn't even make it to the hospital," she said. Most victims were reportedly aged between 20 and 25.

In other cities, injuries were similarly severe. A physician in Kashan noted that some protesters were shot in the eyes, while a Tehran doctor recounted seeing a patient with a bullet passing through the head.

## US Conducts Retaliatory Strikes Against ISIS in Syria Following Deadly Attack on American Personnel



The United States launched another series of retaliatory airstrikes against the Islamic State (ISIS) in Syria on Saturday, responding to last month's deadly ambush that killed two US soldiers and an American civilian interpreter. The large-scale strikes, conducted alongside partner forces, targeted multiple ISIS positions across Syria around 12:30 p.m. ET, according to US Central Command.

The operation, dubbed Operation Hawkeye Strike by the Trump administration, is part of Washington's broader response to the December attack in Palmyra that claimed the lives of Sgt. Edgar Brian Torres-Tovar and Sgt. William Nathaniel Howard, both members of the Iowa National Guard, as well as civilian interpreter Ayad Mansoor Sakat.

"Our message remains strong: if you harm our warfighters, we will find you and kill you anywhere in the world, no matter how hard you try to evade justice," US Central Command said in a statement on Saturday, underscoring the administration's commitment to retaliating against threats to American personnel.

The strikes follow a similar operation launched on December 19, which targeted 70 locations in central Syria, hitting ISIS infrastructure and weapons depots. While the US military did not disclose the identities of the partner forces involved in Saturday's op-

eration, the attacks reflect ongoing coordination with local allies.

For years, the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have served as Washington's primary partner in the fight against ISIS within Syria. However, since the ouster of former Syrian President Bashar Assad in December 2024, the US has increasingly coordinated with the central government in Damascus, which recently joined the global coalition against ISIS.

Adding to pressure on ISIS, Syrian security forces announced on Friday that they had arrested the military leader responsible for IS operations in the Levant. Analysts say this development, combined with US-led strikes, could weaken the group's operational capabilities in the region.

Operation Hawkeye Strike is the latest demonstration of the US commitment to pursuing ISIS militants following attacks on American forces abroad. The coordinated response signals that the US intends to hold ISIS accountable for attacks on its personnel and maintain pressure on the terror group in Syria.

As the US continues its counter-ISIS operations, the strikes also reflect a broader shift in strategy, combining support for local partners such as the SDF with coordination with the Syrian central government to target terrorist networks effectively across the region.

## Trump Revives Pledge to Cap Credit Card Interest Rates at 10%, Drawing Industry Opposition

Former President Donald Trump has renewed his campaign promise to cap credit card interest rates at 10% for one year, a move that could save Americans tens of billions of dollars but has drawn immediate opposition from the banking and credit card industries.

Trump announced the plan in a social media post on Friday night, though he did not specify whether the cap would be implemented through executive action or legislation. A Republican senator, Sen. Roger Marshall (R-Kan.), said he spoke with Trump and intends to work on a bill "with his full support," aiming for it to take effect on January 20, marking one year since Trump took office.

In his post, Trump wrote, "We will no longer let the American public be ripped off by credit card companies that are charging interest rates of 20 to 30%." Analysts estimate that a 10% cap could save Americans roughly \$100 billion annually, while still leaving credit card companies profitable, though some rewards and perks might be reduced.

Currently, around 195 million Americans hold credit cards, accruing \$160 billion in interest charges in 2024, according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). Average interest rates on credit cards range between 19.65% and 21.5%, down slightly from recent highs



but still significantly higher than the roughly 12% average a decade ago.

Banks argue that such a cap would harm low-income and high-risk borrowers, potentially forcing them toward high-cost alternatives like payday loans or pawnshops. The American Bankers Association and allied groups issued a joint statement opposing Trump's proposal, warning that it could drive consumers toward "less regulated, more costly alternatives."

Researchers, however, contend that a 10% cap could be implemented without widespread account closures. Brian Shearer, director of competition and regulatory policy at the Vanderbilt Policy Accelerator, noted that the dominant credit card issuers earn massive profits across income levels and could absorb the change while remaining profitable.

Historically, interest rate caps have existed in some sectors. The Military

Lending Act limits rates for active-duty service members to 36%, and some credit unions cap their credit card rates at 18%. Critics cite states like Arkansas, where strict caps have limited credit access for lower-credit borrowers, highlighting the potential trade-offs of nationwide limits.

Trump's proposal has received support from a bipartisan group of lawmakers. Senators Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.) and Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) previously

introduced a plan to cap rates at 10% for five years. Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and Anna Paulina Luna (R-Fla.) have also proposed similar legislation.

While the credit card industry has been a consistent supporter of Trump's administration and campaign, the new proposal underscores growing public scrutiny over high interest rates amid rising consumer debt, which now totals approximately \$1.23 trillion.

## Protests in Iran Enter Third Week Amid Rising Violence and US Warnings



Nationwide protests challenging Iran's theocracy continued into Sunday, with demonstrators flooding the streets of Tehran and Mashhad, the country's capital and second-largest city. Activists report that the ongoing unrest has resulted in at least 116 deaths, with more than 2,600 arrests, though Iran's internet blackout and cut phone lines have made independent verification difficult.

The demonstrations, which began on December 28 over the collapse of the Iranian rial, have grown into broader anti-regime protests, challenging the foundations of the Islamic Republic amid economic hardship and international sanctions targeting Iran's nuclear program. The rial has plummeted to over 1.4 million to the US dollar, fueling widespread frustration.

Iranian officials re-

sponded with threats. Parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf warned that the US military and Israel would be "legitimate targets" if Washington carried out strikes against Iran, citing President Donald Trump's statements offering potential military action. Qalibaf, a hard-line figure, praised the police, the Revolutionary Guard, and the volunteer Basij forces for "standing firm" during the unrest and promised harsh punishment for those arrested or involved in the protests.

Meanwhile, Trump publicly supported the protesters, tweeting that "Iran is looking at FREEDOM, perhaps like never before. The USA stands ready to help!!" US officials told media outlets that Trump has been presented with military options to protect American interests but has not

made a final decision.

The State Department emphasized that Trump's warnings should be taken seriously.

Videos circulating online, likely transmitted via satellite connections such as Starlink, showed demonstrators gathering in northern Tehran, holding lit mobile phones and marching peacefully. In Mashhad, protesters reportedly confronted security forces, with streets blocked by flaming debris and overturned dumpsters near the holy Imam Reza shrine, giving the protests added symbolic weight. Protests were also reported in Kerman and other cities.

Iranian state media attempted to downplay the unrest, broadcasting pro-government demonstrations in cities such as Qom and Qazvin, and highlighting areas of calm elsewhere, while excluding Tehran and Mashhad.

Exiled Crown Prince

Reza Pahlavi, who has called for protests and encouraged demonstrators to display Iran's old lion-and-sun flag, has voiced support from abroad, though it remains unclear whether protesters are rallying for him personally or for a return to pre-1979 conditions.

The escalating unrest

comes amid fears of a severe crackdown. Iran's attorney general, Mohammad Movahedi Azad,

warned that anyone participating in the protests could be deemed an "enemy of God," a charge carrying the death penalty, and threatened punishment for those assisting rioters. The combination of an information blackout, economic crisis, and violent repression has created a tense environment, leaving both citizens and foreign observers anxious about the future trajectory of the unrest.

## Reza Pahlavi Urges Iranian Protesters to Stay on Streets Amid US Support, Khamenei Defiant



Reza Pahlavi, the US-based son of Iran's former Shah, has urged protesters across Iran to remain on the streets, promising that he will soon join them. Addressing demonstrators as "my compatriots," Pahlavi praised their resilience over three consecutive nights, saying their actions have "severely weakened Khamenei's repressive apparatus and

his regime."

Pahlavi claimed he received reliable reports indicating a shortage of security personnel willing to confront the massive crowds. "Many armed and security forces have left their workplaces or disobeyed orders to suppress the people," he said, adding that only a minority of violent mercenaries, whom he described as

past several days.

Human rights groups report dozens of deaths, while NetBlocks, a global Internet monitoring organization, said the country has had virtually no connectivity since Thursday.

The demonstrations, initially sparked about two weeks ago by economic hardship worsened by international sanctions and last year's conflict with Israel, have evolved into a broader nationwide movement demanding the removal of the Supreme Leader.

### US Signals Support

US President Donald Trump expressed support for the protesters, posting on Truth Social that "Iran is looking at FREEDOM, perhaps like never before. The USA stands ready to help!!" Reports indicate Trump has been briefed on potential military options,

though officials stressed that no final decision has been made.

### Khamenei Responds

In response, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei dismissed Trump's statements, criticizing the US and portraying protesters as being misled. "The US President has said that if the Iranian government does such-and-such, I'll take the side of the rioters. The rioters have put their hopes in him. If he's so capable, he should manage his own country," Khamenei said on X.

He reaffirmed the regime's defiance, asserting that "the Islamic Republic of Iran, established with the sacrifice of several hundred thousand honorable people, won't back down in the face of those causing destruction."

## Aditya Birla Sun Life Mutual Fund Reopens Subscriptions to Three International Equity Schemes

Aditya Birla Sun Life Mutual Fund has resumed accepting fresh investments in its three international equity schemes after a suspension of over three months. The fund house issued a notice-cum-addendum on January 9, 2026, reversing the suspension that had been in place since October 7, 2025.

The reopening applies to the following schemes: Aditya Birla Sun Life International Equity Fund, Aditya Birla Sun Life Global Emerging Opportunities Fund, and Aditya Birla Sun Life Global Excellence Equity Fund of Fund. Investors can now make fresh purchases, switch-in investments, and systematic contributions such as SIPs (Systematic Investment Plans) and STPs (Systematic Transfer Plans) under these schemes, subject to certain limits.

As per the circular, the AMC will accept investments up to Rs 1 crore per PAN per day across all subscription transactions. The limit applies to fresh investments, additional purchases, and systematic transactions wherever available. The resumption of inflows will be effective from Monday, January 12, 2026. However, the fund house has clarified that it retains the right to revise the maximum subscription limit at any time in the future.

While subscriptions have reopened, all other features, terms, and conditions outlined in the Scheme Information Document



(SID) and Key Information Memorandum (KIM) remain unchanged. The notice-cum-addendum issued will form an integral part of the existing scheme documents.

The three international equity schemes focus on providing investors exposure to global markets. The International Equity Fund primarily invests in large-cap and mid-cap companies listed overseas, while the Global Emerging Opportunities Fund targets high-growth companies in emerging markets. The Global

Excellence Equity Fund of Fund invests in other international mutual funds to achieve diversified global exposure.

The suspension of fresh inflows in October 2025 was implemented due to operational considerations. During the suspension period, the AMC had halted new SIP and STP registrations, although existing systematic investments registered before October 7, 2025, were allowed to continue uninterrupted. This move was aimed at managing the operational and liquid-

ity challenges arising from overseas investments in international markets.

With the reopening, investors can once again tap into international diversification through these schemes, which provide a vehicle to gain exposure to global equities and emerging market opportunities. The AMC's move to resume subscriptions is likely to attract investors looking to diversify their portfolios amid ongoing volatility in domestic markets and strong growth potential overseas.

## Gold's Bullish Momentum Set to Continue in 2026 Despite Record Rally in 2025

After one of the most dramatic rallies in modern market history, few investors are expecting gold to replicate its astonishing performance in 2026. Yet, despite the improbability of a repeat surge, many top money managers remain bullish on the precious metal, arguing that the underlying forces that propelled bullion to historic highs last year remain intact.

Gold surged an extraordinary 65% in 2025, marking its strongest annual performance in nearly 50 years. Retail and institutional investors alike piled into bullion alongside central banks, fueling unprecedented momentum. A convergence of almost every tailwind imaginable—falling interest rates, geopolitical tension, and inflation fears—propelled gold to surpass even its inflation-adjusted high, a level that had held since 1980. In an environment where most asset classes struggled to gain traction, gold became the standout performer, drawing attention from seasoned market participants and casual investors alike.

Despite the dramatic run, many money managers who oversee trillions in assets say they are not rushing to take profits, maintaining conviction in the metal's long-term appeal. "We continue to expect gold to rally in 2026, as the drivers of its strong run remain intact," said Ian Samson, a portfolio manager at Fidelity International. Samson, who trimmed his position during a particularly frenzied stretch in October, has since added back, citing central bank purchases, declining interest rates, and high fiscal deficits as ongoing supportive factors for gold.

A key underpinning of gold's appeal lies in waning confidence in major developed-market currencies. Attacks on central bank independence, ballooning sovereign debt, and mounting political discord have undermined trust in fiat currencies, driving investors toward bullion. The past year was particularly illustrative: a congressional standoff in the United States, governmental paralysis in France, and scrutiny of Japan's record budget under its new leadership all contributed to the narrative that fiat currencies are increasingly vulnerable.

"Gold is basically an anti-fiat currency play now more than anything else," said Mike Wilson, chief investment officer and strategist at Morgan Stanley. The view gained traction in late 2025 as the so-called debasement trade—buying gold as a hedge against currency dilution—took hold. Prominent investors such as Ken Griffin and Ray Dalio highlighted gold's meteoric rise as a warning signal, reinforcing its status as a hedge



against systemic risks.

Wilson suggests that investors should allocate roughly 20% of their portfolios into real assets, including gold, as a hedge against inflation, replacing the traditional 60/40 split between stocks and bonds with a 60/20/20 structure.

He emphasizes that the debasement thesis has gone mainstream, yet he believes the market has not fully priced in the implications of global fiscal indiscipline. "When everybody understands the story, you have to ask yourself: Well, is it priced now?" Wilson said. "I don't think it's fully priced, only because I don't see the change in behavior yet. I don't see fiscal discipline anywhere in the world. In fact, I see the opposite."

Historical precedent suggests a note of caution. Oversized rallies have often been followed by long periods of underperformance. After bullion hit \$1,921 an ounce in 2011, propelled by the aftermath of the global financial crisis, it took nine years to revisit that level. Similarly, gold's 127% surge in 1979 was followed by a prolonged bear market. These examples illustrate that even after monumental gains, periods of consolidation and moderate price appreciation are common.

Despite its record rally, gold remains lightly held in the United States. Exchange-traded funds backed by gold account for just 0.17% of private US financial portfolios, according to a December analysis by Goldman Sachs. This figure remains six basis points below the 2012 peak. Goldman analysts estimate that each 0.01% increase in gold's share of US portfolios could lift prices by roughly 1.4%, highlighting the metal's potential for further upside if investor allocation grows.

Central bank purchases remain a major driver of gold prices. Goldman Sachs expects monthly acquisitions of around 80 tons in 2026. Central bank demand accelerated in 2022 after the immobilization of Russia's foreign exchange reserves underscored the appeal of bullion, a liquid asset that cannot be frozen. Thomas Roderick, portfolio manager at hedge fund Trium Capital LLP, emphasized that gold's dual appeal: strong returns and protection against

downside risks elsewhere in their portfolios. "Of course, we don't see the same upside potential as last year, when gold was basically the best asset class of all," Castelli noted. "But we are still bullish on gold."

A central component of Roderick's bullish thesis is China's continued accumulation of gold. The country's strategy involves using vast trade surpluses to acquire assets insulated from US geopolitical pressure. "China won't say 'gold is too expensive, let's accumulate more Treasuries,'" he explained. "That just doesn't work for them from a geopolitical perspective."

Looking ahead, gold's trajectory in 2026 will likely be shaped by a combination of structural and short-term factors. Low real interest rates, rising fiscal deficits, continued central bank buying, and geopolitical uncertainties provide long-term support. At the same time, market volatility, investor sentiment shifts, and global economic developments could drive short-term fluctuations. Even if gold does not replicate its 65% gain, its role as a hedge against currency debasement, inflation, and geopolitical risk remains strong behind the bullish sentiment.

In conclusion, while 2026 may not see a repeat of last year's historic rally, gold is expected to remain a key component of diversified portfolios. From central bank purchases to institutional adoption, from concerns over fiat currencies to China's strategic accumulation, the forces supporting bullion remain robust. For investors seeking protection against uncertainty and long-term wealth preservation, gold continues to offer a unique combination of safety, liquidity, and potential upside in a volatile global environment.

## Techno Paints to Launch Rs 500 Crore IPO, Appoints Sachin Tendulkar as Brand Ambassador



Techno Paints and Chemicals is gearing up to raise Rs 500 crore through an initial public offering (IPO) in the next financial year, company sources confirmed on Saturday. The move comes as the paint manufacturer seeks to expand its presence nationwide and strengthen its market position.

In a major marketing boost, Techno Paints has appointed cricket legend and Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar as its brand ambassador for the next three years. The company said the collaboration with the "Master Blaster" is expected to enhance its visibility and support its growth strategy across India.

"We are honoured to collaborate with one of the world's most iconic cricketers and a Bharat Ratna, Sachin Tendulkar. We are looking forward to achieving bigger and greater milestones this year with our expansion plans and the IPO. No one could have been a better ambassador or growth partner for us," said Akuri Srinivas Reddy, Chairman of Techno Paints and Chemicals.

This is the latest high-profile endorsement for Techno Paints, which had earlier appointed film actor Mahesh Babu as its brand ambassador for a two-year period starting in 2023. The addition of Tendulkar signals the company's ambition to strengthen its national footprint and connect with a

wider audience.

On the financial front, Techno Paints reported revenue of Rs 210 crore for 2024-25 and is expecting to nearly double that to Rs 450 crore in the current fiscal year. Looking ahead, the company has set an ambitious revenue target of Rs 2,000 crore by 2029-30.

Techno Paints manufactures a diverse range of decorative, industrial, and specialty paints, offering more than 3,000 shades of decorative products. Currently, the company operates in eight states and union territories, including Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Delhi, Odisha, and Chandigarh.

The company plans to expand further within India, entering Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh by the end of 2026. Beyond domestic growth, Techno Paints aims to enter the Middle Eastern market in the 2026-27 financial year, leveraging its expanded portfolio and brand visibility through Tendulkar's endorsement.

With the IPO, increased marketing initiatives, and strategic expansion plans, Techno Paints aims to position itself as one of India's leading paint manufacturers. The combination of a strong product portfolio, national and international growth plans, and high-profile brand ambassadors is expected to drive both market presence and investor interest in the coming years.

## Asia's Technology Stocks Surge on AI Optimism and Strong Fundamentals



Asia's technology stocks have started 2026 with strong momentum, as investors bet that the region's tech sector will continue to outperform its US peers. Analysts point to rising demand for artificial intelligence (AI)-related products, solid earnings potential, and attractive valuations as key drivers behind the bullish sentiment.

Strategists at Goldman Sachs are overweight on Asian tech, citing further gains driven by AI adoption and reasonable valuations. Citigroup noted that global long-term investors are accumulating positions in Asia's technology firms, highlighting the region's central role in the semiconductor supply chain and its earnings potential.

The MSCI Asia Pacific Information Technology Index has climbed about 6% this year, outperforming the Nasdaq 100's 2% gain, reflecting a rotation toward Asia amid growing doubts over the sustainability of US tech's AI-driven rally. Strong corporate results are bolstering confidence: Samsung Electronics reported preliminary operating profit more than triple last year's, while Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. (TSMC) surpassed revenue expectations. Chinese AI firms also delivered impressive stock market debuts, further fueling optimism.

"This comes down to a shift in where investors see the best risk-reward," said Dilin Wu, research strategist at Pepperstone Group. "US tech is like a mature gold mine — already rich in value. Asian tech, on the other hand, is undervalued but fundamentally strong, rewarding those who recognize it."

Asian tech stocks trade at a forward

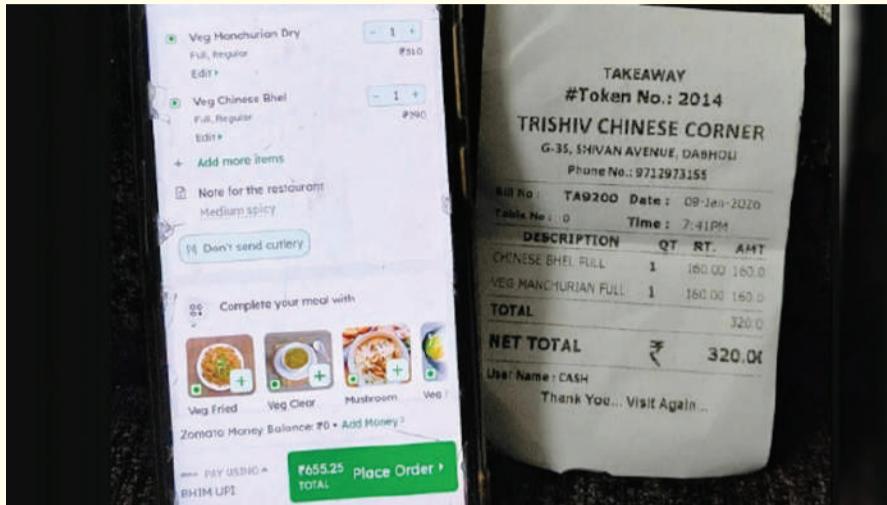
price-to-earnings ratio of 16.3 times, compared with roughly 25 times for the Nasdaq 100, even after outperforming the US index by 33 percentage points since the end of 2024. South Korea and Taiwan, Asia's two tech-heavy markets, are expected to see earnings-per-share growth of 79% and 36%, respectively, over the next year, compared with a forecast 28% for Nasdaq firms.

Key companies, including Samsung, TSMC, and SK Hynix, have gained between 8% and 16% this year, while Hong Kong-based Hua Hong Semiconductor surged more than 20%. Investors are also keeping an eye on upcoming TSMC full-year results, with several brokerages raising price targets amid expectations of improving profitability.

China remains a central focus, with enthusiasm driven by innovations such as DeepSeek's AI development paper, Kuaishou Technology's AI video editing model, and Beijing's self-sufficiency push. Earnings growth for China's tech megacaps is poised to surpass the US "Magnificent 7" for the first time since 2022. A growing pipeline of AI-related IPOs in Hong Kong and mainland China adds further upside potential.

"AI is a multi-year global growth driver, and North Asia's tech ecosystem — spanning hardware, software, and infrastructure — positions the region at the forefront of this trend," said Gary Tan, portfolio manager at Allspring Global Investments in Singapore. Analysts note, however, that geopolitical tensions, particularly in Taiwan, and any slowdown in global AI spending could pose risks to the sector.

## Former YouTuber Flags Price Discrepancy on Zomato, Sparks Debate on Food Delivery Transparency



Former YouTuber Nalini Unagar has sparked an online debate after sharing her experience of what she described as excessive pricing on the food delivery platform Zomato. Taking to social media, Unagar highlighted a sharp difference between the actual cost of her food and the amount charged on the app, raising questions about transparency in third-party food delivery services.

According to Unagar, she ordered Veg Manchurian Dry and Chinese Bhel, items that should have cost ₹320 based on the restaurant's regular pricing. However, the bill generated on Zomato showed a total of ₹655. Even after applying available discounts, she said she was still required to pay ₹550. Expressing her frustration, Unagar termed the final amount "absolutely insane" and accused the platform of blatantly overcharging customers.

In her post, she directly tagged Zomato and demanded an explanation for the significant dis-

crepancy. "Customers are being overcharged openly," she wrote, urging the company to take responsibility and provide clarity on how such pricing differences occur.

Zomato responded to her post, stating that prices listed on the app are "solely determined by restaurant partners."

The company clarified that it functions only as an intermediary between customers and restaurants and claimed it has no control over menu pricing. Zomato also said it would forward Unagar's feedback to the concerned restaurant.

However, the company's response did not end the discussion. Instead, it triggered further criticism from social media users who questioned Zomato's role in influencing prices.

One user pointed out that many restaurants increase menu prices on delivery apps not to make extra profit, but to offset the high fees charged by aggregators. "If Zomato calls itself just an intermediary, it still carries responsibility," the comment read, adding that the platform's business model directly affects pricing decisions.

Unagar's post has since resonated with many users, reigniting broader concerns about rising food delivery costs, inflated online menus, and a lack of clear pricing breakdowns.

Several users shared similar experiences, questioning why food ordered online often costs significantly more than dine-in or direct takeaway prices.

The incident has once again brought attention to the growing demand for transparency in the food delivery ecosystem, as customers increasingly question who bears responsibility for higher prices—the restaurants, the platforms, or the system as a whole.

## Young Student in Inner Mongolia Wins Praise for Helping Classmates with Traditional Chinese Medicine



A young student in northern China has drawn widespread admiration for using his growing knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) to help his classmates. Zhao Tianyu, a Grade Three pupil at Kai-lu No. 1 Middle School in Tongliao, Inner Mongolia, has become known among students as a "little TCM doctor" for offering voluntary health advice during school breaks, according to a report by the South China Morning Post.

Zhao's interest in traditional Chinese medicine began three years ago when he accompanied his grandfather for medical treatment. Fascinated by the diagnostic methods and healing processes he observed, Zhao developed a strong curiosity about TCM. He soon began studying the subject independently, reading old TCM books at home and watching online courses to deepen his understanding.

His unusual skills first

attracted attention when he checked the pulse of a classmate sitting next to him in class. After a brief examination, Zhao correctly identified that the student frequently stayed up late and was experiencing weakness in the spleen and stomach. Impressed by the accuracy of his observations, the classmate shared the experience with others, and word quickly spread.

Soon, students from Zhao's own class and neighbouring classes began approaching him during breaks for advice. According to his teacher, Liu, many of these students were simply curious to see whether the young boy's assessments were reliable. "They had heard that there was a 'little TCM doctor' in our class and wanted to see for themselves," Liu said.

The feedback from both teachers and students has been overwhelmingly positive. Liu noted that Zhao Tianyu's preliminary diagnoses are often surprisingly accurate, in

some cases comparable to assessments made by doctors at hospitals. However, Zhao remains cautious and responsible in his approach. He consistently reminds his classmates that his observations are only preliminary and advises them to seek professional medical attention if they feel unwell.

Liu praised Zhao's maturity, saying that he displays a level of caution and responsibility that is rare for someone his age. Rather than presenting himself as an expert, Zhao understands his limitations and emphasises the importance of proper medical care.

Zhao's dedication to traditional Chinese medicine has earned him the respect and trust of both classmates and teachers. His willingness to help others, combined with his passion for learning, has made him a standout student at his school and an inspiring example of how curiosity and kindness can positively impact a community.

## From Tragedy to Triumph: How Wang Xinyi Turned Disability into Opportunity for Others



Five years after a devastating car accident altered her life forever, a young Chinese woman has transformed personal tragedy into a mission of hope and empowerment, creating jobs for people with disabilities and inspiring thousands with her resilience. Wang Xinyi's remarkable journey has drawn widespread attention across China, with her story recently highlighted by the South China Morning Post.

Wang, now a well-known social media influencer, was just in her early twenties when a car crash in 2020 left her critically injured. The Porsche sports car, driven by a friend, crashed violently, resulting in Wang losing her left arm and left leg. Her injuries were severe—she suffered three cardiac arrests and underwent 14 surgeries to survive. As she fought for her life, she also faced emotional devastation. Her boyfriend left her during her recovery, and the friend who survived the crash stopped covering her medical expenses.

The physical and emotional recovery was long and painful. It took Wang nearly a year to fully accept her new re-

ality. Rather than allowing despair to define her future, she chose to see the accident as a turning point. She renamed herself "Yuu," meaning "right right," symbolising a fresh beginning and a conscious decision to move forward with strength and independence.

In 2023, Wang took her mission further by opening a shoe-cleaning factory in Guangdong province, close to her hometown in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The factory employs 10 people, half of whom are specially abled. Wang assigns tasks based on each employee's strengths rather than their limitations. An employee with brittle

bone disease handles shoe sorting and digital record-keeping, while a hearing-impaired worker operates noisy machinery. Another employee, who has polio, is entrusted with detailed cleaning work, valued for his patience and precision.

Wang firmly believes that disability does not define a person's potential. "Everyone has unique abilities," she has said, emphasising that people with disabilities simply need the right opportunities to thrive.

The factory now

cleans between 700 and 800 pairs of shoes each day and generates nearly 300,000 yuan in monthly revenue. Wang hopes to expand the business by opening a branch in her hometown so she can be closer to her parents, who stood by her throughout her recovery. Her efforts have received strong support from the Nanning Association of Professional Services for People with Disabilities.

Beyond entrepreneurship, Wang actively gives back to society. She volunteers as a public representative for the Federation of People with Disabilities and uses her growing influence—nearly 500,000 social media followers—to promote businesses run by disabled individuals and raise funds for medical causes. Recently, she helped raise 800,000 yuan for a 12-year-old girl battling leukemia, enabling the child to undergo a life-saving bone marrow transplant.

Today, Wang Xinyi's story stands as a powerful reminder that resilience, purpose, and compassion can turn even the deepest pain into a source of hope for others.

## Bengaluru Resident Flags Worsening Traffic and Road Safety Concerns on Outer Ring Road



A long-time Bengaluru resident has raised serious concerns over deteriorating traffic conditions, poor road quality, and the lack of lane discipline on the city's busy Outer Ring Road (ORR), urging the government to take immediate and strict corrective measures. The resident, who has lived in the city all his life, said Bengaluru's infrastructure has seen a sharp decline in recent years, making daily commuting increasingly stressful and unsafe.

Expressing deep attachment to the city, he said he continues to love Bengaluru despite its growing challenges. However, he noted that issues such as worsening traffic congestion, declining air and water quality, and badly maintained roads have significantly affected the quality of life for residents. Among these, he stressed that road conditions and traffic management have become the most serious concerns.

The resident said he regularly travels the full stretch of the Outer Ring Road—from Silk Board to Mahadevapura—at least twice a week. What was once a manageable commute, he explained, has now turned into a frustrating and time-consuming journey due to relentless congestion and unpredictable traffic movement.

He added that he has

tried almost every mode of transport available in the city, including office cabs, buses, private cars, bikes, and even a combination of three metro lines. While each option comes with its own benefits, he pointed out that all of them ultimately face the same core problems on the road—poor infrastructure, lack of discipline, and constant traffic bottlenecks.

According to him, reckless driving and inconsistent lane usage significantly worsen congestion. He observed that buses and taxis frequently change lanes without warning, often creating sudden slowdowns and long traffic snarls. These abrupt movements, he said, make driving stressful for motorists and dangerous for two-wheeler riders.

The condition of the ORR itself, he noted, is equally alarming. Several stretches are uneven, damaged, or poorly maintained, posing serious risks—especially to those riding motorcycles. The resident explained that when riding his bike, he must remain constantly alert, not just to other vehicles but also to the road surface. Potholes, uneven patches, and loose gravel increase the risk of skidding, which could easily result in fatal accidents.

Calling for urgent action, the resident appealed to civic authorities and traffic officials to prioritise road repairs, enforce strict lane discipline, and improve overall traffic management on the ORR. He stressed that without immediate intervention, commuting on one of Bengaluru's most important arterial roads will continue to endanger lives and strain the city's already overburdened infrastructure.

## Sixteen Years Late: Nokia Phones Ordered in 2010 Finally Delivered in War-Torn Libya



In a bizarre yet deeply symbolic episode reflecting Libya's prolonged instability, a mobile phone dealer in Tripoli has finally received a shipment of Nokia mobile phones that were originally ordered in 2010—more than a decade and a half ago. The extraordinary delay was the result of the civil war that erupted in 2011 and the subsequent collapse of the country's logistics, customs systems, and basic infrastructure.

According to local accounts, the shipment remained stranded in storage facilities for nearly 16 years as armed conflict, political fragmentation, and widespread insecurity disrupted trade and transportation networks across the country. The forgotten consignment consisted entirely of button-based Nokia phones—models that once dominated the global market but have since been rendered technologically obsolete.

When the long-delayed package finally arrived

at the dealer's shop, the moment was met with disbelief and laughter. A video capturing the unboxing quickly circulated on social media, showing the shopkeeper laughing uncontrollably as he examined the devices. "Are these phones or historical artifacts?" he joked, highlighting the absurdity of receiving technology that belonged to a bygone era.

The shipment reportedly included premium models of the time, such

as music-edition phones and Nokia Communicators, which were once considered status symbols and cutting-edge devices. Today, however, they serve as reminders of how dramatically the mobile phone industry—and Libya itself—has changed over the past decade and a half.

Despite the short distance, the package took 16 years to reach its destination, underscoring the scale of institutional collapse caused by years of conflict. The viral video amused thousands online, with users reacting to both the humour and the underlying tragedy of the situation. Many commented on how prolonged conflict can severely disrupt everyday life and business operations, turning routine

transactions into extraordinary stories.

Some social media users also saw unexpected value in the long-forgotten devices. With a growing global interest in vintage technology, several suggested that the phones could fetch higher prices among collectors. "Looking at the current geopolitical situation, these phones are valuable—there's no tracking," one user wrote. Another commented, "These are trophies from a great lost era and probably worth more now."

Others were simply entertained by the unboxing itself. "I tried to stay serious, but the way they were pulling out the phones made me burst into laughter," one user said.

Beyond the humour, the episode stands as a striking reminder of how deeply conflict can distort time, commerce, and daily life—sometimes in ways that are as surreal as they are revealing.

# Dewald Brevis and Keshav Maharaj Focus on SA20 Amid T20 World Cup 2026 Build-Up

South African young gun Dewald Brevis has said he remains unfazed by outside noise and is focused on enjoying his game ahead of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026. Currently featuring for Pretoria Capitals in the SA20 league, Brevis emphasized that whether he plays in domestic tournaments or on the global stage, the external chatter does not impact him.

"It's always outside noise, whether you play SA20 or the World Cup. At the end of the day, it stays a cricket game, it stays a white ball, and I'm just going to enjoy it and play the way I always play. It doesn't affect me," Brevis said. The 22-year-old expressed excitement about the upcoming T20 World Cup, set to begin on February 7, saying, "Everyone's form is building, but we focus on the now, which is the SA20. We're having fun here, and it's super excit-



ing for the World Cup around the corner."

Brevis made his T20I debut against Australia in Durban in August 2023. Since then, he has featured in 19 T20 internationals, scoring 469 runs at an impressive strike rate of 173.70, including one century and one half-century. His aggressive batting style and consistency have

made him a key prospect for South Africa heading into next year's global tournament in India and Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, Pretoria Capitals captain and South African veteran Keshav Maharaj is also balancing domestic and international commitments ahead of the World Cup. Maharaj, a left-arm spinner with 40

T20I appearances, has taken 38 wickets at an average of 26.50 since debuting against Sri Lanka in Colombo in 2021. The 35-year-old, who leads South Africa's spin attack, said the SA20 is an excellent platform for match practice while preparing for the marquee event.

"Not to think too far ahead, but it's a wonderful

opportunity for us to get match practice under our belt. We've only played one series in India so far, so this is great preparation," Maharaj said. Discussing the nature of T20 cricket, he stressed the importance of trusting the process, adding, "Sometimes you go for runs, sometimes you pick up wickets, sometimes you're economical. You have to keep trusting your processes, keep working hard, and maintain a positive frame of mind."

With Brevis focusing on maintaining his form and Maharaj emphasizing preparation over pressure, South Africa aims to head into the T20 World Cup 2026 well-prepared. Both players reflect the team's strategy of blending youthful exuberance with experienced leadership, creating a balance that could prove decisive in the global tournament.

## Mark Boucher Confident Virat Kohli Will Feature in 2027 ODI World Cup

Former South Africa cricketer Mark Boucher has expressed full confidence that India's batting stalwart Virat Kohli will play in the 2027 ODI World Cup, which will be co-hosted by South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia next year. Speaking to ANI in Paarl, Boucher highlighted that Kohli's fitness is not a concern and that the decision to participate will rest entirely on the player's own desire.

"Virat is going to be there. There's no doubt in my mind," Boucher said. "He has stepped away from a couple of formats at the moment, but fitness is not an issue. It's simply about whether he wants to play. From what I see, I'm sure his mind is set on coming here and playing in another World Cup."

Boucher emphasized that India continues to rely on Kohli's vast experience, noting the void



left when senior players like Kohli and Rohit Sharma are absent. "We've seen in India, especially in Tests, that when Rohit and Virat are not there, it leaves a significant gap. For South Africa, the World Cup would be a better tournament if Virat is involved, and for India, it would be fantastic to

have him there."

Kohli, who retired from Test cricket and T20Is, has shown exceptional form in the 50-over format following a rough patch earlier this year. In October 2025, he registered two consecutive ducks in Australia, which sparked speculation over his cricketing future. However, he has since silenced critics with consist-

ent performances in both international and domestic 50-over cricket.

In his last six 50-over innings, comprising four ODIs and two Vijay Hazare Trophy (VHT) matches, Kohli has maintained an extraordinary record, scoring three centuries and three fifties without registering a single score below 50. His impressive

form was particularly evident during the three-match ODI series against South Africa in November-December, where he scored 135, 102, and an unbeaten 65\*.

Boucher believes that Kohli's participation would not only strengthen India's World Cup prospects but also elevate the competition overall. "India needs him, and the tournament itself gains excitement when a player of his calibre participates," he added.

With the 2027 ODI World Cup set to be held in familiar South African conditions, fans and cricketing pundits alike will be watching closely to see Kohli in action once again. If the former captain continues his current 50-over form, his presence could prove crucial for India's title challenge, adding both experience and firepower to the squad.

## Cricket Legend Rahul Dravid Turns 53: A Tribute to 'The Wall'



Former India captain and head coach Rahul Dravid celebrated his 53rd birthday on Sunday, earning tributes from fans and cricketing bodies worldwide. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) took to X to honour the batting great, who became a symbol of discipline, resilience, and technical mastery throughout his career.

Fondly nicknamed "The Wall," Dravid was renowned for his rock-solid defence, mental toughness, and ability to anchor innings under pressure. Beyond statistics, his impact on Indian cricket has been immense, both on the field and as a mentor to the next generation.

Dravid played 164 Test matches for India, amassing 13,288 runs at an average of 52.31, including 36 centuries and 63 half-centuries. His highest score of 270 highlights his ability to bat for extended periods in challenging conditions. He remains India's second-highest run-scorer in Tests and

ranks fourth overall globally.

In One Day Internationals (ODIs), Dravid featured in 344 games, scoring 10,889 runs at an average of 39.16, with 12 centuries and 83 fifties. His highest ODI score of 153 underscores his consistency across formats, making him India's fifth-highest run-getter in ODIs and tenth overall. He also represented India in a single T20 International, scoring 31 runs.

Dravid's presence extended to the Indian Premier League (IPL), where he played for Royal Challengers Bangalore (2008-2010) and Rajasthan Royals (2011-2013). In 89 IPL matches, he scored 2,174 runs at an average of 28.23, including 11 fifties, with a strike rate of 115.52.

After retiring, Dravid transitioned seamlessly into coaching, achieving remarkable success. As India's U19 head coach, he guided the team to the 2018 ICC U19 World Cup title and played a pivotal role in shaping emerging

stars such as Rishabh Pant, Shubman Gill, Ishan Kishan, Sarfaraz Khan, Arshdeep Singh, Abhishek Sharma, and Washington Sundar.

As India's senior team coach, he led the side to the finals of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) 2023 and the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023. Although India narrowly lost the World Cup final to Australia after a dominant 10-match winning streak, Dravid's mentorship was widely praised. Months later, India clinched the 2024 T20 World Cup in Barbados, marking a fitting celebration of his coaching acumen.

Beyond records and trophies, Dravid's legacy lies in his integrity, calm temperament, and commitment to nurturing talent. From his stellar performances as a batsman to his achievements as a coach, Rahul Dravid remains one of the most respected figures in world cricket, inspiring players and fans alike.

## Liam Rosenior Praises Chelsea's "Outstanding" Start After 5-1 FA Cup Win



Chelsea manager Liam Rosenior described his team's 5-1 demolition of Charlton in the FA Cup third round as "outstanding," highlighting a strong start to his tenure at Stamford Bridge. Rosenior, who arrived from Strasbourg to replace Enzo Maresca last week, oversaw goals from Jorrel Hato, Tosin Adarabioyo, Marc Guiu, Pedro Neto, and Enzo Fernandez in a dominant display at The Valley on Saturday.

The victory marked a perfect introduction for the 41-year-old boss, who is the latest in a line of high-profile managers at Chelsea following a turbulent period at the club.

Chelsea's former manager, Maresca, left after a challenging campaign reportedly affected by rifts with the club hierarchy. Rosenior now faces scrutiny from critics questioning whether he will be influenced by the club's power-brokers, given Chelsea and Strasbourg share the same ownership group.

The former Hull manager, who was sacked by the Championship side in 2024, has already demonstrated his authority with a resounding win over Charlton, who sit 19th in the Championship, avoiding any risk of an up-

set in his first match.

"A good start, professional. I thought our first goal came at an important time, a brilliant strike from Jorrel. The quality of my players was outstanding. Strong start, something to build on," Rosenior said. He praised individual performances, singling out Marc Guiu for a "magnificent" display that earned him a goal. Rosenior emphasized that while the victory was encouraging, there was no reason to be come complacent.

Chelsea have experienced frequent managerial changes since Todd Boehly's consortium took over, with Thomas Tuchel, Mauricio Pochettino, Graham Potter, and Maresca all unable to last long in charge.

Rosenior, however, became the first Chelsea manager since Antonio Conte in 2016 to win his debut match, a milestone after nine previous permanent and caretaker bosses failed to do so.

Looking ahead, Rosenior and Chelsea face a sterner test in the League Cup semi-final first leg against Premier League leaders Arsenal on Wednesday. "The lads have been really receptive, and I thank them for that. If we keep working in this way, I'm excited for the future," Rosenior said. "Just a small game next on Wednesday!"

The emphatic victory, coupled with Rosenior's positive start, provides a sense of optimism at Chelsea as the club looks to stabilize and regain consistency under a new managerial era.

## Sanju Samson Takes Batting Tips from Yuvraj Singh Ahead of T20 World Cup 2026



A video featuring India's wicket-keeper-batter Sanju Samson seeking batting advice from legendary all-rounder Yuvraj Singh is currently making waves on social media. In the clip, Samson can be seen standing attentively as Yuvraj shares his tips, highlighting the continuing role of senior cricketers in mentoring the next generation. Yuvraj has previously guided stars like Shubman Gill and Abhishek Sharma, helping Gill become India's ODI and Test captain and Abhishek establish himself as a dynamic T20I opener.

Samson has earned his place in India's squad for the 2026 T20 World Cup after a string of consistent performances at the international level, coupled with renewed confidence in his abilities. He will open the batting alongside Abhishek Sharma, forming a promising top-order partnership. Ishan Kishan has also been included as the second wicket-keeper option, returning to the side following a spectacular Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) 2025-26 season.

Kishan was instrumental in leading Jharkhand to their first-ever SMAT title, scoring 517 runs in 10 innings at an average of 57.44, including two centuries and two fifties, with a strike rate above 197.

Rinku Singh has also made a comeback to strengthen India's batting depth, providing additional firepower at the top and middle order. The squad boasts a strong core

of all-rounders and specialists to handle different conditions. Pace all-rounders Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube, along with spin all-rounders Axar Patel and Washington Sundar, bring balance and versatility. Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravarthy are India's primary spinners, while Jasprit Bumrah leads a potent pace attack alongside Arshdeep Singh and Harshit Rana.

Under Suryakumar Yadav's captaincy, India is placed in Group A of the T20 World Cup 2026, alongside Namibia, the Netherlands, Pakistan, and the United States. The team will kick off its campaign against the USA on February 7 in Mumbai.

The full squad for the T20 World Cup 2026 and the upcoming New Zealand T20I series includes: Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wicketkeeper), Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel (vice-captain), Rinku Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Harshit Rana, Arshdeep Singh, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarthy, Washington Sundar, and Ishan Kishan (wicketkeeper).

With the squad finalized and young players like Samson seeking guidance from experienced campaigners such as Yuvraj Singh, India aims to combine mentorship, experience, and talent to make a strong challenge in the 2026 T20 World Cup.

## India Clinches Thrilling Victory in First ODI Against New Zealand



India began its three-match One Day International (ODI) series against New Zealand with an impressive four-wicket win at the BCA Stadium in Vadodara on Sunday. Chasing a challenging target of 301, India secured the victory with six balls to spare, taking an early 10 lead in the series.

Winning the toss, Indian skipper Shubman Gill chose to bowl first, aiming to capitalize on favorable conditions. India's bowlers restricted New Zealand to 300 for 8 in their allotted 50 overs. Openers Devon Conway and Henry Nicholls laid a strong foundation with steady partnerships, while Daryl Mitchell led the scoring with 84 runs. The Indian bowling attack, led by Mohammad Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, and Harshit Rana, played a crucial role in containing the opposition's batting line-up.

In the run chase, India started steadily with Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli building a vital partnership. Kohli was the star of the innings, scoring a brilliant 93 off 91 balls, including eight fours and one six, guiding India through a tricky phase of the chase. His performance earned him the Player of the Match award and proved decisive in maintaining India's momentum.

Supporting Kohli were Shreyas Iyer, who contributed 49 runs, and

Shubman Gill with 56, providing stability at the top. The lower order, led by KL Rahul who remained unbeaten on 29, and a composed contribution from Harshit Rana, ensured India crossed the finish line comfortably in the 49th over.

The match was a display of India's balanced team effort, combining effective bowling with strong batting depth. It also highlighted the competitiveness of both sides, making for a thrilling contest. Senior Indian players achieved personal milestones during the match, with Rohit Sharma notably becoming the first player in the world to hit 650 international sixes, further cementing his status as one of the modern greats of the game.

The first ODI win has given India a strong start to the series, putting pressure on New Zealand as they prepare for the second ODI in Rajkot later this week. India will aim to maintain momentum and continue their dominance, while New Zealand looks to bounce back and level the series.

Overall, the opener showcased India's resilience and skill under pressure, setting the tone for an exciting ODI series. Fans will be eagerly watching to see whether India can continue their winning form and assert control over the series.

## CBFC Clears Ravi Teja's 'Bhartha Mahasayulaku Wignyapthi' with U/A Certificate



Good news for Telugu cinema fans as the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has officially cleared Ravi Teja's upcoming film Bhartha Mahasayulaku Wignyapthi for theatrical release with a U/A certificate. With the censor formalities now completed, the film is all set to reach audiences during the festive Sankranthi season.

Directed by Kishore Tirumala, the film is positioned as a wholesome entertainer that blends action, comedy, and emotion—elements that align well with Ravi Teja's signature mass appeal. The U/A certification indicates that the film is suitable for family audiences, with parental guidance advised for younger viewers, making it an ideal festive release.

The film stars Aashika Ranganath and Dimple

Hayathi as the female leads. Dimple Hayathi's character, Balamani, is said to bring freshness and energy to the narrative, while the supporting cast includes well-known actors such as Sunil, Satya, Vennela Kishore, Sudhakar, and Muralidhar, adding strong comic and emotional depth to the storyline.

Music for the film is composed by Bheems Cecirolo, whose songs and background score have already generated positive buzz. The technical team also features Prasad Murella as the cinematographer and Sreekar Prasad as the editor, ensuring high production values and a polished cinematic experience.

Since its announcement, Bhartha Mahasayulaku Wignyapthi has attracted attention for its intriguing title and

Ravi Teja's energetic presence. Promotional material released so far has heightened expectations, especially among fans eager to see the Mass Maharaja return in a full-fledged entertainer.

With Sankranthi being one of the biggest release windows in Telugu cinema, the film is expected to benefit from the festive holiday crowds. The makers are confident that the combination of Ravi Teja's screen charisma, relatable storytelling, and clean entertainment will strike a chord with audiences across age groups.

As the release date approaches, anticipation continues to build for Bhartha Mahasayulaku Wignyapthi, which promises to deliver laughter, emotions, and mass entertainment on the big screen.

## Vijay's Jana Nayagan Faces Censor Delays — 'Theri' to Re-Release for Sankranthi



In a surprising turn of events, the much-anticipated Tamil action drama Jana Nayagan, starring Thalapathy Vijay, has encountered a major hurdle with the censor certification process just days before its planned theatrical release, impacting its Sankranthi launch. The film, which many considered Vijay's final cinematic outing before his full-time entry into politics, was scheduled for a January 9 release but has now been postponed due to delays in securing a censor certificate from the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). The certification complications emerged after a complaint and subsequent referral to a revising committee, despite the producers completing suggested changes and re-submitting the film for approval. This unexpected situation prompted the team to seek judicial intervention, and multiple hearings are ongoing as they await a final decision on the matter.

The postponement has left fans disappointed, with many expressing their frustration across social media and in fan circles, given the emotional significance attached to Jana Nayagan as a potential farewell project for Vijay. The delay has also sparked broader conversations within the industry about the film certification process and its impact on major releases during key festival windows.

To ensure audiences still get a festive cinematic experience featuring Vijay, producer Kalaipuli S. Thanu announced that the blockbuster hit Theri will be re-released in theatres worldwide on January 15. Originally released in 2016, Theri marked a significant milestone in Vijay's ca-

reer, showcasing his dual role performance in a high-energy action thriller. The re-release is timed to coincide with the Sankranthi and Pongal celebrations, giving fans another opportunity to relive the excitement of the film on the big screen.

This strategic move has brought cheer to many supporters who were disappointed by the Jana Nayagan delay, as Theri remains a beloved favorite among audiences. The re-release also highlights the enduring popularity of Vijay's earlier work and offers a festive alternative while Jana Nayagan navigates its certification challenges.

As the censor and legal discussions continue, both fans and industry watchers are closely monitoring developments, hopeful that Jana Nayagan will eventually secure clearance and find its way to screens soon.

## Allu Arjun's Emotional Birthday Wish for Director Sukumar Wins Hearts

 Allu Arjun  
@alluarjun · Follow

Happy Birthday, darling.

It's a special day for me... more than for you... because this day changed my life. No amount of wishes can convey the joy of having you in my life. #HBDsukumar

Puttinandhuku thanks!!!

(Copyrights @pnavdeep26)



critical acclaim and a loyal fan following.

Fans flooded social media with messages celebrating both Allu Arjun and Sukumar, calling their bond inspirational and expressing hope for more collabora-

tions in the future. Many described the post as a rare glimpse into the personal side of a superstar, appreciating the humility and gratitude expressed by the actor.

As both Allu Arjun and Sukumar continue

to work on ambitious projects, their enduring partnership remains one of the most admired relationships in the industry—built not just on box-office success, but on trust, respect, and genuine affection.

## Meenakshi Chaudhary Promises Laughter and Fun in 'Anaganaga Oka Raju' This Sankranthi



Sankranthi 2026 is set to treat moviegoers with a fresh dose of entertainment as Anaganaga

Oka Raju gears up for its theatrical release on January 14. Starring the ever-popular Naveen

Polishetty and Meenakshi Chaudhary, the film promises to be a complete festive entertainer. Produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya under Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas, and presented by Srikrishna Studios, the film marks the directorial debut of Mari, with music composed by Mickey J Meyer.

From the outset, the promotional material for Anaganaga Oka Raju has caught the audience's attention with its refreshing vibe and energetic tone. Following three consecutive blockbusters from Naveen Polishetty, expectations are high, and the recently released trailer has further amplified the excitement.

Speaking to the media, heroine Meenakshi Chaudhary shared her experiences and insights into the film. She plays Charulatha, a pam-

pered girl from a wealthy family, described as innocent, sensitive, and soft-hearted. "My character is completely different from who I am in real life," Meenakshi revealed. "I'm practical, whereas Charulatha is very emotional. Playing a full-fledged comedy role has been both challenging and exciting."

Meenakshi highlighted the significance of her story and character depth over star power. She has previously played diverse roles, from an IPS officer in Sankranthi Vastunam to a mother in Lucky Bhaskar, and believes Anaganaga Oka Raju showcases a new dimension of her acting.

With this film, Meenakshi Chaudhary looks poised to charm audiences with her impeccable comic timing and lively performance, making Anaganaga Oka Raju one of the most anticipated releases of this Sankranthi season.

## Sharwanand's 'Nari Nari Naduma Murari' Trailer Promises Wholesome Family Entertainment



The trailer of Sharwanand's upcoming Telugu entertainer Nari Nari Naduma Murari has been unveiled, setting the stage for a laughter-filled festive release this Sankranthi. Packed with humor, emotions, and relatable family moments, the trailer has received a positive response from audiences and film lovers alike.

Directed by Ram Abbaraju, the film is presented as a feel-good family entertainer that revolves around relationships, misunderstandings, and comic situations. The trailer showcases Sharwanand in a light-hearted role, caught between past and present relationships, leading to a series of amusing and emotionally engaging moments. His comic timing and expressive performance stand out, promising a refreshing change from intense roles.

The film features Samyuktha Menon and Sakshi Vaidya as the female leads, both of whom play pivotal roles in driving the narrative forward. Their chemistry with Sharwanand adds charm and depth to

the storyline. Supporting actors like Vennela Kishore, Sunil, Naresh Vijay Krishna, and Sami Raj add strong comedic and emotional layers, making the film appealing to audiences of all age groups.

Produced by Anil Sunkara and Ramabrahmam Sunkara, Nari Nari Naduma Murari is designed as a complete family package, blending romance, comedy, and sentiment—elements that traditionally work well during the Sankranthi festival season. The makers have focused on clean humor and situational comedy, steering clear of loud or forced gags. The music, composed by Vishal Chandrasekhar, complements the film's tone, while the visuals and

background score elevate the emotional beats showcased in the trailer. The technical values appear polished, hinting at a well-crafted cinematic experience.

With Sankranthi being one of the biggest release windows in Telugu cinema, expectations are high for Nari Nari Naduma Murari. The trailer has successfully generated curiosity and excitement, positioning the film as a strong contender for audiences looking for wholesome entertainment to enjoy with family.

The film is scheduled for a theatrical release on January 14, 2026, and is expected to draw crowds seeking festive fun, laughter, and heartfelt moments on the big screen.

## Telugu Film 'Sindhuri' Launched, Shooting Begins in Hyderabad



The much-anticipated Telugu film Sindhuri officially went on floors today with a traditional pooja ceremony in Hyderabad. The film is being produced by Kishore Babu and Leela Reddy under their banners, with CK directing the project and Narala Nagaswara Rao contributing as the writer. Jay Babu is on board as the executive producer.

Starring Eshwar as the male lead and Aishwarya as the heroine, Sindhuri is set to have an intense 90-day non-stop shooting schedule across various locations in and around Hyderabad. The film is described as a heartfelt love story. Eshwar plays Govindu, a young man who has been in love with a girl named Sindhuri since childhood. The narrative explores the challenges he faces because of his deep affection for her. The story also introduces another girl who has feelings for

him, and the plot delves into the emotional and romantic dilemmas that follow. The central question is whether the young lovers overcome the obstacles in their path and how their relationships finally unfold.

Director CK promises a visually appealing and engaging narrative, while the team aims to capture the nuances of youthful romance and the emotional intensity of love tested by circumstances. With strong performances expected from the lead pair and a compelling story, Sindhuri is already generating buzz among Telugu cinema audiences.

The launch marks the beginning of what promises to be a vibrant and romantic cinematic journey, and the team is optimistic about completing the shooting within the planned schedule, aiming for a smooth production process in the coming months.