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208 Bicycles Distributed to Uppumaguru ZP High School Students



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Chandrababu Charts Andhra Pradesh as Knowledge and Creator Economy Hub

Amaravati, February 20, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu held a series of high-level discussions in Delhi as part of the India AI Impact Summit 2026, outlining his vision to position the state as a central hub for the knowledge and creator economy. Emphasizing that the state's youth with technology skills are its greatest resource, Chandrababu reiterated plans to nurture them into world-class experts in artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technology, and other emerging fields.

During the summit, held at Bharat Mandapam, the Chief Minister met leaders of global tech giants, including Adobe, Autodesk, Aramco, LEGO Education, and Nasscom, discussing collaboration opportunities and investment prospects.

In meetings with Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen, Chandrababu highlighted Andhra Pradesh's ambition to become a knowledge hub and requested support for expanding the creator economy. Narayen assured that Adobe would provide specialized creator software to



enhance skills for students and professionals in the state. Discussions also covered AI Living Labs, digitalization of public services, and capacity-building programs for tech talent.

With Aramco representatives, the Chief Minister focused on clean energy initiatives, including solar power and green energy projects, inviting the company to expand operations in the state, citing Andhra Pradesh's suitability for sustainable energy development.

Chandrababu also met NVIDIA Vice President Calista Redmond to explore partnerships in AI chip development and AI Living Labs, encouraging participation in the "AP First" project

in collaboration with IIT Tirupati and IISER Tirupati. In discussions with Autodesk CEO Mike Haley, he proposed establishing a global capability center for design engineering solutions in Andhra Pradesh.

Emphasizing early tech education, the Chief Minister invited LEGO Education to help set up AI and robotics learning labs in schools and proposed a "LEGO Cultural Experience Center" in Visakhapatnam. Additionally, meetings with Quantela Inc. Chairman Sridhar Gadh explored the integration of AI solutions in smart governance and citizen services.

After the meetings, Chandrababu toured

the summit stalls showcasing initiatives by NVIDIA, Tata, Intel, and Microsoft, reviewing AI applications in agriculture, healthcare, and industry. The Tata Group highlighted its "Sanjeevani" digital health records project and the Digital Nerve Center in Andhra Pradesh.

Through these engagements, the Chief Minister reaffirmed his vision of positioning Andhra Pradesh at the forefront of the technology-driven knowledge and creator economy, building a skilled workforce, and attracting global investments to transform the state into a hub of innovation and technology excellence.

OneMan Committee Appointed to Probe Alleged Ghee Adulteration in TTD



Amaravathi, 20 February 2026 | TPN Bureau

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has officially appointed a One-Man Committee to investigate allegations of adulteration and substandard ghee supplied to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). This move follows a case registered at Tirupati East Police Station (Crime No. 470/2024) concerning the supply of adulterated ghee to the temple, a matter that has raised serious concerns over the sanctity and quality of materials used in temple rituals.

According to the government order issued by C. Vijayabhaskar Reddy, Section Officer (SC), the inquiry will be led by Shri Dinesh Kumar, IAS (RR-1983) (Retd.), who has been appointed as the Chairman of the One-Man Committee. The retired bureaucrat has been tasked with conducting an independent and thorough in-

vestigation into the matter.

This decision was made after a Special Investigation Team (SIT), formed by the government, completed a preliminary investigation. The SIT's findings led to the filing of a chargesheet on 23 January 2026 against individuals allegedly involved in the incident. The SIT also recommended that a committee conduct a deeper review to ensure accountability among officers and employees responsible for procurement and quality control at TTD.

The primary responsibility of the Committee will be to identify lapses, omissions, and failures in the procurement and testing of ghee used by the temple. It will also assess whether the administrative and technical staff of TTD had failed to maintain due diligence and quality standards. Furthermore, the committee is expected to determine whether decisions were made without proper reasoning, documentation, or compli-

ance with prescribed procedures.

The government has mandated that the committee submit its detailed report within 45 days from the date of the order. The report will then be reviewed by the government for necessary follow-up action, including potential administrative or legal proceedings based on the findings.

Officials emphasized that the committee's proceedings would be strictly fact-based and independent, with recommendations aimed at strengthening the accountability and transparency of procurement processes for essential items supplied to temples.

The allegations of ghee adulteration have drawn public outrage, as ghee holds a sacred role in Hindu rituals and offerings. The government's latest move underscores its commitment to preserving the sanctity of temple practices and ensuring that all materials used in religious worship remain pure and untainted.

Amaravati Hosts All India Police South Zone T20 Cricket Meet



Amaravati, February 20, 2026 | TPN Bureau

The capital city of Amaravati has once again emerged as a major sporting venue, hosting the 2nd All India Police South Zone T20 Cricket Tournament 2025-26. The event was inaugurated on Friday with a grand opening ceremony at the Andhra Pradesh Special Police 6th Battalion Grounds in Mangalagiri, marking

another milestone for the Andhra Pradesh Police in organizing national-level sporting events. The prestigious tournament is being conducted under the aegis of the All India Police Sports Control Board, New Delhi, with participation from ten teams representing six states — Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and Chhattisgarh — along with two Union Territories, Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar Is-

lands, and two Central Armed Police Forces, NSG and ITBP.

State Home and Disaster Management Minister Vangalapudi Anitha attended as the chief guest, while Director General of Police Harish Kumar Gupta was the guest of honour. After receiving a ceremonial salute from participating teams, the dignitaries formally declared the tournament open and released balloons to mark the occasion. Matches will be held from February 20 to 24 at the Andhra Cricket Association Grounds in Mulpadu, with the opening fixtures featuring Chhattisgarh vs Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Karnataka vs ITBP.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Anitha

said the NDA coalition government led by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu is prioritizing sports development and transforming Amaravati into a world-class capital. She noted that the upcoming Sports City project would benefit from such events and could position the city as a future venue for national and international competitions. The minister also emphasized the importance of sports in enhancing unity, physical fitness, and mental well-being among police personnel, and suggested organizing dedicated sports meets for women police.

DGP Harish Kumar Gupta described the tournament as a symbol of discipline, camaraderie, and service spirit

within the police forces. He highlighted that the semifinals onward will be broadcast live in 160 countries on DD Sports, a first in the history of All India Police Games, adding global visibility to the event. He said hosting the tournament is a matter of pride for Andhra Pradesh Police, which successfully conducted the All India Weightlifting Cluster last year. Senior police officials, including Additional DGP (Law & Order) N. Madhusudana Reddy and other officers, were present at the ceremony. The five-day tournament is expected to foster sportsmanship, strengthen inter-force bonds, and further enhance the reputation of the state as a hub for police sports.

Nara Lokesh Condemns YSRCP MLAs' 'Unforgivable' Disrespect to Lord Venkateswara

Amaravati, February 20, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh IT and Education Minister Nara Lokesh has strongly criticized YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MLAs for allegedly disrespecting Hindu sentiments by handling images of Lord Venkateswara in an offensive manner inside the state legislature. Lokesh responded to controversial remarks made by YSRCP MLC Botsa Satyanarayana, who had challenged the minister to provide proof that the deity's image was carried into the assembly with footwear.

In a video posted on social media, Lokesh released photographs and footage showing YSRCP legislators wearing shoes and sandals while holding the deity's photo, describing the act as "a grave sin that cannot be forgiven." He stated, "There is no devotion or reverence in their actions. They showed complete disregard for the sentiments of Hindus. Carrying Lord Venkateswara's image with shoes, and leaving the photos scattered on the council floor, is an unforgivable act of sacrilege."

The incident occurred earlier in the day amid chaotic proceedings in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly. The unrest began when YSRCP members Ravi

Babu, Tumati Madhavarao, and Mangamma disrupted scheduled discussions on ghee supplies through the Indapur Dairy, affiliated with the Heritage organization. The council chairman's decisions on the adjournment requests were rejected, escalating tensions on the assembly floor.

YSRCP MLAs then took to protesting by holding placards and images of Lord Venkateswara while moving around the podium, reportedly wearing shoes and sandals during the demonstration. Their actions interrupted the assembly proceedings, causing significant disorder.

The display of disrespect prompted strong



objections from ruling party members, who condemned the MLAs' decision to handle sacred images with footwear. Minister Lokesh emphasized that such behavior is intolerable, asserting that the incident reflects a deep insensitivity toward religious and cultural norms, and called

for accountability. The episode has ignited widespread debate about decorum and the use of religious symbols in political protests, highlighting tensions between assembly members and raising concerns about maintaining respect for faith within legislative proceedings.

Lokesh Hosts Warm Get-Together for Coalition Lawmakers



Amaravathi, February 20, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Andhra Pradesh IT and Education Minister Nara Lokesh has been creating waves in political circles by emphasizing family values and tradition through a series of intimate gatherings for coalition lawmakers. On Friday, Lokesh hosted a grand luncheon at his residence in Undavalli, extending warm hospitality to legislators and MPs from the Rajahmundry and Narsapur parliamentary constituencies. Families of the lawmakers were also present, adding a festive and familial atmosphere to the event.

Set along the scenic banks of the Krishna River, the gathering was marked by a congenial and lively ambiance. Guests from across the Godavari districts were welcomed personally by Lokesh and his family, who ensured that the event offered a memorable experience for all attendees. Conversations among senior leaders, playful interactions among children, and friendly exchanges among women attendees created a vibrant and jovial atmosphere.

Lawmakers from all three coalition parties—TDP, Jana Sena, and BJP—attended with their families, underscoring Lokesh's message that the coalition is not merely three parties but one unified family. This emphasis on unity, tradition, and personal bonding resonated strongly among the attendees. Several lawmakers expressed

their admiration for Lokesh during the event. Rajahmundry City MLA Adireddy Vasu presented Lokesh with a cherished pen as a token of respect. Narsapur MLA Bommidu Nayakar gifted Lokesh and his wife a beautifully embroidered portrait of a Brahmin couple, reflecting local artistry and cultural sensibilities. At the conclusion of the luncheon, Lokesh and his spouse honored all women attendees with Mangalagiri cotton sarees, a gesture symbolizing respect and goodwill.

The gathering was attended by a host of prominent figures, including Union Minister Bhubapatiraju Srinivas Varma, state ministers Kandula Durgesh and Nimmala Ramanayudu, Deputy Speaker Raghurama Krishna Raju, MLC Somu Veerajulu, and MLAs Gorantla Bucchayya Chowdary, Adireddy Srinivas, Pitani Satyanarayana, Nallamilli Ramakrishna Reddy, Arimilli Radhakrishna, Pulaparthi Ramanjaneyulu, Bommidu Nayakar, Battula Balaramakrishna, Boliseti Srinivas, Maddipati Venkatraju, and Muppidi Venkateswara Rao, along with their family members.

Through these gatherings, Minister Lokesh is fostering camaraderie and personal bonds among coalition leaders while simultaneously reinforcing family traditions and cultural values, highlighting the human side of political alliances. The event was widely appreciated as a thoughtful blend of hospitality, culture, and political unity, strengthening personal relationships within the coalition.

Cabinet Sub-Committee Reviews Space Allocation for Iconic Towers in Amaravati

AMARVATHI 20.02.2026 TPN BUREAU:

A Cabinet Sub-Committee meeting was held to decide the allocation of space for various departments in the iconic government buildings being constructed in Amaravati. The Andhra Pradesh government is developing a General Administration Department (GAD) Tower along with four Head of Department (HOD) Towers as part of the capital city's administrative infrastructure. These towers are being designed as landmark structures, and construction works have already commenced.

Unlike the earlier Secretariat setup, where only Principal Secretaries and departmental sections functioned from a centralized space, the new iconic buildings will house Secretariat departments, Heads of Departments, and corporation offices under one roof. This integrated approach aims to bring all state-level administrative offices into a single, coordinated campus for improved efficiency and governance.

To assess the space requirements for each department, the government constituted a Cabinet Sub-Committee comprising Ministers Narayana, Payyavula Keshav, Manohar,



Bala Veeranjaneya Swamy, BC Janardhan Reddy, and Satya Kumar. The committee held its first meeting today at the Secretariat's second block.

After the meeting, Minister Narayana briefed the media, stating that discussions focused on the construction of iconic buildings, parking facilities, and the total number of state-level employees. Officials have been directed to provide department-wise employee data, along with specific space and infrastructure requirements.

He recalled that during 2014-19, the buildings were originally designed with a built-up area of 52.72 lakh square feet, including 31.71 lakh square feet of carpet area. At that time, the design was based on an estimated workforce of 26,700 employees. However, as per current data, there are 39,882 sanctioned posts across departments. Minister Narayana stated that Chief Minister N.

Chandrababu Naidu constituted the sub-committee to reassess present requirements comprehensively before finalizing allocations.

For accurate planning, the committee plans to request the Chief Secretary to nominate one representative from each department to provide precise staff details. This will ensure that the space allocation aligns with current administrative needs.

The minister also mentioned that officials have been instructed to study the newly constructed secretariats in Nava Raipur and Hyderabad as reference models. The sub-committee will reconvene next Monday to deliberate further on the proposals.

The meeting was attended by CRDA Commissioner Kanababu, Shonti Srinivas, Managing Director of Amaravati Growth and Infrastructure Corporation, and other senior officials.

South Zone Sports Meet Held in a Spirit of Camaraderie: Vangalapudi Anitha



AMARVATHI 20.02.2026 TPN BUREAU:

Andhra Pradesh Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha expressed happiness over the South Zone Sports Meet being conducted in a friendly and spirited atmosphere at Amaravati. She said it was a matter of pride that the prestigious event was being hosted in the state's capital region.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister appreciated police personnel from various states who, despite their busy schedules and demanding duties, took part in the sports meet. "Police officers work tirelessly day and night to ensure public safety and maintain law and order. Their participation in sports activities reflects their dedication not only to duty but also to physical fitness and team spirit," she said.

She described the organization of the South Zone Sports Meet in Andhra

Pradesh as a significant and welcome development. Highlighting Amaravati as the venue, she noted that the capital city is steadily progressing under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Hosting such a major inter-state police sporting event from Amaravati adds to the prestige of the state and showcases its growing infrastructure and administrative capabilities.

The Home Minister emphasized that sports foster unity, discipline, and mutual respect among participants. She encouraged all police personnel to take part in the competitions with true sportsmanship. "Every participant must move forward with a spirit of healthy competition. The sports meet should enhance police pride and strengthen the bonds among forces from different states," she said. She further stated

that such events not only improve physical endurance and morale but also promote coordination and goodwill among police departments across regions. The minister underlined that maintaining fitness and mental strength is essential for police personnel, given the nature of their responsibilities.

As a woman Home Minister, Vangalapudi Anitha said she is particularly keen on encouraging greater participation of women police personnel in sports. She urged the Director General of Police to organize a dedicated sports meet for women police officers as well, ensuring equal opportunities and recognition for their contributions.

The South Zone Sports Meet, she concluded, should stand as a symbol of unity, professionalism, and pride within the police fraternity.

Yanamala Slams YSRCP Over Allegations on Heritage Dairy

AMARVATHI 20.02.2026 TPN BUREAU:

Senior TDP leader Yanamala Ramakrishnu strongly criticized the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) over what he described as "baseless and politically motivated" allegations against Heritage Foods. In a press note released on Thursday, he stated that the dairy company, under the effective leadership and guidance of Nara Bhuvaneshwari, has maintained high standards of transparency and integrity in its operations.

Yanamala asserted that Heritage Dairy has earned a credible reputation over the years and operates independently without any improper links to the government. He emphasized that the company has freed itself from all forms of malpractice and continues to function in a professional and ethical manner. Therefore, he said, attempts by YSRCP leaders to tarnish its image are politically driven and misleading.

Furthermore, he alleged that the YSRCP is trying to divert public attention from what he called the "TTD ghee issue" by making counter-accusations against Her-



itage. According to him, such criticism lacks evidence and serves only as a distraction tactic. He added that the accusations are fabricated stories intended to damage the credibility of a reputed private company.

Yanamala also accused former Chief Minister Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy of harming Andhra Pradesh's dairy sector during his tenure. He claimed that Jagan allegedly handed over

the state's dairy business interests to Amul in Gujarat, thereby affecting the interests of local dairy farmers. He argued that this move weakened the position of Andhra-based dairy enterprises and caused uncertainty among milk producers.

In addition, the TDP leader stated that during the previous government, there were deliberate attempts to damage the reputation of

Heritage Dairy. He maintained that political vendetta should not interfere with business institutions that contribute to the state's economy and support thousands of farmers.

Yanamala concluded by urging political parties to avoid spreading misinformation. He stressed that companies like Heritage play a crucial role in strengthening the rural economy and empowering dairy

farmers. Instead of engaging in blame games, he said, leaders should focus on policies that protect farmers' interests and promote fair competition in the dairy industry.

The press note has once again intensified the political exchange between the TDP and the YSRCP, with both sides trading allegations over the state's dairy policies and business environment.

Rare Earth Mineral Corridor to Transform Andhra Pradesh's Future

AMARVATHI 20.02.2026 TPN BUREAU:

Andhra Pradesh is set to embark on a transformative journey with the proposed Rare Earth Mineral Corridor, a strategic initiative aimed at leveraging the state's vast mineral wealth to drive sustainable economic growth. State Mines, Geology and Excise Minister Kollu Ravindra announced in the Assembly that the government is committed to utilizing the state's abundant natural resources to reshape its future. Responding to a question raised by Srikakulam MLA Gundu Shankar Rao, the minister highlighted the immense mineral potential along the state's 970-kilometer coastline, particularly in the north coastal region.

According to assessments by the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research, Andhra Pradesh has identified nearly 102 million tonnes of beach



sand mineral reserves spread across 7,762 hectares in eight locations. The state government has proposed reserving these areas for the Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation (APMDC). In Srikakulam district alone, around 97 million tonnes of reserves have been identified in Gara mandal across significant stretches of land. Letters of Intent have been issued for integrated

mining leases, and statutory clearances are currently underway. Additional mineral-bearing zones in Etcherla, Ranastalam, and other mandals have also been nominated for lease approvals.

Apart from rare earth minerals, Srikakulam district has active quarry leases for quartz, black and color granite, gravel, road metal, building stone, and manganese. Currently, 301 min-

eral leases cover about 1,359 hectares, with a separate manganese block spanning 152 hectares.

The minister emphasized that Andhra Pradesh holds more than 30 percent of India's monazite reserves, a critical mineral that contains rare earth elements such as neodymium and praseodymium, essential for high-performance magnets used in advanced technologies.

Other valuable minerals found along the coast include ilmenite, a source of titanium used in aerospace applications; zircon, vital for ceramics and nuclear energy; and garnet and sillimanite for various industrial uses.

With the Union Government supporting the establishment of Critical Mineral Parks and allocating funds for mineral corridors, Andhra Pradesh aims to move beyond raw mineral extraction. The focus is now on creating an integrated value chain that includes processing, refining, and manufacturing of value-added products. By developing downstream industries and strengthening mineral-based manufacturing, the Rare Earth Mineral Corridor is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, attract investments, and position Andhra Pradesh as a key hub in India's strategic minerals sector.

Power Sector is the Backbone of Andhra Pradesh's Economy: Gottipati Ravi Kumar

AMARVATHI 20.02.2026 TPN BUREAU:

Speaking during the Budget discussion in the Assembly at Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar underscored that the power sector remains the backbone of the state's economy. He stated that consistent reforms and strategic planning are essential to ensure sustainable growth and uninterrupted power supply across all sectors.

The minister credited Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for pioneering electricity reforms in the country. He noted that the reforms introduced under Naidu's leadership laid the foundation for the rapid growth of the IT sector in Hyderabad. Between 2014 and 2019, the state was transformed into a power-surplus state within just six months of assuming office. During the same period, renewable energy capacity was expanded to 7 gigawatts, mark-

ing a significant milestone in clean energy development.

However, he alleged that between 2019 and 2024, the previous government led by Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy severely damaged the power sector. He claimed that electricity tariffs were increased nine times, placing a burden of nearly ₹30,000 crore on consumers in the name of True-Up charges. He further stated that renewable energy investors were discouraged during that period, affecting the state's investment climate.

The minister said the present coalition government is now working to restore financial discipline in the power sector, which had been pushed into heavy debt. He highlighted that, for the first time in the country, the government implemented a 13-paise True-Down adjustment, providing relief to consumers. Through the Integrated Clean Energy Policy, the state is target-

ing an ambitious 160 gigawatts of power generation capacity.

He emphasized that the government is supplying nine hours of quality free power daily to agriculture and allied sectors, while ensuring 24x7 uninterrupted power supply to all categories of consumers. In the current Budget, ₹13,000 crore has been allocated toward power subsidies to support public welfare initiatives.

Around 22 lakh farmers are receiving free electricity, while aqua farmers are being provided power at just ₹1.50 per unit. Nearly 20 lakh SC and ST consumers are benefiting from 200 units of free electricity. The government has also extended subsidies to handloom weavers, dhobis, and salon operators. From April 1, 200 free units will be provided to handloom workers and 500 units to power loom operators.

With an installed capacity of 21,457 megawatts, Andhra Pradesh



continues to strengthen its power generation capabilities. Recently, APGENCO achieved a record 6,000 megawatts of power generation. Additionally, the government reduced the power pur-

chase cost per unit from ₹7.71 to ₹6.35, saving ₹340 crore. The PM Surya Ghar scheme is also being implemented with 100 percent subsidy support for SC and ST beneficiaries.

Ambati Breaks Silence After Remand

Amaravathi, February 20 | TPN Bureau

Former Andhra Pradesh minister and YSR Congress Party leader Ambati Rambabu on Thursday clarified that his earlier remarks were not directed at former Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, while levelling serious allegations against political rivals and police officials following his release from Rajahmundry Central Jail.

Rambabu had been in judicial remand for 18 days in connection with three separate cases before being granted bail. Addressing the media after his release, he accused Union Minister Pemmasani Chandrasekhar of targeting him politically and warned that his opponents would have to "pay a price."

He said the events of the past few weeks had been closely watched by the public. According to Rambabu, he was arrested by Nallapadu police around midnight on January 31 and remained in custody without an opportunity to present his



version until his release. He maintained that he had only attempted to advise party workers near a flex banner put up by the Telugu Desam Party, insisting he did not tear it.

The former minister alleged that tensions es-

calated the following day when he was verbally abused while returning from a temple visit, prompting him to respond in anger. He later regretted his language, stating that his remarks were not aimed at Chandrababu Naidu and that

he felt remorse after returning home.

Rambabu further claimed that large groups gathered outside his residence for several hours, creating unrest and intimidating his family. He alleged that the attackers acted with

police backing and that his supporters from the YSR Congress Party were prevented from reaching his house. He also accused police of attempting to assault him at around 2 a.m. while he was in custody, adding that he would pursue legal action over the incident.

Dismissing allegations of caste-based remarks, Rambabu said his family itself included members from the community in question and accused rivals of deliberately fueling divisions. He criticised both Nara Lokesh and Pawan Kalyan, alleging political vendetta and claiming attempts were being made to sideline him.

Invoking the legacy of slain leader Vangaveeti Ranga, Rambabu said his party could not afford to "lose another voice," referring to veteran Kapu leader Mudragada Padmanabham.

The remarks have intensified the ongoing political war of words in Andhra Pradesh, with sharp reactions expected from rival parties in the coming days.

Chaos in Andhra Pradesh Assembly Over Tirumala Incident



Amaravati, February 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau

A heated uproar erupted in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Friday as YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MLAs staged a protest involving sacred images of Lord Venkateswara, sparking sharp criticism from ruling party members. The controversy revolves around the YSRCP members allegedly holding images of the deity while reportedly wearing footwear inside the Assembly — an act deemed disrespectful by the opposition.

The clash began when the Assembly Chairman, Koyye Moshen Raju, rejected a motion to discuss the TTD (Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams) ghee supply issue, prompting YSRCP legislators to rush to the podium in protest. During the demonstration, they displayed images of Lord Venkateswara, drawing immediate condemnation from ruling party leaders, who described the act as a violation of sa-

cred customs, calling it a "serious offense" against religious sentiments.

Reacting strongly to the incident, State Minister Achchennaidu recalled a similar controversy involving former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, claiming, "When Jagan visited Tirumala in the past, he walked across the temple premises in shoes. Today, YSRCP leaders in the Assembly held Lord Venkateswara's pictures while wearing shoes and boots. Instead of apologizing to the devotees for such actions, they are spreading falsehoods and issuing challenges. What else can one say about them?"

Ministers Nara Lokesh and P. Keshav also expressed strong disapproval, stating that the actions of YSRCP MLAs hurt Hindu sentiments and called for an immediate apology.

However, YSRCP Assembly floor leader Botsa Satyanarayana strongly refuted the allegations, challenging the opposition to provide evi-

dence proving that their members held the deity's images while wearing shoes. In response, the protesting MLAs released photographs and video clips on social media showing their footwear, seemingly reinforcing their defence.

The tense standoff led the Assembly Chairman to adjourn the session temporarily, highlighting the heightened friction between the ruling party and the opposition in the state. Analysts note that this episode not only underscores the sensitivity of religious issues in Andhra Pradesh politics but also reflects the ongoing confrontations between YSRCP and opposition legislators over procedural matters in the Assembly.

The incident is likely to dominate political debates in the coming days, as both sides accuse each other of disrespecting sacred traditions and political overreach, keeping the state's political atmosphere charged.

Durgesh Condemns YSRCP Members for Disrespecting Lord Venkateswara's Image



Amaravati, February 20, 2026 | TPN Bureau

State Tourism, Culture, and Cinematography Minister Kandula

Durgesh has strongly criticized members of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) for allegedly showing disrespect to

Hindu sentiments in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly. Speaking at the media point within the assembly premises on Friday, Minister Durgesh expressed outrage over YSRCP members carrying an image of Lord Venkateswara on a placard into the assembly and reportedly placing it on tables with their footwear. He described the act as "highly improper, offensive, and deeply hurtful to the religious sentiments of devotees."

The minister was accompanied by several colleagues, including Ministers Nara Lokesh, Anam Ramanarayana Reddy, Payyavula Keshav, Nimmala Ramanaayudu, Dola Balaveeranjaneya Swami, Savitha, Gummidu Sandhya Rani, and Vangalapati Anita. Also present were BJP MLC Somu Verraju, Jana Sena MLC Hari Prasad, and other senior legislators. Together, they voiced their condemnation of the YSRCP members' actions, emphasizing that such behavior is unacceptable in a democratic forum and amounts to a misuse of religious symbols for political purposes.

Minister Durgesh accused the YSRCP leadership of exploiting religion under the supervision of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy for political gain. He demanded that the Chief Minister offer an immediate apology to the Hindu community, asserting that failure to do so would signal a disregard for the sentiments of devotees and the cultural values of the state. "The carrying of the deity's image into the assembly and its disrespectful handling demonstrate arrogance and contempt for religious norms," he said.

The minister urged the Assembly Speaker to take strict action against the lawmakers involved. He warned that if no action is taken, similar incidents could occur in the future, creating a dangerous precedent. Durgesh stressed that the people of Andhra Pradesh, along with devotees, are closely observing these developments and will not tolerate the use of religion as a political tool. He also reiterated that Jana Sena would continue to fight to protect religious sentiments until the responsible individuals are

held accountable.

Highlighting the importance of respect for religious and cultural symbols in a democracy, Minister Durgesh called for awareness among all legislators regarding the sensitivities of diverse communities. He emphasized that government institutions and political leaders must set an example by upholding ethical and cultural values.

The official statement was issued by the Public Relations Officer of the Department of Tourism, Culture, and Cinematography, Government of Andhra Pradesh, reinforcing the government's commitment to protecting religious sentiments and ensuring accountability in public conduct. The statement also urged that all political parties respect the faith and beliefs of citizens while participating in legislative and public activities.

This incident has drawn widespread attention across the state, highlighting the sensitive intersection of politics and religion, and has intensified calls for strict enforcement of decorum and respect within the legislative assembly.

Tirumala Ghee Row Sparks Assembly Uproar



Amaravati, February 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly witnessed another major uproar on Friday over the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) ghee supply issue, as YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MLAs staged a protest inside the House, drawing sharp reactions from opposition members.

The confrontation began when YSRCP legislators, holding placards, marched into the Assembly to press for a discussion on the Indapur Dairy ghee supply. The motion submitted by the YSRCP members was rejected by Assembly Chairman Koyye Moshen Raju, prompting them to surround the podium with images of Lord Venkateswara and placards in protest.

The demonstration sparked immediate outrage from ruling party members, who condemned the YSRCP lawmakers for bringing religious images into the political fray. They argued that

using images of the deity for protest violated Hindu sentiments and politicized sacred symbols. Several ministers demanded action against the YSRCP members and called for public apologies.

Responding to the criticism, Assembly Chairman Moshen Raju sought to calm tensions, stating that the YSRCP members had not committed any wrongdoing. "I will call them and speak to them. There is no fault in their actions," he said, emphasizing that dialogue, not confrontation, should resolve such disputes.

The incident highlighted the growing friction between the YSRCP and the ruling party in the state Assembly, as political disagreements over procedural matters escalate into debates over cultural and religious sensitivities. Analysts note that repeated clashes like these reflect the heightened politicization of religious is-

ssues in Andhra Pradesh's legislative proceedings.

Observers also pointed out that protests involving religious imagery, even in political contexts, can trigger public sentiment and media attention, increasing pressure on both the government and opposition to carefully navigate sensitive topics.

The Assembly session remained tense throughout the morning, with the Chairman trying to restore order and urging all members to engage in constructive discussion. The ghee supply issue itself, though procedural in nature, continues to act as a flashpoint for political protests, keeping the Assembly in the news for both administrative and cultural controversies.

As tensions simmer, the focus now shifts to whether dialogue and negotiation can defuse the standoff or if further confrontations will dominate the Assembly agenda in the coming weeks.

MP Lavu Criticizes Congress for AI Summit Protest

New Delhi, February 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Narasaraopet MP Lavu Srikrishna Devarayalu on Friday strongly condemned the Congress Party following a protest by Youth Congress workers at the ongoing Global AI Summit in Delhi. The protest involved demonstrators tearing open their shirts to express dissent, an act that the MP described as highly disrespectful and damaging to India's international image.

Speaking to the media, Lavu alleged that Congress leaders, under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi, behaved in a manner that embarrassed the nation in front of global technology leaders and world dignitaries attending the summit. "Their conduct has reduced India's prestige on the international stage and made the country a subject of ridicule," he said.

The MP accused the Congress Party of prioritizing selfish political interests over national welfare. "Congress is acting with the intention of hindering India's development and preventing opportunities for the youth. Their actions demonstrate a complete disregard for the country's progress," he added.

Lavu also expressed surprise at the silence of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) regarding the incident. "It is astonishing that YSRCP has not condemned these acts. When it comes to national interest, 'Mother Congress' and 'Child Congress' share the same approach," he remarked, emphasizing that political loyalties should not come at the cost of the nation's reputation. Demanding accountability, Lavu called for an immediate public apolo-

gy from the Congress Party to both the people of India and the international community. He urged stringent action against those responsible for the protest, insisting that politics must never undermine national honor.

The MP further stressed that despite political disruptions or attempts to hinder progress, India's development trajectory cannot be stopped. He warned that those who disrespect the nation would not be forgiven by the public.

This statement adds to the ongoing debate over political protests at high-profile international events, highlighting tensions between parties over the appropriate conduct of representatives in global forums. Analysts note that such incidents can have far-reaching implications for



India's diplomatic and technological reputation, particularly at platforms involving international leaders and corporate giants.

The AI Summit protest

continues to attract national attention, prompting calls from multiple quarters for political restraint and responsibility in safeguarding the country's image abroad.

Excellence is a Continuous Process”: Dr. M.C. Das at APCRDA Training Session

Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN bureau :
A motivational training programme on Professional Excellence and Personal Excellence was conducted on Friday at the headquarters of the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) located in Rayapudi, Thullur Mandal, Amaravati.

The session was led by Dr. M.C. Das, Professor and Management Consultant from the City Cardiac Research Centre Limited. Addressing the officials and staff during the programme, Dr. Das emphasized that excellence is not an instant achievement but a continuous process that requires consistent effort and dedication. He encouraged participants to regularly enhance both their professional knowledge and personal competencies in order to achieve long-term success.

As part of the training, Dr. Das explained the “Nine Mantras for Professional Excellence” and the “Nine Mantras for Personal Happiness.” He elaborated on key aspects such as self-awareness, skill development, commitment to



work, maintaining a positive attitude, and contributing proactively to the growth and progress of the organization. The session also focused on improving work efficiency, strengthening interpersonal skills, and adopting a growth-oriented mindset for personal and institutional development.

The programme was attended by Managing Director of Amaravati Growth & Infrastructure Corporation Limited

(AGICL), SVR Srinivas, along with CRDA Strategy Director Uma Adusumilli, HR Director Mallikarjuna Reddy, Additional Director (Information Systems) Kushwanth, Manager (Accounts) D. Umamaheswari, and other senior officials and staff members.

Senior representatives from PgMC, including Dr. R. Manohar Reddy, K.R.V. Prasad, and K. Chatterjee, also participated in the session. At the conclusion of the programme, SVR

Srinivas and other key officials presented books to Dr. M.C. Das as a token of appreciation for his insightful and engaging session.

Officials and staff from APCRDA, ADCL, PgMC, and PMCs attended the training programme, which featured interactive discussions throughout. The initiative proved to be highly beneficial in promoting a culture of excellence and personal development among the participants.

Fake Police Video Call Targets Elderly in Uyyuru; Real Cops Step In Just in Time

Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN bureau :

An attempted cyber fraud targeting a retired elderly couple under the pretext of a “digital arrest” was successfully foiled by alert local police in Uyyuru of Krishna district. Cybercriminals posing as officials from the Mumbai Crime Branch tried to intimidate the couple through a video call by falsely claiming that an arrest warrant had been issued against them by the Supreme Court of India.

The victims, Kota Shivashankar (70), a retired accountant, and his wife, a retired teacher, reside near AG & SG College in Uyyuru town. On the morning of February 18 at around 11 AM, Shivashankar received a video call from individuals claiming to be officers from the Mumbai Crime Branch. The fraudsters alleged that money amounting to ₹25 lakh had been routed through Shivashankar’s Aadhaar card and that he was involved in illegal financial transactions.



To make their claims appear legitimate, the scammers even introduced a person impersonating a Supreme Court judge during the live video call. They demanded immediate disclosure of the couple’s bank account details and information regarding movable and immovable assets. The fraudsters also warned them not to inform anyone about the issue, threatening

that local police would arrest them and shift them to Mumbai if they disclosed the matter.

Distressed by the threats, the elderly couple initially panicked but soon sensed something suspicious about the situation. Realizing they might be falling into a cyber trap, they promptly contacted local police for assistance. By the time police personnel arrived at their

residence, the video call was still active. Upon seeing the actual police officers on the call, the cybercriminals abruptly disconnected and went offline, thereby preventing what could have been a major financial fraud.

Following the incident, police officials issued a public advisory stating that the term “digital arrest” has no legal validity. They urged citizens not to believe in calls made in the name of agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate, Customs Department, or CBI claiming involvement in money laundering or drug trafficking using Aadhaar or SIM cards.

Police advised the public to immediately report such suspicious calls to the nearest police station or cybercrime helpline. Officials emphasized that awareness and vigilance remain the most effective tools in preventing digital fraud and safeguarding one’s financial security.

Traffic Awareness Drive Conducted at SRK Engineering College in Enikepadu



Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN bureau :

Acting on the directions of Vijayawada Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhara Babu, a Traffic Awareness Programme was conducted at SRK Institute of Technology located in Enikepadu. The initiative aimed to educate students on the importance of road safety and responsible driving practices.

Vijayawada Traffic DCP Smt. Shareen Begum addressed the students and created awareness about essential traffic rules and regulations that must be followed to prevent road accidents. She emphasized that both riders on a two-wheeler must compulsorily wear helmets while travelling. She also cautioned students against driving under the influence of alcohol and strictly advised them not to operate vehicles without a valid driving licence.

Further highlighting the risks associated with unsafe driving, she urged students to avoid triple riding, using mobile phones while driving, and over-speeding, which are among the major causes of road mishaps. She informed that traffic challans must be paid only through official e-

governance platforms and advised students to understand the value of life by staying alert and responsible while on roads.

In view of rising cyber-crime cases, the DCP also warned students about fraudsters who send fake messages or links in the name of pending challans. She advised them to remain vigilant and avoid downloading suspicious mobile applications or clicking on unknown links sent by cybercriminals, which could lead to financial fraud or data theft. Students were encouraged to adopt safe digital practices and ensure they do not fall victim to cyber scams.

Around 220 students participated in the awareness programme and actively engaged in the session. College Principal Dr. K. Ramesh, AO Pratap, NSS Programme Officer B. Chinni, Traffic CI S. Ramesh Kumar, CI Ramarao, SIs Satyanarayana and Sheshubabu, along with college staff and students, were present during the event. The programme proved to be an informative and impactful initiative in promoting road safety and cyber awareness among the youth.

742 Journalists Receive New Accreditation Cards in NTR District

NTR District, February 19, 2026 | TPN Bureau

In a significant step to streamline media accreditation, the NTR District administration has issued the first batch of 742 accreditation cards to eligible journalists in accordance with government guidelines under G.O.Ms. No. 84. The distribution was carried out at the Collectorate’s AVS Reddy Hall, overseen by District Collector Dr. G. Lakshmi, who also chairs the District Media Accreditation Committee (DMAC).

Speaking at the event, Collector Dr. Lakshmi explained that the previous accreditation cards had expired, necessitating a fresh issuance under the stipulated norms. “A district-level committee was formed to review all applications comprehensively. After a transparent assessment process, 742 journalists from print and electronic media have been approved for accreditation in this first phase,” he said. The new cards will remain valid until December 2027.

He emphasized that each application was examined impartially, and those meeting eligibility criteria received the cards. The remaining applications are being processed, with subsequent batches of cards to be issued soon.

Highlighting the importance of journalists in governance, the Collector noted that media personnel act as a crucial bridge between the government and the public, effectively disseminating information on development and welfare programs. He urged accredited journalists to continue supporting transparency by pro-



viding accurate information, offering feedback on government schemes, and assisting citizens in accessing public benefits.

The distribution ceremony also saw participation from senior officials including DI&PR Officer K.V. Raman Rao, Divisional PRO K. Ravi, Audio-Visual Supervisor V.V. Prasad, DMAC members, Deputy Labour Commissioner G. Dhanalakshmi, P. Nagamallaelshwara Rao, and others, ensuring smooth coordination of the accreditation process.

The move reinforces the district administration’s commitment to professionalizing media services, fostering accountability, and strengthening communication between the government and citizens through an empowered press.

Devotional Fervour at Indrakeeladri: Bhaktiranjani Enchants Devotees under ‘Dharmapatham’ Cultural Series



Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN bureau :

A spiritually uplifting evening unfolded atop the sacred Indrakeeladri hills as the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam hosted a mesmerizing Bhaktiranjani musical programme as part of its ongoing ‘Dharmapatham’ cultural initiatives. The devotional concert, held on Friday evening in the divine presence of Goddess Durga, drew an overwhelming response from devotees who gathered in large numbers to witness the soulful performance.

Renowned classical vocalist Smt. Lanka Meenakshi, accompanied by her dedicated team of disciples, presented a series of melodious devotional compositions that created an atmosphere of divine serenity across the temple premises. The programme commenced at 6:30 PM with the traditional Ganapati invocation “Vathapi Ganapathim Bhaje,” setting an auspicious tone for the evening.

The audience was then treated to a rich repertoire of popular kritis including “Mayatheetha Swaropiini,” “Himagiri Thanaye,” “Sarasjanabha Sodari,” and “Kanakashaila Viharini.” Each rendition resonated with deep spiritual emotion, reflecting both the musical prowess

and devotional commitment of the performers.

Particularly noteworthy were the renditions of “Bhagyada Lakshmi Baramma” and “Kanti Shukravaramu,” which immersed the gathering in a profound devotional experience. The performances not only showcased the richness of Carnatic music but also reinforced the temple’s efforts to promote cultural heritage through spiritually engaging programmes.

The concert concluded on a reverent note with the Mangala Harathi rendition of “Indiravariki,” leaving the devotees in a state of spiritual fulfilment. Alongside Lanka Meenakshi, artists Lanka Kalyani, A. Abhigna, P. Yuktaashree, and T. Medha contributed to the success of the programme with their harmonious support and musical finesse.

Temple authorities extended darshan and prasadam facilities to the participating artists as a mark of appreciation. The event stood as a testament to the enduring power of devotional music in uniting devotees through faith and culture. Attendees expressed heartfelt admiration for the artists, acknowledging their exceptional talent and dedication in delivering a truly divine musical experience.

Demand Grows for Vande Bharat Express Between Vijayawada and Bengaluru; Nara Lokesh Respond



Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN bureau :

There has been a long-standing demand to introduce a Vande Bharat Express train service between Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh and Bengaluru in Karnataka. The proposed route is expected to significantly improve travel convenience, particularly for IT employees and working professionals commuting between coastal Andhra districts and the tech hub of Bengaluru.

Thousands of software professionals from Coastal Andhra Pradesh currently working in Bengaluru are reportedly facing severe difficulties due to the lack of sufficient direct train services between the two cities. The situation becomes more challenging during weekends and festive seasons when securing confirmed train tickets becomes extremely difficult.

Given the growing need for faster and more efficient connectivity between the two major urban centres, discussions around the necessity of introducing a Vande Bharat service on this route have intensified in recent times. However, railway authorities have repeatedly postponed the proposal, citing factors such as congestion along the route and oth-

er operational challenges.

Amid these concerns, Andhra Pradesh Minister Nara Lokesh recently responded to a user’s query on social media platform X regarding the requirement for a Bengaluru-Vijayawada Vande Bharat Express service. In the tweet, the user highlighted the daily struggles faced by thousands of professionals belonging to Coastal Andhra Pradesh who are employed in Bengaluru’s IT sector.

The user also pointed out that due to limited train availability, passengers are forced to depend on alternative modes of transport, often leading to increased travel time and expenses. The introduction of a semi high-speed train service like Vande Bharat is being seen as a potential solution to ease travel constraints and boost regional connectivity.

The demand is steadily gaining momentum as stakeholders emphasize the importance of improved inter-state connectivity for economic growth and workforce mobility. With Minister Lokesh acknowledging the issue, expectations are rising that the proposal may receive renewed consideration in the near future.

Police Sensitize Social Media Group Admins on Legal Responsibilities in Ramachandrapuram

Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN Bureau :

A crucial awareness meeting with social media group administrators was conducted today at the Ramachandrapuram Sub-Division to educate them on the legal implications of misuse of digital platforms. The meeting was attended by Ramachandrapuram DSP Raghuvveer, CI Venkata Narayana, SI Nageswara Rao, and Pamarru SI G. S o m e n d r a at Ramachandrapuram.

The primary objective of the meeting was to create awareness among WhatsApp and other social media group admins regarding laws related to the misuse of online platforms and to ensure responsible digital communication.

Police officials explained the legal provisions under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including:

- Section 196: Promoting enmity between different groups
- Section 197: Posting content that



- affects national integrity
- Section 299: Actions intended to hurt religious sentiments
- Section 353: Statements disturbing public peace
- Additionally, provisions under the Information Technology Act 2000 were highlighted:
- Section 67: Publishing or transmitting objectionable electronic content
- Section 69A: Pub-

- lishing unlawful or prohibited information online
- Officials also elaborated on the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, emphasizing that caste-based insults, threats, or abusive comments constitute serious punishable offences.
- Group administrators were instructed to actively monitor content posted within their groups and immediately remove any objectionable or hate-filled posts. Members posting or for-

- warding fake news, morphed images, edited videos, or messages that may incite communal or social tensions should be removed without delay.
- Admins were further advised to:
- Preserve digital evidence when required for police investigation
- Report serious violations immediately to the nearest police station
- Prohibit circulation of rumours or unlawful as-

- ssembly calls
- Restrict message forwarding during sensitive situations
- Use the "Only Admins Can Send Messages" option when necessary
- Remain neutral on caste, religion, and political matters

Police warned that failure to act against illegal content, even after being aware of it, would be treated as abetment of the offence. Group admins cannot evade responsibility by claiming that the post was made by another member. In such cases, both the individual who posted the content and the group admin may be held accountable under the law. All social media group administrators were cautioned that legal action would be initiated without prior notice if the guidelines discussed during the meeting are not followed. The police stressed that adherence to these measures is essential to maintain social harmony and public peace.

Census Officials Play a Crucial Role in Population Enumeration: Collector Keerthi Chekuri

Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN Bureau :

District Collector Keerthi Chekuri emphasized the vital role played by census officials in the successful conduct of population enumeration. She participated in the State-Level Principal Census Officers' Meeting held at the Andhra Pradesh Secretariat on Friday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector stated that extensive discussions were held regarding preparedness for the population census scheduled to be conducted in 2027. The meeting focused on training programmes, selection of Master Trainers and Field Trainers, and other preparatory measures necessary for efficient data collection during the upcoming census.

Deputy Registrar General from the Office of



the Registrar General of India, Dr. V.V.L.N. Sharma, informed that Census of India-2027 would be the 16th Census in the country and the 8th since Independence. He explained that the population enumeration process would be conducted in two phases. The first phase would involve

House Listing and Housing Census (HLO), followed by the second phase of Population Enumeration (PE). He further noted that for the first time, the entire census process would be carried out using a fully digital methodology. Citizens will also be provided with the

opportunity to undertake 'self-enumeration' through a dedicated web portal, making the process more accessible and efficient. Officials highlighted that the data collected through the population census would be crucial for planning, policy for-

mulation, allocation of resources, and assessing societal needs. The Collector stressed the importance of providing effective training to enumerators and supervisors to ensure accurate and reliable data collection.

State Nodal Officer and Special Chief Secretary S.S. Rawat mentioned that the Central Government has decided to adopt a digital mode for census operations and that a mobile application and web portal have been developed accordingly.

State Director of Census J. Nivas also urged District Collectors and Municipal Commissioners to take appropriate measures to ensure the successful implementation of this digitally driven population enumeration process across the state.

208 Bicycles Distributed to Uppumaguluru ZP High School Students

Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN Bureau :

In a significant initiative aimed at supporting government school students, Andhra Pradesh Energy Minister Gottiapati Ravi Kumar distributed 208 free bicycles to students of the Zilla Parishad High School in Addanki constituency. The distribution programme was held on Friday at Uppumaguluru village in Ballikurava mandal.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Ravi Kumar stated that the free bicycle distribution initiative was launched to ensure that no government school student discontinues education due to travel difficulties. Initially, the scheme was planned only for students of Classes 8 and 9. However, considering the requests from younger students, the programme has now been extended to include all students from Classes 6 to 10.

He further informed that with the support of donors, free bicycles have also been provided to Interme-



mediate and Polytechnic students in the constituency. Each bicycle, worth approximately ₹6,000, has been distributed to help students commute to schools with ease. The Minister revealed that around 11,400 bicycles are required across the constituency, out of which over 7,000 have already been distributed. The remaining students will soon receive bicycles under the ongoing programme.

Highlighting the contribution of various organizations, he mentioned that Kishore Granites Company has donated 1,000 bicycles, Assist, a voluntary organization, has provided another 1,000, while SEIL has contributed 2,000 bicycles. These efforts have been

made possible through CSR funds from companies and support from local donors. Minister Ravi Kumar also urged village elders and well-wishers to come forward in addressing the basic needs of government schools. He expressed hope that students would make the best use of the facilities provided and strive to achieve 100 percent pass results in the Class 10 examinations.

The event was attended by local leaders, parents, teachers, and students, who welcomed the initiative and appreciated the efforts being made to improve access to education in rural areas. Members of the Telugu Desam Party also participated in the programme.

Iftar Feast Symbolises Spiritual Essence of Ramadan in Ramachandrapuram

Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN Bureau :

Highlighting the spiritual significance of the holy month of Ramadan, senior coalition party leader Vasamshetty Satyam participated as the chief guest in an Iftar feast held at the Grand Mosque in Ramachandrapuram on the second day of the sacred month.

Speaking on the occasion, Vasamshetty Satyam stated that Iftar gatherings serve as a symbol of national integration and play a crucial role in promoting peace, harmony, and brotherhood in society. He joined members of the Muslim community in offering prayers and shared the evening meal with them, reflecting the spirit of communal harmony and mutual respect.

He emphasized that the holy month of Ramadan instills discipline, compassion, and a sense of service among individuals. He further added that such occasions help strengthen social bonds and encourage people from different communities to come together in unity and understanding.

Several community leaders and dignitaries were present at the event, includ-



ing former Municipal Co-option Member MD Nawab, Rayavaram Mandal Minority President Khadar Vali, Ramachandrapuram Town Minority President Sheikh Ahmed Alisha, and former President Allauddin, along with other prominent members of the Muslim community and coalition party leaders.

Participants collectively prayed for peace, unity, and prosperity in society. Addressing the gathering, Satyam reiterated the commitment towards the welfare and development of minority communities and stated that inclusive governance ensures equal opportunities and support for all sections of society.

Others who attended the programme included AMC Director Narapureddy Balaram, Cluster In-charge Kanchumarthi Baburao, Esudasu, and several local leaders. Attendees expressed that such Iftar gatherings significantly contribute to strengthening communal harmony and fostering a spirit of unity across communities.

Purandeswari's Voice for Women Empowerment Resonates on International Platform



Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN Bureau :

A high-level meeting of the Women Empowerment Committee, aimed at strengthening international cooperation and dialogue on gender equality and women's rights, gained prominence with meaningful discussions and global participation. Representatives from the Ministry of External Affairs provided key insights to the committee, offering a comprehensive overview of initiatives related to women's development, rights, and equality.

Committee Chairperson Daggubati Purandeswari played a pivotal role in effectively steering the discussions. She emphasized the importance of integrating both national and international experiences to advance women's empowerment and ensure inclusive development. Fruitful Meeting with European Par-

liament Delegation A productive interaction was held with the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. During the meeting, participants engaged in detailed discussions on several critical issues, including:

- Legal safeguards for women's empowerment
- Gender equality policies
- Women's participation in politics
- International cooperation for economic empowerment

Speaking on the occasion, Purandeswari noted that women's development is not merely a social concern but a fundamental driver of a nation's economic progress. She highlighted that mutual cooperation and sharing of global best practices can significantly strengthen efforts towards achiev-

ing gender equality. She also outlined India's progress in areas such as women's education, healthcare, employment, and political representation. Stressing the need for further initiatives, she called for enhanced focus on rural women's financial independence, strengthening of Self-Help Groups, and increased participation of women in startups and entrepreneurial ventures.

Observers noted that Purandeswari's strong advocacy for women's empowerment on international platforms reflects India's growing commitment to gender-inclusive growth. She expressed confidence that such collaborative engagements would not only strengthen diplomatic ties between nations but also build a robust global network dedicated to protecting and promoting women's rights.

Jagan Mohan Rao Assumes Charge as East Godavari District Registrar



Amaravathi 20.02.2026 TPN Bureau :

As part of the latest promotions in the Andhra Pradesh Registration and Stamps Department, 18 Sub-Registrars across the state have been elevated to the position of District Registrars. The promotion orders were issued by Special Chief Secretary of the Revenue Department, Sai Prasad.

In line with these promotions, K. Jagan Mohan Rao, who had been serving at the Sub-Registrar Office in Machilipatnam, has been appointed as the District Registrar of East Godavari district. He officially assumed charge of his new responsibilities on Friday.

Jagan Mohan Rao is known within the department for his administrative experience and professional competence. His cordial approach towards the public, swift disposal of files, and sound legal knowledge have

earned him a positive reputation. With his appointment, expectations are high that the district's registration system will function more efficiently and effectively. Meanwhile, former East Godavari District Registrar Satyanarayana has been transferred to Vijayawada following his promotion.

Impact of Corruption Allegations

In a related development, allegations of corruption against the Sub-Registrar of Kadiyam have sparked discussions within the department. Following recent vigilance raids and the registration of a case against the official, she has reportedly been denied promotion and will continue in her current position. The decision is understood to have been taken in line with the government's commitment

to administrative transparency. Officials view these promotions and administrative changes as steps toward enhancing discipline, transparency, and operational efficiency within the Registration Department.

Joint Sub-Registrars Extend Greetings

On this occasion, Rajamahendravaram Joint Sub-Registrars Rambabu and Pullamraju met the newly appointed District Registrar to extend their congratulations. They expressed their commitment to working in coordination at the district level to ensure improved public service delivery. With the district registration system entering a new phase under the new leadership, there is optimism that citizens will benefit from faster and more transparent services in the near future.

The New Face of Indian Consumption: Why the “YOLO” Consumer Narrative Matters

In recent years, India has been celebrated for its robust economic growth, rising middle class, and youthful population. Yet, a subtle transformation in how people spend their money reveals something deeper about modern Indian society. This shift isn't just about rising incomes or changing tastes — it reflects how Indians are living, thinking, and prioritizing in ways that both mirror and challenge traditional assumptions.

The Story CPI Tells

Every month, India releases an inflation figure based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This index is more than a number — it's a snapshot of what people actually spend on. But to stay relevant, the CPI must periodically update its methodology to reflect current consumption patterns. Recently, statisticians replaced the nearly decade old base year with a new one grounded in the latest household survey data. This new CPI basket includes goods and services that were once absent — such as video streaming, personal care services, and modern transport expenses — while removing outdated ones like video cassettes. The idea is simple: measure what people really buy today.

But behind these updates lies an intriguing insight. Within the mix of items that now carry greater weight in the CPI, there is a noticeable tilt toward categories that suggest a more aspirational and lifestyle oriented spending pattern. At the same time, staples traditionally seen as essential — basic food, education expenditures — now account for a smaller share of total household spending. In public discourse, this has led to the idea that Indian consumers are increasingly embracing a “you only live once” or YOLO mindset — prioritizing experiences, convenience, and comfort over long term investments.

What Changed in the Consumption Basket?

Under the updated consumption survey, Indians are spending less, as a share of their budget, on traditional essentials. Basic food costs — cereals, pulses, vegetables — have a lower weight in overall spending than before. Even the share of education expenses has



fallen.

Instead, higher weights have been assigned to categories like personal care, transportation, entertainment, and digital or leisure services. Whether it's smartphone based entertainment subscriptions, ride hail services, or discretionary travel, these areas are taking up a larger proportion of Indians' wallets.

The emerging picture is not of a nation obsessed with luxury alone, but of one that increasingly values immediate experience and convenience. In rural as well as urban areas, households are spending more on processed foods and beverages, technology driven entertainment, and lifestyle services compared to staple nutritious foods or investments in skills and formal education.

What Drives This Pattern?

At first glance, this shift might appear trivial — just another trend among many in a fast changing consumer market. But beneath it lie structural forces shaping India's society and economy.

One factor is the sheer size of the so called middle class and aspiring

consumer segment. Millions of Indians now have discretionary income they didn't have a decade ago. But rising income does not always translate into traditional forms of spending like education or savings. Instead, many choose to spend on things that enhance daily life or provide immediate gratification. This can include better food (even if processed), lifestyle products, gadgets, travel, or entertainment.

Another influence is the spread of technology. Internet penetration has soared, with millions accessing streaming content, social media, ride hailing, e commerce, and other digital platforms. Smartphones are ubiquitous, but ownership of computers — tools more directly tied to education and skill building — remains relatively low. In other words, digital connectivity is often used for consumption rather than creation or productivity.

Social media and influencer culture also play a role. Visual platforms make aspirations tangible and immediate. Experiences, outings, gadgets, and lifestyle purchases become not just personal choices but social statements. This isn't unique to India, but in a

tion with multiple overlapping generations, it highlights how modern norms intersect with deep rooted cultural expectations.

Is YOLO India Entirely Accurate?

Labeling the Indian consumer “YOLO” simplifies a much more complex reality. It can mislead us into thinking citizens are reckless or frivolous. The data does reflect rising spending on categories associated with comfort and leisure, but it does not mean people are ignoring their responsibilities or future security.

For many households, spending on processed foods and packaged beverages is partly about convenience and access. Rural spending shifts may reflect availability and marketing more than conscious choice. Urban households' greater expenditure on transport and services largely reflects life in modern cities where distance, time savings, and flexibility matter.

Similarly, lower formal education spending may not indicate disregard for learning — it might reflect systemic issues like the perception of quality in available educational institutions, rising pri-

private tutoring costs, or employers valuing skill certifications more than formal degrees.

The Wage and Inequality Factor Another layer to this narrative is wage dynamics and inequality. Despite headline GDP growth rates and rising employment numbers, many households' real incomes have not kept pace with inflation. Casual sector wages may have grown, but much of the workforce still subsists on low income relative to cost of living in urban areas.

Consequently, a significant portion of spending remains devoted to meeting basic needs, even if the share on certain categories appears to shrink in aggregate statistics. Meanwhile, wealthier urban consumers — whose spending patterns disproportionately affect CPI weightages — may have more lifestyle oriented expenditure. This skews the picture toward an aspirational consumer profile that may not accurately represent all Indians.

What This Means for Policy and Markets

Because CPI influences mone-

tary policy decisions, fiscal budgeting, and social planning, shifting weightages have broader implications. If statistics suggest people value leisure more than staple nutrition or education, policymakers might underestimate demand for social services or education investment. At the same time, businesses and investors see an opportunity in evolving consumer patterns — fueling growth in sectors like personal care, digital services, travel, and lifestyle retail.

India's economy is increasingly driven by consumer demand. Global and domestic firms alike are eyeing the Indian market as a growth engine, seeking to cater to changing tastes. This includes everything from premium packaged foods and beverages to health and wellness products. Indian consumers are also becoming more conscious about value, often willing to experiment with new products and brands based on quality, convenience, and perceived lifestyle enhancement.

A New Narrative or an Old One Repackaged?

The idea of the YOLO consumer can be provocative, but it should not be taken as a wholesale judgment on Indian society. It is a narrative lens — one that highlights how consumption patterns are evolving in a society where aspirations, technology, and economic realities intersect.

What's clear is that Indians are not a monolith. Traditional values of saving, education, family welfare, and long term planning remain strong across large parts of the population. Simultaneously, modern influences shape a generation's expectations and spending patterns in ways that would be unimaginable just a decade ago.

Rather than viewing the rise of lifestyle spending as frivolous or irresponsible, it may be more accurate to see it as an expression of a society in transition — balancing the desire for comfort and experience with the pursuit of stability and future security.

In this context, the “YOLO” label is less a condemnation and more an invitation to understand the complex, layered realities of modern Indian consumption — a blend of necessity, aspiration, and choice.

Bangladesh's Turning Point: Triumphs, Transitions, and the Road Ahead

Bangladesh stands at a historic crossroads. What once seemed like political turbulence spiralling into instability has, in recent times, evolved into a story of democratic resurgence, civic engagement, and renewed aspiration. The 2026 general election — marked by a decisive change in government — is not merely a traditional transfer of power; it represents a profound shift in the political and social fabric of the nation. This shift carries implications not only for Bangladesh's future but also for the broader regional landscape.

At its core, this transition is a testament to the resilience of the Bangladeshi people, especially its youth, whose collective determination helped transform political disillusionment into active participation. For years, much of the region viewed Bangladesh through the lens of democratic backsliding: low voter turnout, disengaged electorates, and deep political polarization. But the narrative of disappointment and apathy has given way to one of civic revival — a watershed moment for a nation long yearning for accountability and representation.

The Rise of Civic Energy

What makes Bangladesh's recent political shift remarkable is the renewed zeal of its citizens. Large sections of the population — especially young people — rejected passivity and made their presence felt. Voter turnout surged significantly compared to previous years, indicating that citizens were not merely spectators but key stakeholders in the democratic process. This energised participation wasn't accidental. It was the culmination of

years of frustration, agitation, and aspiration among those who felt marginalised or voiceless.

Behind this surge in civic energy was a powerful social movement — an uprising that captured national attention and challenged entrenched authoritarian leanings. Fueled by young activists, students, and grassroots organisers, this movement shook the foundations of the political establishment and demanded change. It became clear that the country's future would be shaped not by complacency, but by activism, debate, and collective will.

The Election as a Turning Point

The 2026 polls brought to power a party that had spent nearly two decades in the political wilderness, returning with a sweeping mandate. Its rise was not rooted in nostalgia for past ideologies or personalities, but in a concerted effort to present itself as a reinvigorated force committed to constitutional reform and broad based governance.

What distinguished this election from those of recent past decades was its emphasis on inclusivity and reform. The victorious party presented a platform that sought to strike a balance between national renewal and respect for pluralistic values. It pledged to dismantle vestiges of one party dominance and to enact institutional safeguards against the return of entrenched authoritarianism. For many citizens, the election became a referendum on hope rather than a mere contest of old political rivalries.

In his first address as the



newly elected leader, the prime minister spoke to a vision of Bangladesh as a haven for all its citizens — regardless of religion or background. In a country shaped by a rich tapestry of cultural and religious identities, these words resonated with many who had long feared marginalisation. This emphasis on inclusivity struck a chord not only within Bangladesh's borders but also among neighbouring nations watching closely.

Repositioning on the Regional Stage

For neighbouring countries, particularly India, the political evolution in Dhaka carries significant strategic and diplomatic weight. Stability in Bangladesh has long been viewed as key to regional security, economic cooperation, and social harmony. India's proximity — geographically, economically, and culturally —

makes the health of Bangladesh's democracy particularly salient.

The shift in Dhaka's political landscape offers an opportunity for renewed engagement between the two nations. For years, diplomatic relations were perceived as skewed toward one dominant political figure and party. The emergence of a new government allows policymakers in neighbouring capitals to reset ties, transcending past grievances and focusing on constructive engagement rooted in mutual benefit.

In this context, rebuilding trust and cooperation will require careful diplomacy. The transition offers an opening to focus on issues such as trade, connectivity, and cultural exchange. People to people bridges — through education, tourism, and arts — can reinforce bilateral ties. Economic corridors that connect mar-

kets and infrastructure networks have the potential to unlock substantial growth for both economies.

A Rejection of Extremism

One of the most striking features of Bangladesh's electoral outcome was the nuanced stance of its electorate toward regressive forces. While some political groups with conservative or exclusionary rhetoric garnered increased visibility, voters ultimately rejected them as primary governing agents. Instead, they placed trust in a more moderate and centre oriented approach.

This decision reflects a level of political sophistication among Bangladeshi citizens — particularly women and young voters — who appear to have weighed broader social cohesion and democratic values over divisive appeals. In doing so, they signalled a col-

lective desire for a balanced political future that safeguards civil liberties and promotes social stability.

For regional observers, this rejection holds significance. It suggests that Bangladeshis are not easily swayed by polarising narratives and that they value a political environment conducive to peace and progress. Such discernment is crucial in a region where extremism and radical agendas have, at times, posed threats to stability.

Challenges Ahead

Despite these positive developments, challenges loom large for Bangladesh. The nation's history over the past few decades has included episodes of communal tension, mob violence, and lawlessness that have left deep scars. Addressing these challenges will require sustained institutional reform, effective law enforcement, and an unwavering commitment to uphold the rule of law.

The new government's mandate extends far beyond rhetorical promises. It must confront structural issues that hinder justice and equality — from ensuring the safety of minority communities to rebuilding trust in public institutions. For the Bangladeshi electorate, the real test will be the implementation of meaningful change that translates into everyday improvements in people's lives.

Economic reforms are another pressing priority. While Bangladesh's garment industry and export sectors have earned global recognition, diversification and modernization of the economy are essential for long term sustainability. Investments in technology, ed-

ucation, and infrastructure will be critical to creating jobs and raising living standards across the nation.

Looking Forward Together

For neighbours and global partners, supporting Bangladesh's renaissance means extending a hand rooted not in patronage but in respect for its sovereign choices. Robust diplomatic engagement — in areas like security cooperation, economic partnerships, and cultural exchanges — can reinforce Bangladesh's transition and help ensure that democratic gains are preserved and strengthened.

Sporting and cultural collaborations, such as inviting Bangladeshi teams to international tournaments and facilitating artistic exchanges, can serve as powerful symbols of unity and mutual respect. These gestures, while symbolic, contribute to a broader narrative of partnership and shared destiny.

Bangladesh's journey from political uncertainty to hope infused renewal underscores a universal truth: democracy thrives when citizens believe in agency — in the power of their vote, their voice, and their collective action. The 2026 election has reminded the world that even longstanding challenges can yield to civic courage and constructive engagement.

As Bangladesh turns this new page, the hard work of rebuilding begins in earnest. But with renewed energy, inclusive leadership, and thoughtful engagement both within and beyond its borders, the nation stands poised to chart a path of progress that reflects the aspirations of its people.

Vibrant Villages Phase II: ₹6,839 Crore Plan to Transform 1,954 Border Villages

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has launched the second phase of the government's ambitious Vibrant Villages Programme, aimed at accelerating development in India's border regions. The initiative, unveiled during his visit to Assam's Cachar district, seeks to upgrade infrastructure and improve living conditions in 1,954 villages across the country.

With a total financial outlay of ₹6,839 crore, the programme will be implemented over the next few years, covering border areas in 15 states and two Union Territories. These include strategically important regions such as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and several northeastern states. Of the total villages identified, around 140 are located in Assam, highlighting the government's focus on the region.

The scheme builds on the first phase launched in 2023, which targeted 662 villages along the northern border. While the earlier phase focused largely on areas along the China border, the second phase expands the scope to include villages along other international borders, including those adjoining Bangladesh.

The core objective of the programme is to ensure holistic development of remote bor-



der villages. This includes improving road connectivity, electricity supply, education, healthcare access, and livelihood opportunities. The government also plans to ensure saturation of welfare schemes so that residents receive the full benefits of central and state initiatives.

A key aspect of the programme is its strategic dimension. By enhancing infrastructure and economic opportunities, the government aims to reduce migration from border villages and encourage people to remain

in these areas. A stable population in border regions is seen as vital for national security, as local residents can play an important role in supporting border management.

During the launch, Shah emphasized a shift in perspective—stating that border villages should no longer be viewed as the “last villages” of the country, but rather as the “first villages” of India. This reflects a broader policy approach that places border communities at the forefront of development planning.

The programme also in-

cludes security-related initiatives and connectivity projects, ensuring that development efforts align with strategic priorities. Improved infrastructure is expected to boost economic activity, create employment, and integrate these remote regions more closely with the national economy.

Overall, Vibrant Villages Phase II represents a significant push to transform India's border areas through targeted investment, better infrastructure, and inclusive growth, while simultaneously strengthening national security.

Supreme Court Criticises ‘Blame Game’ in Electoral Roll Process



The Supreme Court expressed displeasure over what it described as an “unfortunate blame game” between authorities involved in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The court stressed that such an approach only hampers progress in an already time-bound and crucial democratic exercise.

During the proceedings, the bench directed the concerned High Court to take a more proactive role by appointing judicial officers to oversee aspects of the SIR process. The aim is to ensure transparency, accountability, and smooth coordination among agencies responsible for updating voter lists.

The SIR exercise is conducted periodically to revise electoral rolls, remove ineligible names, and include new voters. Given its importance in maintaining free

and fair elections, the court underscored that administrative inefficiencies or conflicts between institutions cannot be allowed to derail the process.

The judges observed that instead of passing responsibility, authorities must work collaboratively. The court noted that delays or mismanagement could affect voter inclusion and ultimately weaken the electoral framework.

To address these concerns, the Supreme Court instructed that judicial officers be deployed to monitor the process on the ground. Their role would include supervising implementation, resolving disputes, and ensuring that guidelines are followed properly.

The court's intervention comes amid concerns raised about the execution of the SIR exercise in certain re-

gions, including allegations of irregularities and lack of coordination. By involving judicial officers, the court hopes to bring greater credibility and efficiency to the process.

Additionally, the bench emphasized that electoral roll revision is not merely a routine administrative task but a foundational element of democracy. Therefore, all stakeholders—including election authorities and state administrations—must treat it with seriousness and urgency.

The Supreme Court's remarks serve as a reminder that institutional cooperation is essential in safeguarding democratic processes. By discouraging blame-shifting and encouraging accountability, the court aims to ensure that the electoral roll revision is completed in a fair, transparent, and timely manner.

Dhami Orders Probe into Ad Hoc Appointments, Services Terminated in Uttarakhand

Pushkar Singh Dhami has ordered a detailed probe into controversial ad hoc appointments made in the Uttarakhand Vidhan Sabha secretariat, as the government moves to address allegations of irregular recruitment and enforce accountability.

The controversy involves around 227 ad hoc appointments made between 2016 and 2022, reportedly without following due recruitment procedures. These appointments were approved during different administrations, raising serious concerns about the misuse of discretionary powers and lack of transparency in hiring.

Taking a firm stance, Dhami wrote to Ritu Khanduri Bhushan, urging a fair and comprehensive inquiry into the matter. He emphasized that if irregularities were confirmed, strict action should be taken, including cancellation of such



appointments and reforms to ensure transparent recruitment in the future.

Following this directive, a committee comprising retired officials was formed to examine the issue. The panel reportedly found multiple violations of established norms in the appointment process. Acting on

its recommendations, authorities moved to terminate the services of those hired through the ad hoc system.

The state government has reiterated its commitment to maintaining zero tolerance toward corruption and administrative lapses. Officials indicated that this action is part of

a broader effort to strengthen governance and restore credibility in public institutions.

The issue has also highlighted longstanding concerns regarding recruitment practices within the Assembly secretariat, where rules were allegedly bypassed. While the termination of services marks a significant corrective step, questions remain about accountability for those responsible for approving the appointments in the first place.

The government is now expected to introduce safeguards to prevent similar irregularities in the future, including stricter adherence to recruitment norms and improved oversight mechanisms.

Overall, the probe and subsequent action signal a strong message from the Uttarakhand administration on the importance of transparency, fairness, and accountability in public sector hiring.

Vijay Rules Out BJP Alliance, Signals Independent Political Path in Tamil Nadu



Vijay has firmly ruled out any alliance between his party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), and the Bharatiya Janata Party ahead of the upcoming Tamil Nadu Assembly elections, underlining a clear independent political stance.

Party leaders stated that despite alleged pressure to align with the BJP, Vijay remained resolute and refused to compromise on his party's ideological position. According to them, attempts were made to influence the decision, but the actor-turned-politician chose to stay firm, reinforcing his commitment to his principles.

Vijay has consistently projected the BJP as an ideological rival, making it clear that any alliance would contradict the core values of TVK. His decision signals a definitive political direction as the party prepares to make its electoral debut in the state.

The move reflects TVK's broader strategy of building its own identity rather than relying on alliances. Vijay has emphasised that the party aims to emerge as a strong alternative to existing political

forces by directly engaging with voters and addressing key issues.

TVK leaders also took aim at rival parties, particularly the ruling DMK, suggesting that their early alliance discussions indicate concern over the growing popularity of Vijay and his party. The entry of TVK into active politics has added a new dynamic to Tamil Nadu's political landscape, traditionally dominated by established players and coalition politics.

Political observers note that while contesting independently allows TVK to maintain ideological clarity, it also presents challenges. Building a strong grassroots network and converting popularity into electoral success will be crucial for the party's performance.

Vijay's decision to go solo sets the stage for a competitive and potentially multi-cornered contest in the upcoming elections. It also positions TVK as a party seeking to redefine political engagement in Tamil Nadu by appealing directly to the electorate without traditional alliances.

Indian Railways Plans to Ease Boarding Rules for Greater Passenger Flexibility

Indian Railways is considering a significant change to its boarding rules that could make train travel more flexible and convenient for passengers. The move comes as part of efforts to modernise systems and improve the overall travel experience.

At present, passengers are required to board the train from the boarding station selected at the time of booking. If they fail to do so, their seat may be marked as vacant and can be allotted to another passenger after a few stations. This rule often causes inconvenience, especially for those who are delayed due to traffic, personal emergencies, or changes in travel plans.

To address these concerns, the Railway Board has proposed relaxing the existing rules. The proposal has been sent to the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS), which manages the digital infrastructure of railway bookings and passenger data. CRIS has been asked to explore the necessary technical changes to implement the revised system.

Under the proposed changes, passengers may be allowed to board from subsequent stations without automatically losing their reserved seats. This would eliminate the current risk of seat reassignment if a passenger fails to board at the designated point. The idea is to provide more flexibility while ensuring that seats are



not unnecessarily marked as vacant.

Officials believe that the current system is too rigid and does not account for real-world challenges faced by passengers. By introducing more adaptable rules, Indian Railways aims to make the journey smoother and less stressful, especially for long-distance travelers.

However, implementing such changes will require careful planning. The system must still ensure that vacant seats can be efficiently allocated to waitlisted passengers when genuinely unused. Balancing flexibility with optimal seat utilisation will be key to the success of the proposal.

The move is part of a broader push by Indian Railways to digitally upgrade its services and adopt passenger-centric reforms. If approved and implemented, the revised boarding rules could significantly enhance convenience and reduce disputes related to seat allocation.

For now, the proposal is under consideration, and passengers will need to follow existing rules until any official changes are announced.

Sukhu Flags Attacks on Kashmiris, Criticises India-US Trade Deal



Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, raised concerns over recent attacks on Kashmiri traders while speaking during his visit to Srinagar. He also strongly criticised the trade agreement between India and the United States, warning of its potential impact on farmers.

Addressing party workers and local leaders, Sukhu described incidents involving attacks on Kashmiris as isolated and politically driven. He assured that authorities in Himachal Pradesh have acted swiftly, with arrests made promptly in such cases. Referring to a recent assault on a Kashmiri shawl seller, he stressed that such events are not representative of the state's overall atmosphere.

The Chief Minister highlighted that Kashmiris have long been part of Himachal Pradesh's social and economic fabric, often living and working there peace-

fully. He urged traders from Jammu and Kashmir not to feel threatened and encouraged them to continue their livelihoods without fear. Sukhu also directed law enforcement agencies to take strict action against those responsible for any harassment and appealed to victims to report incidents immediately.

He suggested that some of these episodes are amplified for attention, particularly on social media, and do not reflect widespread hostility. According to him, maintaining harmony between communities remains a priority for his government.

Shifting focus to economic concerns, Sukhu criticised the India-US trade deal, calling it detrimental to farmers, especially in hill states like Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. He pointed out that both regions rely heavily on horticulture, particu-

larly apple cultivation, which sustains a large section of the population.

He warned that lowering import duties could result in a surge of cheaper foreign agricultural products such as apples, walnuts, and almonds. This, he said, would make it difficult for local farmers to compete, especially those who have invested significantly in modern storage and farming infrastructure.

Sukhu cautioned that the long-term effects of the agreement could harm domestic producers and weaken the rural economy. He emphasised the need for policies that prioritise Indian farmers and protect their interests in an increasingly competitive global market.

His remarks combined reassurance on maintaining social harmony with a strong warning about economic challenges facing agricultural communities.

Trump Claims He Prevented India Pakistan War Using Tariff Threat



At a recent Board of Peace event in Washington, U.S. President Donald Trump asserted that he played a decisive role in halting last year's military escalation between India and Pakistan. Trump claimed he had warned both nations that he would impose a 200% tariff on each country if they did not stop fighting, arguing that "nothing is like money" to force peace. He also stated that "11 very expensive jets" had been shot down during the conflict and that his threat persuaded the sides to halt hostilities.

Trump said Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reportedly expressed gratitude, telling Trump that the tariff threat saved "25 million lives," and he described personal

phone calls with leaders from both capitals. The U.S. president also highlighted his personal relationship with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as part of his narrative about applying diplomatic pressure.

The Indian government has firmly denied any third party mediation in the India Pakistan ceasefire, stating that the truce was reached bilaterally through direct military to military talks rather than U.S. intervention. Officials rejected the notion that Trump's tariff threat or involvement influenced the cessation of fighting in May 2025.

Analysts and commentators have questioned the accuracy of Trump's account,

noting there is no public evidence that 11 jets were downed or that tariff threats affected decision-making by either government. Many observers view Trump's remarks as part of his broader strategy to highlight his foreign policy credentials ahead of ongoing political debates in the U.S.

The Board of Peace meeting — intended to spotlight diplomatic efforts on peace and conflict resolution — drew international attention partly due to Trump's sensational framing of the South Asia conflict. Reports described awkward moments as Trump called on Sharif to stand and publicly reinforce the U.S. role, which some commentators characterized

as turning into political theatre rather than grounded diplomacy.

The India Pakistan conflict Trump referred to followed the Pahalgam terror attack in April 2025 and subsequent military clashes later that spring. The ceasefire understanding was formally announced on May 10, 2025, and was welcomed by regional and global actors as a de-escalation of tensions.

In summary, Trump reiterated his claim of stopping the India Pakistan conflict using economic pressure, but his account has been challenged by Indian authorities and lacks independent confirmation, making it a subject of debate rather than an established diplomatic fact.

Indian Origin Executive Convicted in \$1.2 Million 'Ghost Job' Fraud in the US



An Indian origin former senior executive of Optum Inc., a subsidiary of United-Health Group in the United States, has been convicted in a major fraud scheme that siphoned over \$1.2 million from the company through a long running "ghost job" and kickback arrangement.

Karan Gupta, 47, who served as a senior director of data analytics at Optum in Minnesota, was found guilty by a federal jury after a six day trial on multiple charges, including conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering.

How the Scheme Worked

Prosecutors detailed that the fraud began in 2015 when Gupta arranged for a life-long friend to be hired into a managerial data engineering role at Optum even though the friend was not qualified for the position. Gupta allegedly provided a fabricated résumé to secure the job and became his friend's direct supervisor.

Over the next nearly four years, the friend did virtually no work for the company. Evidence showed he sel-

dom sent emails, rarely interacted with other employees, and in some periods did not even log into his company computer. Despite this, the friend continued to receive a substantial salary, which started at more than \$100,000 and increased with raises and bonuses.

Kickbacks and Concealment

In return for the "job," Gupta demanded that his friend pay more than half of his unearned salary back to him as kickbacks. The pair employed elaborate methods to conceal these illicit payments. Initially, the friend withdrew cash from his bank account and deposited it into a bank branch linked to Gupta's account so Gupta could access it. Later, the friend opened a new checking account for salary deposits and mailed Gupta the debit card, which Gupta then used to withdraw funds from ATMs.

Discovery and Legal Outcome

The fraud was uncovered after Gupta was terminated in November 2019 following

the discovery of a separate fraud during an internal review at Optum. A deeper investigation revealed the ghost employee and kickback scheme, leading to his prosecution by federal authorities.

The total loss to the company from Gupta's fraudulent activities has been estimated at more than \$1.2 million. He now faces potential federal prison time, financial penalties and restitution orders when he is sentenced at a later date.

Official Response

Officials highlighted that such schemes undermine legitimate business operations. Authorities stated that individuals in positions of trust must be held accountable, especially when their actions harm employers and potentially burden others indirectly.

In summary, Karan Gupta's conviction underscores the severity of "ghost job" and kickback frauds in corporate settings and marks a notable case of legal accountability for high level executive misconduct in the United States.

Area 51 Explained: The Real Story Behind the UFO Legend

Area 51 is one of the most famous and mysterious places on Earth, instantly bringing to mind images of UFOs, extraterrestrials, and secret alien technology. But the real reason this remote military base in the Nevada desert is so strongly linked to alien lore has more to do with history, secrecy, and public imagination than with actual proof of extraterrestrial life.

What Area 51 Actually Is

Area 51 is a highly classified U.S. Air Force testing site situated about 130 km north of Las Vegas. It forms part of the expansive Nevada Test and Training Range and was established in the 1950s. Its original mission was to develop and test high altitude reconnaissance aircraft — most notably the U 2 spy plane — under extreme secrecy during the Cold War era.

The existence of Area 51 wasn't officially acknowledged until 2013, when the U.S. government declassified documents detailing historic flight test programs conducted there. Those files made it clear that the base's core purpose was testing advanced military air-



craft, not researching or housing alien spacecraft.

How Alien Myths Took Hold

So how did Area 51 become synonymous with aliens? The answer lies in its extreme secrecy and timing. In the 1950s and 1960s, reports of unidentified flying objects surged across the U.S., especially near Nevada. Many of these sightings were later understood to be classified aircraft flying at unprecedented altitudes, unfamiliar to civilian observers and radar operators.

The 1950s Roswell incident — where debris initially

portrayals blurred the line between reality and fantasy, embedding the idea of hidden extraterrestrials deep into public consciousness — even though no reliable evidence ever supported such claims.

Recent Reignited Interest

Interest in UFOs and unidentified aerial phenomena (UAPs) has surged in recent years. Statements by public figures suggesting that aliens might exist — even while acknowledging that no concrete proof of contact has been found — have kept Area 51 in the spotlight. Some governments have responded by releasing or planning to release previously classified files related to UFO sightings and UAP investigations, adding to public intrigue.

What's Real and What's Not

Despite decades of speculation, there is no verified evidence that Area 51 ever housed alien bodies, spacecraft, or any extraterrestrial technology. Its enduring mystery stems largely from its strategic secrecy as a defense testing facility, which inadvertently bred speculation and fascination.

Prince Andrew Released Under Investigation After Arrest for Misconduct

Prince Andrew Mountbatten Windsor, the younger brother of King Charles III, was released under investigation after being arrested on suspicion of misconduct in public office in the United Kingdom. Police held him for about 11–12 hours before releasing him as inquiries continue, meaning he has not been charged but remains subject to ongoing investigation.

The investigation stems from allegations linked to the Jeffrey Epstein files, which suggest Andrew may have shared sensitive government or commercial information during his tenure as the UK's trade envoy between 2001 and 2011. Police are also searching properties associated with him in Norfolk and Berkshire as part of their inquiries.

This arrest marks a historic moment, believed to be the first time in modern history that a senior member of the British royal family has been



taken into police custody on suspicion of a serious public office related offense. Senior royals rarely face this level of legal scrutiny, and the case has drawn global attention.

King Charles III publicly acknowledged the situation, emphasizing that "the law must take its course" and that police have the royal family's full co-

operation. Other members of the family, including the Prince and Princess of Wales, have echoed support for due process. Buckingham Palace was reportedly not informed in advance of the arrest.

At this stage, Andrew is not charged, and police have stressed the matter is active and ongoing. Misconduct in

public office is a serious offense under British law that can carry a maximum life sentence, though such cases are complex and rarely prosecuted.

This episode occurs against a backdrop of long standing controversy over Andrew's links to Jeffrey Epstein, including a previously settled U.S. civil lawsuit related to sexual abuse allegations (not directly part of the current misconduct probe). The broader inquiry into the newly released Epstein documents has prompted multiple law enforcement assessments in the UK.

In summary, Prince Andrew has been released under investigation after being arrested on suspicion of misconduct in public office linked to documents in the Epstein Files. The case remains open, with police carrying out searches and inquiries, and the former royal continues to deny wrongdoing.

Dubai Set to Launch Air Taxi Service in 2026 — 36 km Trip in Just 10 Minutes



Dubai is gearing up to introduce a cutting edge air taxi service in 2026 that could transform urban travel in the Emirate and position it as a global leader in futuristic mobility solutions. This new electric vertical take off and landing (eVTOL) service aims to drastically cut travel times between key locations — for instance, a trip from Dubai International Airport to Palm Jumeirah, a distance of about 36 km currently taking around 45 minutes by road, could be completed in just around 10 minutes by air taxi once operations begin.

What Is the Air Taxi Service?

The plan involves launching a fleet of fully electric air taxi aircraft designed to carry a pilot and up to four passengers at speeds of up to 320 km/h. These aircraft are quiet, powered by electricity with zero direct emissions, and make use of specially developed vertiports — dedicated facilities for take off and landing without the

need for traditional runways.

Network and Vertiports

Initially, the service will operate from four main locations:

- Dubai International Airport (DXB)
- Palm Jumeirah
- Dubai Marina
- Downtown Dubai

At each site, vertiports are being built with two zones for take off and landing, air conditioned passenger lounges, parking, and charging stations for the aircraft. Each facility is expected to support tens of thousands of flights annually, helping to relieve ground traffic congestion and offer a seamless, rapid transport option.

Commercial Launch and Goals

Officials have confirmed that trials and infrastructure buildup are well underway with the aim of commercial air taxi operations commencing in 2026. The goal is not only to provide a premium travel choice for residents and visitors but

also to integrate aerial mobility with Dubai's public transport system — including metro lines, buses, and micro mobility last mile services.

Why It Matters

This initiative exemplifies Dubai's strategy to adopt innovative and sustainable transportation technologies. By slashing travel times dramatically — such as turning a lengthy airport to Palm journey into a matter of minutes — the air taxi service is expected to appeal to commuters, business travelers, and tourists alike. It reinforces the city's ambition to become a global hub for next generation mobility.

Looking Ahead

As the air taxi network prepares for launch, work continues on regulatory frameworks, aircraft certification, and vertiport construction. If successful, Dubai's service could become a model for other cities around the world exploring urban air mobility solutions in the years ahead.

Strong Close for Dalal Street: Nifty Above 25,550, Sensex Surges 317 Points as Power & Metal Stocks Lead, IT Lags



Indian equity markets finished Friday on a firm footing, with key indices staging a robust recovery after early volatility. The BSE Sensex rose 316.57 points (0.38%) to 82,814.71, while the Nifty 50 climbed 116.90 points (0.46%) to 25,571.25, comfortably above the 25,550 level.

The rally was broad-based, with strength seen across several key sectors. Power, metal, capital goods and PSU bank stocks were among the top performers, helping to lift sentiment and underpin the market's advance. Major gainers on the Nifty included names like Hindalco Industries, NTPC, SBI Life, L&T and Coal India, all benefiting from sustained buying interest during the session.

In contrast, IT stocks underperformed, acting as a drag on the overall market gains. Heavyweights such as Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies and Wipro ended the day in negative territory, with the

broader IT index down about 1%, underscoring sector-specific weakness. Media stocks also lagged behind the broader market's rally.

The broader market displayed mixed performance. The Nifty Mid-cap index rose by around 0.5%, while the Smallcap index closed slightly lower, highlighting some divergence in risk sentiment among mid and smaller-sized companies. Despite this, the overall advance-decline ratio favoured gainers, suggesting healthy participation across various segments of the market.

Trading was not without its challenges. Early in the session, markets grappled with geopolitical concerns and elevated crude oil prices, which had initially weighed on sentiment. However, as trade progressed, bargain hunting and fresh buying emerged, helping to reverse the early losses and drive the benchmarks higher.

Stock-specific action

remained active. Several mid and small-cap stocks hit 52 week lows, indicating that while broad indices were strong, underlying volatility persisted in select segments of the market. Nonetheless, fresh buying in sectoral leaders prevented this from derailling the overall positive trend.

On a weekly basis, both Sensex and Nifty posted modest gains, showing resilience despite mixed global cues and intermittent profit-taking. The rally into the weekend, led by cyclical sectors such as power and metals, reflects investors' willingness to rotate into segments expected to benefit from sustained economic activity.

In summary, the Indian equity market ended the week on a high note, buoyed by broad-based buying, strong performances in cyclical sectors, and a rebound from early session weakness — even as IT stocks continued to lag behind.

RBI's Revised Bank Exposure Rules Will Change How Brokers Fund Margin Trading, Not Client Leverage



The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest revision of bank exposure rules has sparked debate across broking circles, but the central point of the update is often misunderstood. Rather than altering how individual traders use margin trading facilities, the changes focus primarily on how brokers themselves are funded for such activities.

Previously, RBI rules had an operationally complex requirement that banks taking exposure to brokers' margin trading facilities (MTF) must pledge client securities. Brokers found this structure impractical, and it effectively shut the door on banks providing direct funding for MTF books. The latest circular removes this clause, reopening a more workable funding route. This means brokers may once again explore bank funding options for their MTF exposures — something that had nearly vanished in practice. In essence, the central bank is tweaking the mechanics of bank-to-broker funding, not tightening client-level leverage limits.

Leading broking executives have pointed out that the new circular is not a reaction to out-sized growth in margin trading. Contrary to some initial interpretations, it does not reduce clients' ability to take leveraged positions through MTF. The leverage frameworks that determine how much a client can borrow against their stock holdings remain governed by established norms set by market regulators and stock exchanges.

Industry insiders explain that the revised rules aim to clarify and streamline how banks evaluate and support broker balance sheets. While banks were largely already reluctant to fund brokers' MTF positions given past complexity, the updated rules remove a specific constraint — potentially making a clearer path for such funding in future, subject to individual bank policies. This can help bring if any, a more standardized approach toward financing brokers' risk exposures.

Broker representatives have also stressed

that risk concentration limits, such as those on single-stock exposures within margin trading books, continue to be monitored. These limits help ensure that risk remains manageable and that brokers do not overextend their lending to clients regardless of how funding is sourced. The structure still comes with higher margins compared to other trading products like derivatives or normal delivery trades.

While some commentary in market circles has linked the RBI move to a broad tightening of retail leverage, brokers clarify that the client-facing experience won't fundamentally change because of this circular. Margin trading will continue to operate under existing risk, reporting, and margin requirements set by regulators. In summary, the RBI's updated exposure rules represent an adjustment in how banks and brokers interact, potentially enhancing clarity around funding, but do not directly alter the leverage available to retail traders.

Morgan Stanley Sees Big Upside in Reliance Industries on AI Investment Push

Global brokerage Morgan Stanley has highlighted Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) as one of its top stock picks, projecting strong long term upside driven by the company's ambitious plan to spend heavily on artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure and related businesses. The firm maintains an "overweight" rating on RIL shares and has set a target price significantly above current levels, implying potential gains of around 28% over its recent market price.

At the centre of Morgan Stanley's optimism is RIL's massive capital allocation blueprint. The company has unveiled plans to invest roughly ₹10 lakh crore over the next seven years in AI, digital platforms, and related energy supply infrastructure — a strategic shift that mirrors the bold expansions it made earlier in telecom and consumer businesses. This planned outlay is seen as the next big pivot in the conglomerate's evolution, with potential to reshape its earnings profile over the long term.

RIL's AI strategy was recently outlined by Chairman Mukesh Ambani, who revealed plans to construct multi gigawatt AI ready data centres, backed



by renewable energy capacity of up to 10 GW, advanced energy storage systems, and AI computing infrastructure. The first phase is expected to generate an initial 120 MW of capacity in the second half of 2026, with a steady scale up over subsequent years.

Morgan Stanley's positive view stems not only from the scale of investment but also from the return potential of the proposed "intelligence" business. Analysts estimate that the new AI fo-

cus capabilities could deliver post tax returns on capital employed above 12% and return on equity nearing 18% over five years — figures that are materially better than what RIL achieved from previous major capex cycles.

Execution is expected to involve partnerships with global technology players, leveraging both RIL's existing digital ecosystem and external expertise. The overall strategy aims to build sovereign AI computing capability in India

while potentially unlocking new revenue streams from enterprise services and digital offerings.

Financially, the firm's significant annual operating cash flows — estimated in the US \$14-15 billion range — provide a strong funding base for the initiative, helping cushion the investment and reduce dependence on external financing.

Market reaction to both the AI plan and Morgan Stanley's outlook has been positive. RIL's stock has seen gains, reflecting in-

vestor confidence in the company's strategic direction, while its market capitalisation remains among India's largest, underlining sustained institutional interest.

In summary, Morgan Stanley's bullish stance on Reliance Industries centres on the belief that its extensive AI and digital infrastructure investment could be the next major growth driver — one capable of delivering meaningful returns and reshaping the company's long term earnings trajectory.

UPL Approves Move to Carve Out a Listed Pure Play Crop Protection Business



UPL Limited, the major global agro chemical and seeds company, has received board approval for a significant group reorganisation that will reshape how its crop protection business is structured and valued. The plan centres on creating a separately listed pure play crop protection arm — a strategic move designed to unlock value for shareholders and sharpen the focus of its core agricultural

chemicals operations. At present, UPL operates through a diversified portfolio that includes crop protection, seeds, specialty chemicals, and related agri tech solutions. As part of the reorganisation plan approved by the board, the company intends to consolidate its crop protection business into a standalone entity that will be listed independently on stock exchanges. This new pure

play crop protection arm is expected to bring greater clarity to the business and help investors more accurately assess its performance and growth prospects.

The rationale behind the move is rooted in creating a more streamlined corporate structure where high growth, high focus segments can operate with dedicated strategies and capital allocation. By spinning off crop protection into

its own listed vehicle, UPL aims to improve operational focus and give this business area the autonomy to pursue its full growth potential. This separation also enables more transparent valuation of the core crop protection business apart from other UPL segments such as specialty chemicals and seeds, which have different market dynamics.

In addition to enabling value recognition, the reorganisation is likely to help UPL attract targeted investments specifically for the crop protection arm. Investors who are keen on the agricultural chemicals sector may find the pure play entity more aligned with their focus and risk profile, compared with holding shares in a broader diversified conglomerate.

The board's approval follows an earlier phase of strategic realignment in which UPL created distinct pure play platforms for its domestic crop protection and seeds businesses, as well

as other segments. That earlier exercise involved transferring specific operations into wholly owned subsidiaries and bringing in private equity participation, with the aim of unlocking value and enhancing growth prospects.

Breaking out a listed crop protection arm comes at a time when UPL is also navigating broader industry pressures, including managing debt and operational efficiency. Analysts have noted that restructuring efforts like this can help the company sharply define strategic priorities while managing capital more effectively.

Overall, the board's approval for the proposed reorganisation lays the groundwork for a major structural transformation at UPL. By creating a separately listed pure play crop protection entity, the company is aiming to unlock shareholder value, refine strategic execution, and attract focused investor interest in one of its most important business verticals.

RBI's New MTF Rules Won't Lower Client Leverage, But Could Influence How Retail Traders Use It

The Reserve Bank of India's latest circular on Margin Trading Facility (MTF) has stirred fresh discussion in broking and trading circles. Although the new guidelines do not directly change how much leverage retail investors can use, they could meaningfully shape how traders think about and apply leverage in practice.

At its core, the RBI's updated framework tightens how brokers themselves borrow funds from banks to support their MTF books. The rules require that any funding must be fully secured with high quality collateral, demand larger haircuts on pledged equity securities, and impose more stringent cash backing for loans. These measures target the broker to bank funding relationship — not the client level leverage that individual investors enjoy while using margin products.

Brokers have been quick to emphasize that

existing margin requirements, leverage limits, and risk controls for MTF remain under the jurisdiction of India's market regulator (SEBI) and the stock exchanges. In other words, how much a retail trader can borrow against shares in their account isn't altered by this circular. What does change is the economics behind how brokers fund their own obligations, which indirectly affects the cost structure of margin trading.

One key point raised by industry executives is that many retail investors underestimate the total cost of leverage. While attention often focuses on headline interest rates charged on MTF borrowings, the actual cost to a trader also includes brokerage fees and how quickly borrowing costs accumulate — especially for short term positions. Higher funding costs for brokers could translate into more visible charges for traders



who underestimate the expenses tied to leveraged positions.

Some brokers predict that this renewed clarity around funding costs may lead to a temporary moderation in the use of margin trading. As traders reassess the true costs of holding leveraged positions, they may adjust their trading habits, particularly for very short holding periods where

costs can quickly erode profits.

Others in the industry stress that the circular doesn't equate to a crack-down on retail MTF usage. Since banks were already not heavily financing MTF exposure in practice, brokers are expected to continue relying on internal accruals, commercial paper markets, or non bank lending lines — meaning the un-

derlying mechanics for clients stay broadly the same.

Overall, while the RBI's changes introduce stricter funding discipline for brokers, they stop short of tightening retail leverage limits. Instead, the shift puts a spotlight on the true economics of leverage, potentially encouraging more informed usage of margin facilities among retail investors.

₹4 Lakh for Kindergarten? Viral Post Sparks Debate on Rising Education Costs



A recent social media post by Aviral Bhatnagar, an alumnus of IIT Bombay, has ignited a widespread debate about the soaring cost of early education in India. His reaction to an unusually high kindergarten fee structure has resonated with thousands online, highlighting growing concerns about affordability in the education sector.

The controversy began when Bhatnagar shared that his cousin's daughter, enrolled in an Upper Kindergarten (UKG) class at a private school in Mumbai, was paying nearly ₹4 lakh annually. What made the revelation even more striking was his comparison: the amount was roughly half of what he had paid for his entire four-year engineering degree.

This stark contrast quickly captured public attention. For many, it underscored a troubling reality—education costs, even at the most basic levels, are rising at an alarming pace.

Bhatnagar described this phenomenon as a form of “hidden inflation,” suggesting that while traditional economic indicators may not fully capture it, families are increasingly feeling the burden. His comment also pointed toward a possible future solution, proposing that artificial intelligence-driven tutors might one day make education more accessible and affordable.

The post soon went viral, drawing significant engagement and sparking a heated discussion on social media. Many users expressed shock and frustration, questioning how preschool education could command such high fees. Several pointed out that early education, which was once considered relatively affordable, is now becoming a luxury for many families.

Some users argued that the issue reflects deeper structural problems within the system. They claimed that sectors like education, healthcare, and even weddings have become highly commercialized, making them inaccessible for the average household. Others criticized the state of public institutions, suggesting that declining quality in government schools has in-

directly pushed parents toward expensive private options.

However, not everyone agreed with this perspective. A section of users viewed the situation differently, arguing that such high fees are often linked to lifestyle choices rather than necessity. According to them, premium schools cater to affluent families who are willing to pay more for perceived quality, brand value, and additional facilities. In this view, the rising costs are less about inflation and more about market demand and social status.

Some even suggested alternative approaches, such as homeschooling or choosing more affordable schools, emphasizing that parents still have options if they are willing to look beyond elite institutions.

The discussion also raised broader questions about inequality in education. As private schools continue to increase fees, access to quality education may become increasingly divided along economic lines. This could have long-term implications for social mobility and equal opportunity.

Amid this debate, Bhatnagar's mention of AI tutors added another dimension. With rapid advancements in technology, many believe that personalized, AI-driven learning tools could disrupt traditional education models. Such tools might offer high-quality instruction at a fraction of current costs, potentially bridging the gap between affordability and quality.

While this vision remains speculative, it reflects a growing belief that technology could play a key role in reshaping education in the future.

Ultimately, the viral post has done more than just highlight a shocking fee figure. It has opened up an important conversation about the direction of education in India—one that touches on affordability, accessibility, and the evolving role of technology.

As costs continue to rise, the question remains: will education become increasingly exclusive, or will innovation help make it accessible once again?

Why Finnish PhD Graduates Receive a Hat and Sword



In Finland, earning a PhD is not just an academic milestone—it is marked by a unique and symbolic tradition involving a top hat and a sword. This centuries-old custom reflects the country's deep respect for scholarship, knowledge, and intellectual responsibility.

At Finnish universities, doctoral graduates participate in a formal ceremony known as a “doctoral conferment.” During this event, they are awarded a black top hat, often called a “doctoral hat,” which signifies academic freedom and the status of a scholar. The hat is a visible representation of the intellectual independence that comes with achieving the highest level of education.

Alongside the hat, many graduates also receive—or more accurately, gain the right to acquire—a ceremonial sword. This sword carries a powerful symbolic meaning: it represents the graduate's commitment to defend truth, knowledge, and ethical values. Rooted in traditions dating back to the 19th century, the sword embodies the idea that scholars must stand up for what is right and contribute responsibly to society.

The sword is not merely decorative.

It reflects the historical belief that education equips individuals with the tools to “fight” ignorance and misinformation—not through force, but through reason, evidence, and critical thinking. In this sense, the sword becomes a metaphor for intellectual courage.

The tradition is particularly prominent at institutions like the University of Helsinki, where the conferment ceremony is a grand and formal affair. Graduates dress in elegant attire, wear their doctoral hats, and carry their swords during processions and celebrations. These ceremonies often include speeches, music, and rituals that highlight the importance of academic achievement.

Interestingly, not all graduates automatically receive the sword; many choose to purchase it themselves. Despite this, it remains a cherished symbol of accomplishment and pride.

Finland's doctoral traditions stand out globally for their blend of ceremony and symbolism. By combining the top hat and sword, the country emphasizes that education is not just about acquiring knowledge, but also about upholding truth, integrity, and responsibility in the wider world.

“I Belong Here Now”: A Traveller's Emotional Goodbye to Goa



A foreign traveller's heartfelt farewell to Goa has struck a deep emotional chord online, capturing the essence of what makes the coastal Indian state so special. After spending two months exploring its landscapes, culture, and people, the traveller—identified as Fran—shared a moving message that resonated with thousands.

Fran documented his journey through a video posted on social media, reflecting on his time in Goa and the profound impact it had on him. What began as a temporary visit evolved into an experience that reshaped his feelings about India, leaving him with a sense of belonging that he hadn't anticipated.

In his farewell message, Fran expressed that leaving Goa did not feel like a final goodbye. Instead, it felt more like a pause in an ongoing relationship. He described his stay as transformative, noting that the connections he made and the warmth he experienced went far beyond what he had expected from a short trip.

During his time in Goa, Fran encountered people who left a lasting impression on him. He spoke about how strangers quickly turned into friends and, in some cases, even felt like family. This sense of community played a major role in shaping his experience, making his departure all the more emotional.

What stood out most to him was not just the scenic beauty or the well-known tourist attractions, but the spirit of the people. He observed that the locals offered a unique perspective on India—one that emphasized openness, kindness, and a relaxed way of life. This, he said, changed how he viewed the country as a whole.

Fran admitted that he arrived as an outsider but gradually began to feel like he belonged. The emotional connection he developed with Goa made him question the idea of temporary travel. By the end of his stay, the place no longer felt foreign—it felt like home.

His reflections highlighted that travel is not

only about visiting new destinations but also about personal transformation. For Fran, Goa became more than just a stop on a journey; it became a place that influenced his outlook, values, and emotional world.

In his message, he also shared a desire to return. He made it clear that his connection to Goa was not fleeting and that he intended to come back, not just as a visitor but as someone who wants to contribute positively. He mentioned hopes of engaging in meaningful activities, including helping local communities and animals.

The emotional tone of his farewell was captured in his words, where he emphasized that Goa changed something within him. He reflected on how the experience was shaped by feelings rather than just sights or activities. The atmosphere, the relationships, and the everyday moments all combined to create something deeply meaningful.

The video quickly gained attention online,

drawing thousands of views and a flood of comments. Many viewers appreciated how authentically Fran portrayed his experience. Locals, in particular, responded warmly, expressing gratitude for the way he represented their home.

Several commenters noted that his words perfectly captured what makes Goa unique. Some shared their own similar experiences, saying that the state had affected them in the same way. Others invited him to return, assuring him that he would always be welcome.

For many, Fran's story reflected a broader truth about travel in India—that the country's impact often goes beyond its physical attractions. Visitors frequently find themselves touched by the people, culture, and emotional depth of their experiences.

Goa, in particular, has long been known for its ability to leave a lasting impression. Its blend of cultural diversity, laid-back lifestyle, and strong sense of community creates an environment where visitors can feel

both relaxed and connected. Fran's story is a testament to that enduring appeal.

His journey also highlights how travel can bridge cultural gaps. Despite coming from a different background, Fran found common ground with the people he met. This connection transcended language, nationality, and other differences, reinforcing the idea that human experiences are often universal.

In the end, Fran's goodbye was not marked by sadness alone but also by gratitude and hope. While he acknowledged the difficulty of leaving, he also celebrated what he had gained—a deeper understanding of a place and a stronger sense of connection to the world.

His message serves as a reminder that sometimes, the most meaningful journeys are the ones that change us from within. For Fran, Goa was not just a destination—it became a part of who he is.

And as he said in his farewell, this was not truly a goodbye, but simply a promise to return.

“Safe, Welcoming And Diverse”: Australian Vlogger Urges Tourists To See The Real India

A viral video by an Australian travel vlogger has captured widespread attention online, offering a refreshing perspective on India and challenging long-held stereotypes about the country. Through his experiences, the creator highlights why he believes India is not only safe to visit but also incredibly diverse and worth exploring in depth.

The vlogger, who has been travelling across India as part of a global journey, shared his thoughts after spending considerable time interacting with locals, visiting different regions, and immersing himself in everyday life. His central message is simple: India is often misunderstood, and many of the fears surrounding travel in the country are exaggerated.

One of the key points he emphasized is safety. Contrary to common perceptions, he explained that he felt comfortable during his travels. While acknowledging that every country has its challenges, he noted that India should not be judged solely based on negative portrayals often seen online or in the media. His own experiences suggested that, with basic precautions, travelling in India can be both safe and enjoyable.

Beyond safety, the vlogger focused heavily on India's diversity—something he believes sets the country apart from most destinations. From landscapes and languages to food and traditions, he described India as a place



where every region offers a completely different experience. This richness, he suggested, is often overlooked by tourists who limit their visits to a few well-known cities.

He encouraged travellers to step beyond typical tourist circuits and explore lesser-known destinations. According to him, doing a bit of research and venturing beyond popular urban hubs can reveal a side of India that is far more authentic and rewarding.

Another highlight of his journey has been the warmth of Indian hospitality. The vlogger shared multiple instances where locals went out of their way to help him—whether by offering food, guiding him through unfamiliar areas, or simply

welcoming him into their daily lives. He described this generosity as something unique and deeply memorable, reinforcing his positive view of the country.

He also spoke about how social media often distorts reality. Many viral travel videos, he pointed out, focus disproportionately on poverty or chaos, creating a one-sided narrative that does not reflect the full picture. While he did not deny that such issues exist, he stressed that they represent only a fraction of what India has to offer.

Instead, he urged viewers to approach travel with an open mind and to form their own opinions. By doing so, he believes more people would dis-

cover the country's cultural richness, historical depth, and everyday vibrancy.

Food was another aspect he praised enthusiastically. From street meals to more formal dining, he found Indian cuisine to be consistently flavorful and diverse, adding to the overall travel experience. For him, the culinary journey was just as important as the destinations themselves.

The video quickly resonated with audiences online, many of whom appreciated the balanced and positive portrayal. In the comments, users thanked him for showing a side of India that often goes unnoticed and for countering negative stereotypes with genuine experiences.

At a broader level, the vlogger's message reflects a growing trend among international travellers who are redefining how India is perceived globally. Rather than focusing solely on its challenges, they are highlighting its strengths—its people, culture, and diversity.

Ultimately, the video serves as both an invitation and a reminder. India, as the vlogger puts it, cannot be understood through a single narrative. It is a country of contrasts, where complexity is part of its identity.

For those willing to look beyond assumptions, his message is clear: India is not just a destination—it is an experience—safe, diverse, and deeply rewarding.

T20 World Cup Super 8 Format Sparks Widespread Criticism

The ICC's decision to implement a pre-seeded Super 8 stage in the T20 World Cup 2026 has sparked significant controversy among fans, players, and cricket experts. Critics argue that the new format undermines competitive fairness and diminishes the excitement that fans expect from a major global tournament.

The controversy centers on the pre-determined placement of teams in the Super 8 round. Under this system, the top team from each of the four initial groups is given a fixed slot, regardless of performance metrics or relative strength. As a result, all four group winners — India, Zimbabwe, West Indies, and South Africa — end up in the same Super 8 group, while the second-placed teams — Pakistan, Sri Lanka, England, and New Zealand — are clustered in the other group.

This arrangement has drawn criticism for creating a disproportionate imbalance between the two groups. Stronger teams are concentrated together, making their path to the semi-finals more challenging, while teams finishing second in their initial groups enjoy an easier route. Traditionally, topping the group is sup-



posed to offer a competitive advantage, but in this setup, finishing first offers little benefit and, in some cases, may even be a disadvantage.

Fans have also raised concerns about how this format affects the tournament's excitement. Since Super 8 placements are predetermined, the significance of later group-stage matches is reduced. Early victories no longer guarantee meaningful ad-

vantages, and the drama and unpredictability that make the T20 World Cup thrilling are partially lost.

Additionally, co-hosting considerations have caused complications. Sri Lanka, despite hosting initial matches, may be required to travel to India for crucial knockout games, depriving the team of home advantage and local fan support. Critics argue that this ar-

range prioritizes logistical convenience over sporting fairness.

The ICC has defended its approach, citing the need to manage venues, broadcasting, and travel efficiently across two host nations. However, many observers feel that administrative considerations should not come at the cost of competitive integrity.

Overall, the Super 8 format controversy high-

lights a tension between organizational efficiency and the spirit of fair competition. Fans are calling for a system that rewards performance, ensures balanced group compositions, and maintains the suspense and intensity that define the T20 World Cup. How the ICC responds could shape perceptions of the tournament's credibility and fairness in the years to come.

“Beta Perform Karo”: Afridi’s Fiery Call to Shadab Khan After Criticism Row



Former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi put the spotlight firmly back on performance after a public back and forth with current all-rounder Shadab Khan during the ongoing T20 World Cup 2026. The exchange was triggered by comments Shadab made in response to criticism of the team's performances following Pakistan's heavy loss to India.

The controversy began when Shadab, reacting to remarks from former players, highlighted that the current squad achieved something his predecessors could not — a World Cup win over India in 2021. He said that criticism is part of cricket and pointed to that victory to defend himself and the team, suggesting that current players had earned respect through that achievement.

Afridi, however, was unimpressed with words alone and used a recent TV appearance to deliver a blunt message. He reminded Shadab that while the win over India was a milestone, it should not be used as a shield against criticism, especially when the team's recent form has been inconsistent. Afridi stressed that former players, including himself, have stood by Shadab during tougher times — defending him publicly when his place in the team was under threat due to poor form.

In a pointed rebuke, Afridi urged Shadab to let his cricket do the talking. “Beta perform karo,” Afridi

said — essentially telling the all-rounder to respond with strong performances on the field, rather than engaging in verbal sparring. He went further, challenging Shadab to replicate meaningful contributions not only against weaker opposition but also against stronger teams like New Zealand, which Pakistan faced in the Super 8 stage.

Afridi acknowledged that cricket naturally attracts opinions from players and pundits, but emphasized that the best way to silence critics is through impactful displays in big matches. He recalled how, during their playing days, performances against top teams were what ultimately defined careers and earned respect.

The exchange reflects a deeper tension within Pakistan's cricketing circle — between generations of players and how they view success, criticism and accountability. Shadab's initial comments were meant to defend the current squad's achievements, yet Afridi's response refocused attention on the importance of consistency and contributions in key games.

As Pakistan navigates the Super 8 phase of the tournament, the expectation now falls on players like Shadab to back up their words with performances, just as Afridi called upon them to do. The challenge remains clear: on the global stage, actions often speak louder than statements.

New Zealand Batters Gear Up to Tackle Pakistan’s Spin in Super 8 Clash



As the T20 World Cup 2026 Super 8 stage gets underway, New Zealand's batters face a crucial challenge against Pakistan's spin-heavy attack. The match in Colombo is expected to be pivotal for both teams, with performance here likely influencing their chances of advancing further in the tournament.

New Zealand's top or-

der, led by Tim Seifert and Finn Allen, has delivered strong starts in earlier games, providing the team with quick runs and momentum. However, the middle order — featuring Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mark Chapman, and Daryl Mitchell — has struggled to maintain consistency. Converting promising starts into match-winning in-

nings remains a pressing concern. Against Pakistan's experienced spinners, New Zealand will need disciplined partnerships and intelligent shot selection to post or chase a competitive total around the 180-run mark.

Pakistan's spin attack, well-acquainted with the slow and turning Colombo surface, presents a formidable obstacle. Bowl-

ers such as Usman Tariq, Abrar Ahmed, Saim Ayub, Mohammad Nawaz, and Shadab Khan are expected to exploit the pitch conditions to maximum effect. The battle between New Zealand's batters and Pakistan's spinners will likely define the outcome of the match, with patience, timing, and strategic stroke play proving essential.

While Pakistan's bowling appears potent, their batting has been inconsistent so far. Aside from tournament top-scorer Sahibzada Farhan, the rest of the lineup has struggled to contribute significant scores. Even star batsman Babar Azam has faced difficulty finding rhythm, raising the possibility of tactical adjustments in the batting order to strengthen the team's scoring depth. Such changes could be decisive in building totals capable of challenging New Zealand's bowlers.

New Zealand's bowling attack must also adapt to the spin-friendly conditions. Pacers Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Jacob Duffy, and James Neesham will need to vary their deliveries, including slower balls, cutters, and bouncers, to unsettle Pakistan's batters. Meanwhile, spinners Mitchell Santner and Ish Sodhi will play a key role in controlling the run rate and taking timely wickets to maintain pressure.

Ultimately, the match promises to be a tactical contest between New Zealand's batting resilience and Pakistan's spin mastery. Middle-order contributions, intelligent shot selection, and clever use of the bowling attack are likely to determine which team gains the upper hand. With Super 8 stakes high and the Colombo pitch favoring spin, both sides face a challenging yet exciting battle that could shape the early trajectory of the tournament.

Afghanistan Coach Jonathan Trott Bids Emotional Farewell After T20 World Cup

Afghanistan's head coach Jonathan Trott grew visibly emotional during his final press conference following the team's campaign in the T20 World Cup 2026. The 44-year-old, who has guided Afghanistan since mid-2022, struggled to contain his feelings as he reflected on his journey with the team and officially announced that this was his last day in charge.

Trott's tenure saw several milestones for Afghanistan cricket. Under his guidance, the team nearly reached the semifinals of the 2023 ODI World Cup and progressed to the knockout stages of the T20 World Cup 2024. These achievements helped elevate the country's standing in international cricket. Despite exiting the 2026 campaign after the group stage, Afghanistan ended on a positive note with a morale-boosting win in their final match.

During the press conference, Trott spoke about the pride he felt in witnessing the growth of his

players, many of whom have become world-class talents despite limited resources and challenging conditions in Afghanistan. His connection with the squad went beyond coaching; it was rooted in admiration for their resilience, dedication, and passion for the game.

Trott revealed that he initially took the coaching role almost by chance but quickly found it immensely rewarding. He emphasized how fulfilling it was to watch players mature not only as cricketers but also as individuals, contributing positively to their families and communities. His approach to coaching focused on building character, discipline, and a team culture that fostered both personal and professional development.

Afghanistan captain Rashid Khan and other teammates paid tribute to Trott during the press conference, acknowledging his significant impact on the team's performance and morale. In a touching gesture, star



batter Ibrahim Zadran dedicated his Player of the Match award in the team's final game to Trott, highlighting the respect and appreciation the players had for their coach.

While Trott did not specify his next professional move, he hinted at potential future coaching opportunities, including

a possible return to coaching roles in England, the country where he had once represented as a player. His departure marks the end of an era for Afghanistan cricket, but his legacy remains evident in the team's growth, professionalism, and rising international stature.

Trott's emotional fare-

well underscores the strong bond he developed with the Afghan squad and his dedication to nurturing cricket in a country that continues to make its mark on the global stage. His tenure has left a lasting impression, both on the players he coached and on the trajectory of Afghanistan cricket as a whole.

Amir’s Bold Take: From Criticising Abhishek Sharma to Predicting India’s Super 8 Fate



Former Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Amir has stirred conversation in the build up to the T20 World Cup 2026 Super 8 stage with two outspoken comments about the Indian team — first targeting opener Abhishek Sharma, and then making a daring prediction about India's chances of reaching the semifinals.

Amir initially sparked debate by referring to Abhishek as a “slogger,” suggesting the young batter's approach — looking to hit every ball hard — leaves him vulnerable at the highest level. Abhishek, one of India's most destructive T20 hitters in recent years, has struggled for runs in this tournament so far, recording several ducks early in the competition. Amir argued that consistent international bowlers would exploit technical weaknesses, especially if a batter relies too much on power hitting and does not rotate the strike or play more nuanced cricket.

That smack talk did not sit well with many fans, particularly as Abhishek's struggles became a talking point across cricket forums. While some defended him as a talented power hitter who can change games if he finds form, others acknowledged that early failures can happen in pressure tournaments like the World Cup.

But Amir didn't stop with Ab-

hishek. As the Super 8 groups were set, he made a provocative call about India's overall prospects. Despite India entering the Super 8s undefeated in the group stage and being one of the favorites, Amir predicted they would not make it to the semifinals. He backed South Africa and West Indies to qualify ahead of India from their group — a view that surprised many given India's strong record in ICC events.

Amir justified his stance by pointing to the inconsistency in India's batting outside of the marquee win against Pakistan. In his view, apart from that match, the Indian batting unit has shown vulnerabilities that stronger Super 8 opponents could exploit. This comment has added fuel to debates on social media, with fans and commentators divided over whether India's recent form is a genuine concern or simply a narrative being magnified by critics.

While predictions like Amir's are part of the colourful banter surrounding major cricket tournaments, they also underline the pressure on India's batters — especially those struggling for form — to perform when the stakes are highest. The Super 8 stage will test both India's depth and their ability to respond to criticism with results on the field.

Hey Balwanth Roars with Laughter at Box Office



The hilarious entertainer Hey Balwanth, starring Suhas and Shivani Nagaram, is witnessing a strong theatrical run, with audiences packing cinemas and responding with thunderous laughter. Directed by Gopi Acharya and produced by B. Narendra Reddy under Trishul Visionary Studios, the film released on February 20 and quickly gained blockbuster momentum.

Presented by the successful duo Bunny Vas and Vamsi Nandipati through Nandipati Entertainments and Bunny Vas Works, the film has earned both audience appreciation and positive critical response. With strong word-of-mouth, the team recently celebrated the film's success at a grand success meet, where cast and crew shared their excitement over the overwhelming reception.

Speaking at the event, Vamsi Nandipati revealed that the film received an excellent re-

sponse across all centers. Overseas premieres reportedly collected close to the 100K mark, while premiere shows in the Telugu states ran houseful. He added that collections saw a steady jump from morning shows to matinees, describing the film as "a stress-buster that leaves audiences refreshed." He expressed confidence that the film would reach break-even over the weekend.

Director Gopi thanked audiences for their support, noting that the positive feedback began from paid premieres itself. He said viewers have been calling the film "fantastic" and praised its ability to make audiences laugh non-stop while delivering emotional moments. Producer Narendra Reddy echoed the sentiment, calling the response "extremely encouraging" and labeling the film a blockbuster for their banner.

Cast members also shared their joy. Actress

Sravanti said audiences are not only laughing but also connecting emotionally, urging families to watch the film in theatres. Actor Sudharshan noted that theatres are "shaking with laughter," while Shivani expressed happiness at returning to audiences with a feel-good film that families are enjoying together.

Suhas described the film as the biggest opening of his career, admitting he was surprised by the collections and delighted by reports of audiences laughing throughout the screenings. Veteran actor Narvesh shared an emotional note, saying the theatrical experience was rare and heartwarming, with viewers giving a standing ovation during the climax.

With rising collections and strong family appeal, Hey Balwanth is continuing its successful run, positioning itself as one of the season's most talked-about entertainers.

Mrithunjay Release Shifted to March 6



The release of the much-anticipated thriller Mrithunjay, starring Sree Vishnu and Reba John, has been officially postponed. The makers announced that the film will now arrive in theatres worldwide on March 6, instead of its earlier scheduled date of February 27.

Sharing the update with fans, Sree Vishnu took to social media with a playful note that read, "The release date has changed, not the thrill," confirming that the suspense-driven film will hit the big screen a week later than planned. The announcement has heightened curiosity among audiences who have been eagerly waiting for the project since the release of its intriguing title teaser.

Directed by Hussain

Sha Kiran, the film has already generated strong buzz within film circles. The teaser hinted at a gripping crime thriller packed with mystery and psychological tension. It also revealed that Reba John will be seen playing a police officer, while brief glimpses of Sree Vishnu sparked speculation among viewers that he may portray a prisoner or a character with a complex past. The makers, however, have kept the storyline tightly under wraps, adding to the intrigue.

Produced by Sandeep Gunnam and Vinay Chilakapati under Light Box Media and presented by Ramya Gunnam, the film promises a slick technical package. The production house earlier described the narrative as a high-stakes

game where every clue and every move carries risk, suggesting a layered investigative plot.

On the technical front, the film features music by Kaala Bhairava, while veteran editor Sreekar Prasad handles editing duties. Cinematography is by Vidyasagar, and production design is by Manisha, raising expectations for a visually engaging cinematic experience.

With its release date now locked for early March, Mrithunjay is poised to enter the summer movie race with strong anticipation. Fans of Sree Vishnu are particularly excited to see the actor in what appears to be a darker, more intense role, while the film's mystery-driven premise continues to build momentum ahead of its theatrical debut.

Seetha Payanam Records Modest Four-Day Collections

The family drama Seetha Payanam, directed by Arjun Sarja, has posted modest numbers at the box office in its first four days, according to trade estimates. The film, which hit theatres on February 14, generated initial curiosity among audiences, particularly as it marked the lead debut of Aishwarya Arjun opposite Niranjan Sudhindra.

The opening day saw a slow start, with collections remaining on the lower side across major territories. Over the next few days, the film maintained steady but limited momentum, with no significant surge during the weekend. Trade circles suggest that while the film managed to hold its ground without sharp drops, the overall four-day total remained modest compared to expectations for a wide release.

Across key markets in the Telugu states and other southern regions, the film's occupancy levels were described as average, with family audiences forming the core footfall. Industry observers note that the film's emotional theme and clean storytelling have resonated with a section of viewers, but this positive word-of-mouth has

yet to translate into strong box-office growth.

Mounted on a sizeable budget for a mid-scale drama, the film will likely require sustained weekday performance and improved weekend trends to move towards a comfortable recovery zone. Trade analysts believe that the coming days will be crucial in determining whether the film can build gradual momentum through family audiences and repeat viewership.

Despite the muted commercial response, Seetha Payanam has received appreciation from viewers who connect with its heartfelt narrative. The story revolves around a young woman whose life takes a transformative turn after a life-altering incident, leading her on a journey of gratitude, relationships and personal rediscovery.

As the theatrical run continues, the makers remain hopeful that steady word-of-mouth will help the film find a stronger footing in the days ahead. For now, Seetha Payanam stands as a content-driven release that has opened on a restrained note at the box office while aiming for gradual growth.



Anvesh Account Banned After Controversy



Telugu travel vlogger Anvesh, widely known for his popular "Naa Anveshana" travel videos, has landed in controversy after his Instagram account was banned, triggering widespread discussion across social media. The account, which reportedly had around 1.3 million followers, suddenly disappeared from the platform, leaving fans surprised and sparking debate online.

The action came after a complaint was lodged with the CCS police by actress Karate Kalyani, who alleged that Anvesh had made inappropriate remarks about India in some of his videos. Taking the complaint seriously, police initiated an inquiry into the content shared by the travel vlogger across his social media platforms.

During the investigation, officials reported-

ly found posts that they believed could promote communal disharmony and negatively affect the country's image. As part of the procedure, the police first sent a formal communication to Instagram seeking details related to the account. After reviewing the content, authorities sent a follow-up letter to the platform stating that certain posts were objectionable and requesting that the ac-

count be taken down.

Responding to the police communication, Instagram conducted an internal review of the account and its content. After examining whether the posts violated its community guidelines, the platform reportedly concluded that there were breaches of its policies. Soon after, the account was banned, and it no longer appears in search results, confirming its removal from the

platform.

The development has drawn mixed reactions from the public. While some social media users supported the move, saying creators must be responsible for their content, others raised concerns about freedom of expression and the boundaries of online regulation. The incident has once again highlighted the delicate balance between content moderation and creative freedom in the digital space.

So far, Anvesh has not issued a detailed public statement explaining his side of the story or responding to the allegations. Meanwhile, officials have not clarified whether any further legal proceedings are being considered.

The controversy underscores the growing scrutiny faced by digital influencers in India, where social media reach comes with increasing accountability. With millions of followers and wide-ranging influence, online creators are now under closer watch from both authorities and the public, making compliance with platform rules and legal frameworks more crucial than ever.

Eesha: A Chilling Thriller Finds New Life on OTT

The horror-thriller Eesha, which released in theatres on December 12, has been gaining renewed attention after its recent arrival on OTT. Directed by Srinivas Manne, the film revolves around a gripping narrative centered on four friends and their unsettling encounter with the supernatural.

Featuring Trigan, Hebah Patel, Akhil Raj and Siri Hanumanthu in key roles, the film initially opened to a positive response in theatres, particularly among fans of the horror genre. After its theatrical run, the movie recently began streaming on Amazon Prime Video, where it has been drawing fresh viewership.

In recent years, horror thrillers are often perceived as low-budget ventures that rely more on jump scares than strong storytelling. However, films like

Masooda have helped shift that perception by emphasizing content and atmosphere. Eesha follows a similar path, focusing on suspense and narrative tension to keep audiences engaged.

The story follows four childhood friends who strongly believe that ghosts and spirits do not exist. Determined to expose so-called godmen who exploit people's fears, they make it a habit to debunk such claims. Their journey takes a dangerous turn when they set out to confront a self-styled spiritual figure named Adidev along the Andhra-Odisha border. What begins as an attempt to prove their point soon spirals into a terrifying experience, as the group encounters situations that challenge their beliefs and test their courage.

One of the film's strengths lies in its at-



mospheric storytelling and gradual build-up of tension rather than relying solely on loud scares. The performances of the lead cast, along with the eerie setting, help create a sense of unease that sustains throughout the narrative. Viewers who

expected a routine horror outing were pleasantly surprised by the film's ability to deliver genuine thrills.

With its OTT release expanding its reach beyond theatrical audiences, Eesha is finding a second wave of appreciation.

For fans of suspenseful horror dramas, the film offers a mix of mystery, fear and emotional undertones, making it a noteworthy addition to the recent lineup of Telugu genre films that aim to balance content with commercial appeal.