









ACROSS THE STATES



Delhi Police ASI held for accepting Rs 10,000 bribe

The vigilance unit of Delhi Police has arrested an assistant sub-inspector (ASI) posted at Krishna Nagar police station for accepting a bribe of Rs 10,000, officials said on Tuesday.



Court issues bailable warrant against Pragya

A special NIA court here on Tuesday issued a bailable warrant against BJP leader Pragya Singh Thakur, accused in the 2008 Malegaon blast case, for failing to attend the proceedings.



Delhi hospitals see spike in respiratory issues

Amid worsening air quality in Delhi, hospitals across the city are witnessing a spike in the number of patients with respiratory issues. While those with pre-existing conditions like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or asthma are the worst hit,

Abhishekam, archana at Kamala's ancestral village temple in TN

PNS ■ TIRUVARUR (TAMIL NADU)

A special 'abhishekam' of sandalwood and turmeric, besides a special 'archana' was performed on Tuesday at a temple in the village of ancestors of Democrat Kamala Harris as the villagers prayed that she becomes the next US president.

Arulmozhi told reporters. Meanwhile, three fans of Harris visited the native place of the American leader's maternal family near here and joined the prayers.



Harris's win. One of the fans said she was from Las Vegas and told PTI Videos: "I came here to Kamala's great grandparents' village to support her because I happen to be in India."

'India and China await de-escalation'

PNS ■ CANBERRA

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday said the agreement on disengagement of Indian and Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh will be implemented in the coming days "to everybody's satisfaction."



In Canberra on Tuesday, Jaishankar: "The immediate part which awaits us is what we call the de-escalation, which is the build up of forces along the Line of Actual Control (LAC)."

Jaishankar was speaking at the inaugural session of a think tank here in conversation with Justin Bassi, the executive director of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) when he was asked a question about the India-China relationship after the seeming breakthrough.

India on October 21 announced it had reached an agreement with China on patrolling along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, ending the over four-year-long military standoff between the two armies.

In Canberra on Tuesday, Jaishankar: "The immediate part which awaits us is what we call the de-escalation, which is the build up of forces along the Line of Actual Control (LAC)."

Minister said. The ties between the two Asian giants nosedived significantly following the fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.

tially means that after the summer of 2020, Chinese and Indian troops have been deployed along the LAC in distances which were extremely concerning," he said. "The priority has been to find ways of separating the troops, which is why the word disengagement."

bilateral meeting after five years, that the foreign minister and the National Security Advisor would meet their counterparts and find ways to normalise the relationship.



India has always been strong votary of human rights: Birla

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday said India has always respected international laws and has been a strong votary of human rights and the statutes brought to ensure the dignity of women are a fine example of the country's commitment in this regard.

'Drone warfare major disruptor in present-day battlefield'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Maintaining that drone warfare has proved to be a major disruptor on the present-day battlefield, Eastern Army Commander Lt General R C Tiwari on Tuesday said that the Indian Army is looking at augmenting its units and formations with potent state-of-the-art drones.



Delivering the opening address at the two-day expo 'East Tech 2024' here, he urged the defence industry partners of the armed forces to provide robust drones that can operate in high altitudes and challenging environments where the soldiers are deployed.

Lt Gen R C Srikanth, Chief of Staff, Eastern Command, later told reporters that the defence industry and the armed forces are now developing various counter-drone technologies and these are being inducted to carry out operations against the drones in various manifestations.

'Politics not genuinely working for people'



PNS ■ WAYANAD (KERALA)

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi, the UDF candidate in the Wayanad Lok Sabha bypoll, on Tuesday took a dig at both the BJP-led Central government and the CPI(M)-led Kerala government, stating that politics in India and Kerala "is not genuinely and honestly working for the people."



BJP seeking to plunder J'hkhand's mineral resources: Kharge

Claiming that the BJP has "no intention" to ensure the welfare of people in Jharkhand, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday accused the saffron camp of trying to grab power to "plunder" the state's coal and other mineral resources. He also alleged that the number of BJP leaders congregating in poll-bound Jharkhand is "higher than the total number of candidates", showing that the saffron party wanted to snatch power from a tribal chief minister.

'State under positive obligation to treat all equally'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

SC upholds UP madrasa law



The Supreme Court on Tuesday said the positive concept of secularism required the state to treat minority institutions at par with secular ones and treat all equally irrespective of faith, and belief.

the state to take active steps to treat minority institutions at par with secular institutions while allowing them to retain their minority character. Positive secularism allows the state to treat some persons differently to treat all persons equally. The concept of positive secularism finds consonance in the principle of substantive equality."

The bench said fundamental rights comprise both the negative and positive postulates and required the state to restrain its exercise of power and create conducive conditions for exercising these rights.

Majority children addicted to social media: Survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

According to a survey of parents of children aged between 9 and 17 years in urban areas, 47 per cent have shared that their wards spend an average of three hours or more every day on social media, videos, over-the-top apps, and online games.

Majority of parents surveyed believe their children are addicted to social media, over-the-top apps and gaming platforms and more than half have observed behavioural changes in them which include aggression, impatience and lethargy, says a report.



OTT or online gaming platforms and 58 per cent of these parents believe that this is leading to increased aggression, impatience and lethargy in children," LocalCircles founder Sachin Taparia said.

children are "impatient", 49 per cent described the children as being 'lethargic', 42 per cent stated that the children are 'depressed', 30 per cent stated that the children are 'hyperactive'.





## FIRST COLUMN LIFE BEYOND THE GRAVE

Rebirth is not only a source of spiritual continuity but also a foundation for the pursuit of higher consciousness



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Every time we see death or attend a funeral, we experience something like cemetery-induced reclusion which makes our mind & body numb. This makes us question the very purpose of our life. We start thinking that if death is the be-all and end-all of it-all, and it can kill anyone, anytime, then why should we bother about doing good deeds and fear punishment for our sins? There are mainly two kinds of people who have two different beliefs in this regard.

The first kind of people believe in the rebirth of human beings and strongly feel that the account of our good and bad deeds will be settled on the day of judgment when the dead rise from their graves, and then there are the second kinds of people who not only believe that human souls are reborn, but they also feel that humans transmigrate into 8.4 million species before getting a human birth again. However, there is very little knowledge about the third kind of people who believe that human souls take rebirth and are always in the human body.

Let us suppose that humans are not reborn. In that case what reason would there be to perform good deeds and desist from bad ones? Also, if there were no rebirth there would be no fear of punishment for one's bad deeds either, and little to stop people from doing as they pleased as long as they could evade the law. We should understand that if there is no future after death, people would also not amass wealth right up to their death, or build houses in their old age.

These efforts would be futile, in the absence of rebirth. Thus, our hopes



of eternal prosperity and happiness, desire to earn merit by performing good deeds, fear of punishment in future births and feelings of eternal love and patriotism, would not arise at all if rebirth were not a reality. According to Hindu Mythology, a soul never dies, it is the body that dies & immediately after death, the soul changes body as we change clothes. With modern techniques like Past Life Regression, there are lots of cases around us where we see a child claiming to be experiencing visions of his/her previous births. Many of these cases have been verified by experts and psychologists who have recorded the testimonies of people recalling their previous birth and then cross-checked the facts with official records and the people mentioned by them.

Another simple fact that points to the reality of rebirth is that a soul cannot function without a body. If there were no rebirth, where does the soul go after a person has died? As human beings, nearly all our interactions are with fellow humans. Thus, we create karmic accounts with humans, to which we have to take birth in human form again. The analogy of the seed also illustrates this point. Just as a mango seed brings forth a mango tree, which then produces mangoes, which again provide mango seeds, the human soul possesses human qualities, feelings and experiences, and is the seed of human life. Hence it cannot function in any other living creature's body. Scepticism about the existence of souls and facts like rebirth is widespread because of the lack of an experience of soul consciousness. Such an experience requires spiritual effort for which one has to focus the mind and the intellect inward and then contemplate on it in silence. Slowly one begins to sense the existence of a sentient entity within, which is the soul. Such an experience, repeated over time, brings soul-consciousness, or the belief that one is a soul. It is this experience of reality that removes the shroud of ignorance from all other facts of the subtle world of souls, which we usually dismiss in disbelief for lack of material proof. So let us practice remaining in soul consciousness and enjoy being an enlightened soul without any botheration.

(Writer is a spiritual educator & a popular columnist; views are personal)

# Punjab's MSMEs: Poised to compete on the global stage



A S MITTAL

With tailored state-specific export policies and enhanced trade routes, Punjab's MSMEs are poised to overcome geographical disadvantages and harness lucrative global markets

In a decisive step to enhance industrial growth in Punjab, the NITI Aayog in partnership with the Punjab Government, has sought feedback from stakeholders to explore the potential of MSMEs as a driver of export growth. This initiative is essential for identifying and promptly resolving industry challenges. To meet the objective of boosting Punjab's exports, MSMEs must be equipped with a comprehensive State Export Promotion Policy, linking them to sustainable growth and significant employment generation.

Exports are a fundamental pillar of a state's development, and a strategic geographical location is vital for ensuring global competitiveness and job creation factors for robust economic growth. For instance, Haryana once a barren expanse, has emerged as one of the top five states for export value, thanks to its advantageous proximity to the National Capital Region (NCR). Currently, Haryana outpaces Punjab with five times more exports. Coastal states with access to seaports are a step ahead in engaging in international trade, while landlocked regions like Punjab endure higher trade costs and transit challenges. It is unacceptable that policymakers have not prioritised Punjab's geographical disadvantages as a landlocked border state. The remoteness from seaports, inadequate connectivity, and frequent protests have created significant barriers to investment, resulting in a concerning decline in the industrial sector—a crisis that Punjab can no longer afford to ignore. The non-competitive environment for Punjab's MSMEs, stemming from their distance from seaports, must be addressed head-on.

These challenges are surmountable, and it is crucial to focus on empowering Punjab's vital MSMEs, which have the potential to become an "Export Engine" and deserve a fair platform to compete on equal terms. According to NITI Aayog's latest Export Preparedness Index (EPI), Punjab ranks a disappointing 10th with a score of 58.95, while Haryana leads in 5th place with a score of 63.65. Notably, Gujarat has the highest number of districts among the top 25 in the country for export share (54 per cent), followed by Maharashtra with five districts, Haryana with one, and Punjab with none—only a meagre 2 per cent of the country's exports.

Therefore, it is essential for Punjab to actively engage in export promotion initiatives for every potential MSME to dramatically increase its export figures. Why a State-Specific Policy Needed: The Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) for 2023-2028 has set an ambitious target of achieving \$2 trillion in exports by 2030. However, with 766 districts across the country, it is unacceptable that only 43 cities designated as centres of export excellence receive crucial financial incentives for global market surveys, brand promotions, warehouse establishment, and zero customs duty on capital goods for export-oriented production.

This glaring disparity in the distribution of incentives underscores the urgent need for a more inclusive, state-specific policy. The current focus on a handful of "Towns of Export Excellence" severely undermines the principles of 'One District, One Product' and 'Sabka Saath,



WHILE INDIA CURRENTLY LAGS BEHIND CHINA IN BICYCLE EXPORTS, WE HAVE A CLEAR AND COMPELLING OPPORTUNITY TO ELEVATE OUR GLOBAL EXPORT TARGETS BY AT LEAST 10 PER CENT OVER THE NEXT TWO TO THREE YEARS, PARTICULARLY IN UNTAPPED MARKETS IN THE US, EUROPE, AND AFRICA

Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas.' Punjab must decisively shift towards 'Industries of Export Excellence' (IEE). This strategy will empower the identification and promotion of key sectors, such as textiles and apparel, bicycles, auto parts, tractors, engineering goods, hand and machine tools, sports goods, footwear, and leather products.

Furthermore, the Foreign Trade Policy is resolutely committed to enhancing decentralised export promotion. The introduction of districts as export hubs is a non-negotiable strategy within the MSMEs Export Promotion Policy. This initiative will systematically identify potential export products and services in every district, establishing institutional mechanisms for their promotion—a critical step toward realising the policy's objectives. Every district in Punjab possesses significant untapped potential.

It is essential to identify additional districts for bolstering export operations, aligning with the imperative 'Vocal for Local' and 'Make in India' initiatives. India's vision of transforming each district into an export hub demands the active engagement of MSMEs from all districts. The time for action is now. MSMEs Export Potential: Punjab boasts an impressive 14.65 lakh MSMEs, which are the backbone of the state's industrial growth and are primed for global expansion.

These MSMEs are powerful hubs, excelling in industries such as textiles and apparel, bicycles, hosiery, tractors, automobile components, hand tools, machine tools, sports goods, engineering goods, footwear, and leather goods. They constitute a staggering 99.7 per cent of all MSMEs in the region, employing 65 per cent of the industrial workforce and generating 78 per cent of the state's total industrial output. These industrial clusters possess immense poten-

tial and can be fostered further. Ludhiana stands as a powerhouse, ranking first (Rs 20,140 Crore export business) among the top ten exporting districts with an export business valued at Rs 55,844 Crore for 2023-24. It leads the nation by producing 92 per cent of India's bicycle parts and 75 per cent of all bicycles, commanding an 80 per cent share in bicycle exports from India.

While India currently lags behind China in bicycle exports, we have a clear and compelling opportunity to elevate our global export targets by at least 10 per cent over the next two to three years, particularly in untapped markets in the US, Europe, and Africa. As the foremost producer of blended yarn and hosiery, Ludhiana holds its ground as the second-largest producer of polyester silk, fibre, and cotton yarn. It dominates woollen knitwear (95 per cent) and hosiery (65 per cent) exports, showcasing unparalleled strength in the global market. While China captures a commanding 37 per cent share in textiles apparel and hosiery, India needs to aggressively increase its mere 5% share in the worldwide market. The opportunity for growth is vast, particularly in lucrative export markets such as the USA, UAE, UK, Germany, France, and Australia.

In the farm equipment sector, Punjab is a force to be reckoned with, hosting one-third of the total original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and standing as the leading tractor manufacturer. With a commanding 34.3 per cent share in exports, Sonalika IITL stands as the largest tractor exporter (Rs 3000 Cr) in 2023-24. Despite India's current 2.2 per cent share in the global market, the potential for over 2 lakh tractors to be exported in the next 2-3 years to burgeoning markets such as Brazil, Argentina, Turkey, SAARC, and African nations is undeniable. Jalandhar dominates the sports goods sector,

producing 45 per cent of the nation's total and contributing to 75 per cent of the country's sports goods exports. While China currently leads with a 42.2 per cent share, India's scant 0.56 per cent share of global exports highlights the tremendous untapped potential for growth. The time is ripe for Punjab to seize lucrative opportunities in markets like the USA, UK, Brazil, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Colombia, and Argentina, and make a formidable mark on the global stage. The Way Forward: To enhance the competitive edge of MSMEs in foreign trade, it's crucial to allow the flow of bilateral trade from Punjab through the Wagah Border of Pakistan to Middle Eastern countries, CIS nations, Europe, and the US. Establishing a Directorate of Exports in the state is vital for aligning the state and central government's export promotion policies.

One of the most pressing issues is the high borrowing cost of 10-12 per cent. It is essential to introduce interest subvention to create a level playing field for MSMEs, especially when compared to leading global players like China (3.1 per cent), Vietnam (4.5 per cent), Malaysia (3 per cent), and Thailand (3 per cent). Competitive and efficient logistics are foundational for export growth. Therefore, policy-backed support for state-owned wagons in landlocked border states like Punjab is essential.

This will help alleviate the burden of over-freight and provide a more equitable environment for driving export growth.

The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika IITL Group, Vice-Chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and President of Tractor and Mechanization Association (TMA); Views expressed are personal.

## How mobile video conferencing is bridging the digital divide in Bihar

The Bihar Government has taken a bold step toward real-time governance with the launch of a mobile outdoor video conferencing system

In a time when digital communication is essential for efficient government, resolving infrastructural and geographic obstacles is vital to making decisions in real time. This need is especially acute in large states like Bihar, where there are major connectivity challenges due to the expansive rural environment.

To narrow this gap, a major project was started by Bihar State Electronics Development Corporation (BELTRON) along with Millenium Automation as a system integrator, to establish a mobile outdoor video conferencing system that would improve communication challenges and enhance the state's governance. Because of this initiative, the administra-



VARINDER SINGH JAWANDA

tion can now function smoothly throughout Bihar by introducing an inventive, stronger video conferencing system.

**Improving Governance** With the use of the new outdoor video conferencing technology, authorities in Bihar can now hold virtual meetings and communicate with other officials directly from almost anywhere in the

state. This technology allows government officials to communicate in real-time, independent of their actual location, providing a much-needed degree of flexibility. This solution's robust, continuous connectivity and high-quality video streaming facilitate quicker decision-making, effective governance, and a more open line of contact with rural residents.

**Recognising the Challenge** In places remote from urban networks, ensuring reliable, fast communication was crucial but challenging. To prevent interruptions, a smooth interface between the new mobile video conferencing system and the Bihar State Wide Area Network (BSWAN) was required.

Sustaining steady uptime was essential since government communications are so vital. To maintain system functionality and quickly address any technological problems, comprehensive maintenance assistance was also necessary, guaranteeing dependability and continuity throughout the state.

**A Comprehensive Solution** With portable video conferencing devices that have high-quality audio and video components in cases that are easy to move, a specially designed solution was developed to meet these demands. Even in remote locations, the system's smooth integration with the current Bihar State Wide Area Network (BSWAN) guaranteed reliable service quality.



Advanced networking equipment allowed for seamless data transfer, particularly in areas with limited bandwidth. Disruptions during crucial meetings were minimised by optimising bandwidth in locations far away. Prompt technical assistance, and on-site maintenance guaranteed continuous strong system operation across the state. Key Outcomes of the Project

This initiative empowered Bihar's government to conduct mobile, outdoor video conferences statewide, enabling officials to make real-time decisions from any location, thus streamlining operations and improving emergency response. As a technological advancement, it highlights how mobile technology can bridge the digital divide, aligning with the "Digital India" vision by enhancing transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement.

With scalability for future needs, the system can expand into public services and disaster management, offering a sustainable, resilient model for evolving governance demands, and setting an inspiring precedent for other

states. Future Prospects and Potential for Growth. This outdoor video conferencing solution has the potential to revolutionise governance in Bihar and other similar states. As Bihar continues to advance, the system can be further expanded to incorporate additional features and applications, including new e-governance initiatives. Emerging technologies like IoT, advanced bandwidth optimisation, and real-time analytics are being explored to enhance communication efficiency even further. The success of this project opens doors for expansion into other government sectors, allowing more departments to benefit from mobile video conferencing. In conclusion, this outdoor video

conferencing initiative has enabled the Bihar government to communicate and make decisions effectively, regardless of officials' physical locations.

It has solved an immediate challenge while laying the foundation for future technological advancements in government communication. By bridging the digital divide, this solution is enhancing governance in Bihar, helping to build a more inclusive, connected, and prosperous state. The collaboration with BELTRON demonstrates that strategic digital initiatives can empower state governments to deliver on the promise of accessible, efficient governance for all.

(The writer is CEO at MAPL World; views are personal)





# what's brewing?

## BARKHA TO ROMANCE VIKRANT IN THE SABARMATI REPORT

Excitement is building around the upcoming film *The Sabarmati Report* presented by Balaji Motion Pictures. While details about Barkha's character remain under wraps, reports indicate that Barkha is playing Vikrant's love interest.

According to reports, a source close to the project revealed, "Barkha Singh will be seen romancing Vikrant Massey in this theatrical film. Her chemistry with Vikrant is something to watch out for." Barkha has continuously impressed viewers with her versatility, effortlessly transitioning between different genres and roles.

Barkha has also announced her forthcoming project titled *Lafangey* with Amazon MiniTV. In addition to this promising venture, she has an array of intriguing projects lined up for release this year.



## Adarsh Gourav shadows real-life filmmaker Nasir for Zoya Akhtar's next

Known for his versatility and commitment to his craft, Adarsh Gourav is set to take on a unique and challenging role in the upcoming film *Superboys of Malegaon*. Based on the real-life story of a group of amateur filmmakers from Malegaon, Gourav will portray Nasir Shaikh, one of the key visionaries behind Malegaon's grassroots film movement. To bring authenticity and depth to his character, Gourav spent considerable time shadowing Nasir Shaikh and even took it a step further—creating his own short film with minimal resources, just as Nasir did.

*Superboys of Malegaon* follows the journey of passionate, small-town filmmakers in Malegaon, a city known for its local film industry that creates parody versions of Bollywood blockbusters on shoestring budgets. To ensure his portrayal was rooted in reality, Gourav immersed himself in Shaikh's world and gained firsthand experience of the obstacles these filmmakers face.

In a statement, Adarsh Gourav shared his thoughts on this extraordinary process: "The story of *Malegaon's* filmmakers is truly inspiring



and I knew I had to do justice to Nasir Shaikh's character. To understand him, I didn't just want to hear about his experiences—I wanted to live them. That's why I spent time in Malegaon, shadowing Nasir and creating my own short film with the same limitations he had: minimal equipment, a small crew and almost no budget. It was an eye-opening experience. The struggles they faced—

the ingenuity and resilience required to create something meaningful with so little—helped me understand not just Nasir but the soul of Malegaon's film community."

He further added, "Going through the process of filmmaking with these constraints allowed me to get into the skin of the character in a way that wouldn't have been possible otherwise. I have a deep admiration for Nasir and everyone in Malegaon who dares to dream big despite all odds. This is a story of heart, passion and unshakeable belief in the magic of cinema, no matter where you come from or what resources you have."

*Superboys of Malegaon*, directed by ace filmmaker Reema Kagti and produced by Zoya Akhtar's Tiger Baby Production, promises to be a heartwarming and comedic tribute to the creativity and perseverance of local filmmakers in India, blending humor, drama and an exploration of grassroots cinema. The film is set to release in cinemas soon, with audiences eagerly awaiting to see Gourav bring Nasir Shaikh's inspiring story to life on the big screen.

## DJ LYAN x Baby Jean's Tapori brings Kerala to world stage



In a groundbreaking fusion of traditional Indian culture and contemporary music, British-Asian producer DJ LYAN and Malappuram's rising rap star Baby Jean have unveiled their latest track, *Tapori* (meaning street slang) with DESI TRILL. The high-energy single, coupled with a visually stunning music video, thrusts Kerala's exhilarating bull surfing sport onto the international stage. The music video, filmed across the picturesque landscapes of Kerala, captures the raw energy and daring athleticism of bull surfing, a traditional sport known locally as *Maramadi*. By seamlessly blending ancient tradition with modern music production, DJ LYAN and Baby Jean have created a captivating audiovisual experience that celebrates Kerala's rich cultural heritage.

Drawing inspiration from local street slang for its title, the track resonates deeply with the youth culture of modern India. The collaboration bridges the gap between South Asian and Western musical sensibilities, featuring Baby Jean's authentic Malayalam rap flow over DJ LYAN's sophisticated production that incorporates traditional South Indian percussion.

*Tapori* is more than just a song and serves as a fitting tribute to Kerala's vibrant lifestyle and the fearless spirit of its people. The music video's stunning cinematography showcases the breathtaking beauty of the region, from its lush green landscapes to its bustling urban centers. *Tapori* is part of DJ LYAN's EP *Thank You, Come Again*, packed with infectious club bangers and anthems delivering a unique blend of traditional samples and new-age vocals. With sounds ranging from Spanish to his native Indian influences, DJ Lyan crafts an international club experience with his distinct tempo and style. Excited about *Tapori*, DJ LYAN said, "The growing popularity of Malayalam music in India inspired me to work with Baby Jean. His distinct voice and authentic approach to storytelling perfectly complemented the sound I envisioned for *Tapori*."

Baby Jean said, "When I first heard LYAN's production, I knew this was an opportunity to do something different and showcase our local culture on a global platform. The track allowed me to represent Malappuram's street culture and shoot the video in my hometown. Everything was coming together in full circle."

## Is India next? Paul Mescal, Ridley Scott's alleged *Gladiator II* promo tour



With *Gladiator II's* release on the horizon, Indian fans are buzzing with anticipation—and now, there's even more reason to be excited. Sources reveal that Academy Award-nominated actor Paul Mescal and legendary director Ridley Scott may be headed to India for their first-ever promotional tour.

This landmark visit is poised to elevate the film's appeal in one of the world's most passionate movie markets and it's no coincidence. "There have been conversations about an India visit. The market is key in the ecosystem of things," shares a source close to the film. "They're planning for a series of interactive events to engage fans."

The visit is expected to feature exclusive sneak peeks, including a special preview of *Gladiator II* and live discussions with Mescal and Scott. With its focus on engaging Indian audiences, this tour could be one for the ages, celebrating the magic of *Gladiator II* and the enduring cinematic bond between Hollywood and India.

## STANDALONE

Attended by some of India's top celebrities, alongside the immensely talented cast and crew, the premiere was an electrifying celebration of the action-packed series born from the world of *Citadel*. The spies, Varun Dhawan (Bunny) and Samantha (Honey), in addition to the ensemble cast including Sikandar Kher, Soham Majumdar, Shivankit Parihar and Kashvi Majumdar proved to be scene stealers even off the screen.



## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



### NANCY



### GINGER MEGGS



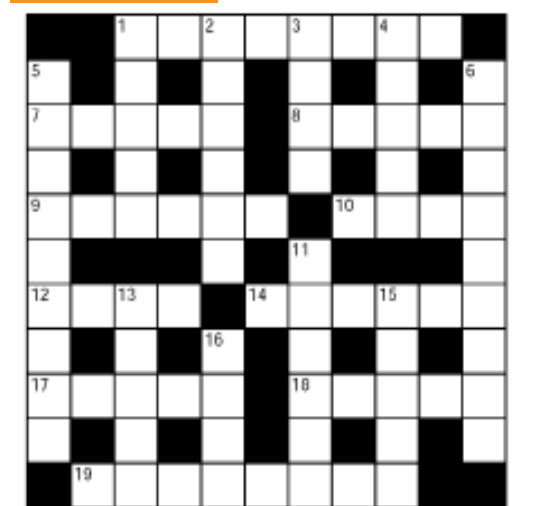
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### SUDOKU

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- Rules
- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
  - The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

### ACROSS

- Beard
- Movements of the sea caused by the moon's pull on the Earth
- A sour oily fruit from a tree
- One of the continents
- An alcoholic drink
- Look at something for a long time
- Me
- A type of small bird
- A clothing size
- A chart of months and days

### DOWN

- Broader
- A six-legged creature
- Round handle

- Lift up
- People not known to you
- Extremely frightened
- An eye's cover
- A striped animal
- Mistake
- A joint in the leg







# RAHASYAM IDHAM JAGATH IS BASED ON SRI CHAKRA: KOMAL R BHARADWAJ

SURESH KAVIRAYANI  
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The Telugu film *Rahasyam Idham Jagath* is releasing on November 8. Directed by Komal R Bharadwaj, the film has been mostly shot in the USA. He is also introducing new talent with this film. The director talks about his film and what the inspiration behind it is. Having grown up in an artistic environment, he shared, "My parents are writers. It has come to me naturally. I also wanted to tell stories."

He completed his masters in the USA and later joined a film school to learn film-making. "I made short films with US artists while I was in film school and also received many awards," said Komal. This further gave him confidence that he could also make a feature film. "Then I started to write this *Rahasyam Idham Jagath* in 2020 and started shooting in 2021," said the director.

"I wanted to come with an unconventional story rather than come up with a regular love story or a drama. In 1990 in Oregon, America, people dug for *Sri Chakram* and the place is near where I stayed. So I got curious and did my kind of research and started to write my story based on that incident," said Komal. The news about *Sri Chakram* in America appeared in most of the media in the USA and even in India also. "I wanted to take that true incident and I took mythological inputs and added some cinematic liberty to narrate the story, which I think is completely new to the audience," he said. That's how he started the story and completed the film.

He also used the Wormhole concept for

**RAHASYAM IDHAM JAGATH IS HITTING THE SCREENS THIS WEEK AND THE DIRECTOR, KOMAL R BHARADWAJ, IS FROM THE USA. HE SHOT THE FILM IN THE USA. HE SPEAKS ABOUT THE INSPIRATION FOR THIS FILM AND WHAT HE WANTS TO DO IN THE FUTURE**



this film. "According to the science predictions, one can travel to another time period using this Wormhole concept, so I used this in my film," he added. "Actually all these points are written in our *puranas* and I touched on all of them in my film, which I feel is interesting for the audience," he said. Though these stories are good to hear, when it comes on the big screen, it should be interesting. "Yes, I narrated it in a simple way and one can see these when revealing the characters one after another," he said.

Komal Bharadwaj left the software job and is now turning into directing, which he feels is a risk, but his passion about directing made it this way. "Many directors are now in the top position, but they all had taken a big risk at that time. I wanted to take a risk, because I believe in my story and my potential," he said. He added that he showed the film to many people and they appreciated his efforts and the film.

Komal introduced many new artists with this film. "I wanted to go with newcomers because I feel that this kind of story needs new faces. Though they are new, they are proven actors and they have performed very well in my film," he said. About his future plans, he said that he has some new kinds of stories. "This film is a learning experience for me and if there are any mistakes, I want to correct them for my next film," said Komal.

## GAME CHANGER PROMOTIONS KICKSTART IN LUCKNOW

Ram Charan and director Shankar's film *Game Changer* promotions are all set to start on November 9 in Lucknow. It is interesting to see the team's strategy that they want to launch not the regular cities like Hyderabad, Delhi, Mumbai, or Chennai, but they want to start in Lucknow. Kiara Advani is the female lead, while Dil Raju is the producer. The movie is hitting the screens on January 10, 2025, on the occasion of the coming Sankranti festival.

From the last few days onwards, the makers are under pressure as they didn't start the promotions because Ram Charan has a huge fan following. Now, the makers wanted to start with a teaser release event in Lucknow on November 9 and continue till the film release. The makers earlier released a couple of songs, *Raa Macha Macha* and *Jaragandi*, which were popular on the internet. Now, this upcoming teaser definitely boosts the excitement among the audience.

In this film, Ram Charan is essaying the role of an IAS officer who combats corrupt politicians by advocating for fair elections. Karthik Subbaraj is provided the story and written by SU Venkatesan and Vivek. S Thaman provides the music with dialogues by Sai Madhav Burra.



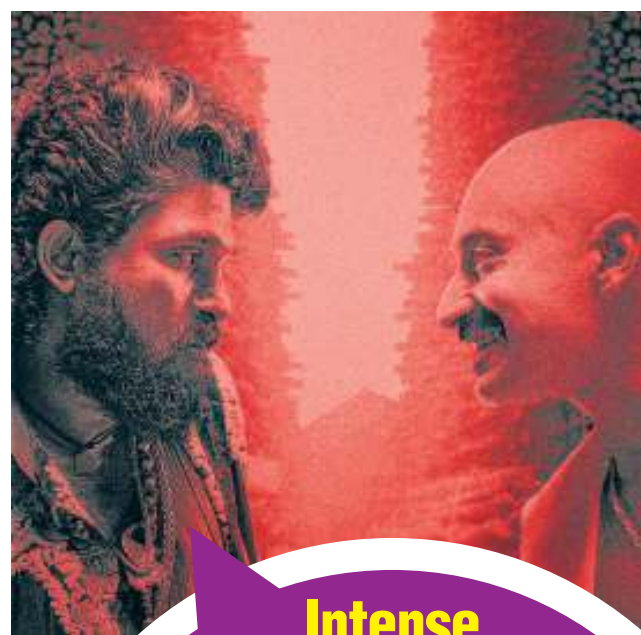
## Naga Chaitanya's *Thandel* gets sizzling February 7 release

Finally, the release date of the much-awaited *Thandel* film is announced on Tuesday. Directed by Chandoo Mondeti, the film has Naga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi as the lead pair. Allu Aravind is the presenter, while Bunny Vas is producing it. The film's story is based on a true incident that happened in Srikakulam district.

The producer Allu Aravind announced that they are releasing the film on February 7. "Initially we wanted to release it on December 20 and then planned on Sankranti festival, but now, we have decided to release it on February 7," said Allu Aravind.

Both Sai Pallavi and Naga Chaitanya are presented at this release date announcement event.

Few days back the director said that he almost completed the shoot and it is the producers to make an announcement on the release date. Though the makers wanted to release it in December, the Allu Arjun starrer *Pushpa 2* is releasing on December 6. Then they planned it on Sankranti, but again Ram Charan's *Game Changer* and few other films are hitting the screens for the coming Sankranti. With all the above, Allu Aravind decided to lock February 7 as the release date of *Thandel*.



### Intense face-off b/w Allu Arjun & Fahadh Faasil

The wait is nearly over! Fans of *Pushpa* have been eagerly anticipating the next chapter in the saga and now the countdown for *Pushpa 2: The Rule* has officially begun. Following the massive success of *Pushpa: The Rise*, the sequel promises to take the action, drama, and intensity to even greater heights—and the newly released poster is already setting the tone for what's to come.

Mythri Official have released a new poster along with the countdown, captioning it as One month to go for *Pushpa 2: The Rule*. The exploring trailer for the film is going to come out soon.

As we bid adieu to the year 2024, *Pushpa 2: The Rule* will be an apt entertainer to end the year. Starring Allu Arjun, Rashmika Mandanna and Fahadh Faasil, the film is directed by Sukumar and produced by Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings, with music on T-Series.



## 'No vulgarity, only youthful entertainment in *Roti Kapda Romance*'

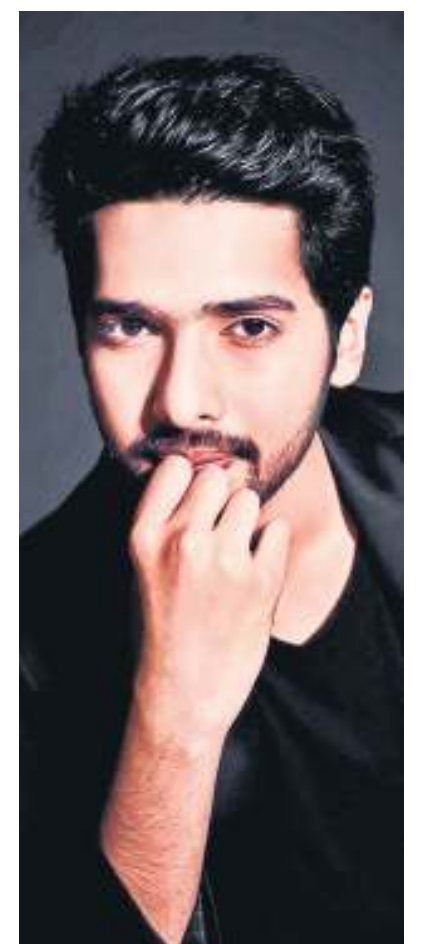
Vikram Reddy is making his debut as director with the film *Roti Kapda Romance*. The film's promotional event was released and there are a few words that were shown in the trailer that were objectionable. In the trailer there are few romantic scenes, and when asked the director about them, he said, "Whatever you see in the trailer, those are the few regular scenes and in the film there are no vulgarity or derogatory scenes or words," said the director Vikram Reddy.

The director said that it is a youthful entertainer, and the film's climax is very important. "The last fifteen minutes of the film are very emotional and everyone definitely feels about it," said the director. Bekkam Venu Gopal is the producer of this film. The film is releasing on November 22. The movie fea-

tures Harsh Narra, Sandeep Saroj, Tarun, Supraj Ranga, Sonu Thakur, Nuvvikesha, Meghaleka and Khushboo Chaudhary in lead roles.

"This film has been crafted as a youthful romantic family entertainer with themes that resonate with today's youth, along with a blend of family emotions. Every character in the movie is designed in a way that will connect with young audiences," said the producer, Bekkam Venugopal. He added that the film has all ingredients, like romance, entertainment, and emotions, which are the key strengths of this film. "We have shown the film to a select group of people that includes students, families, and young adults and the response has been overwhelming," said the producer. After seeing the content, popular OTT channel ETV Win bought the OTT streaming rights before this film release.

The producer said that they are planning the premieres of this film on November 21.



## Armaan Malik nominated for MTV EMA

Known for pouring his heart into every song, Armaan has an incredible gift for making listeners feel seen and heard, and *Always* is a perfect example of that magic. With its tender lyrics and soothing melody, the song captures the beauty and vulnerability of love, striking a chord with fans across the globe.

It's proof that his journey, from singing in multiple languages to finding a global audience, is inspiring people everywhere. He's constantly bridging cultures through his music, bringing his roots to an international stage while staying true to himself. This isn't just another nomination; it's a reminder of how far he's come and how his music resonates with people around the world. With *Always*, Armaan captures a raw, beautiful vulnerability that's so relatable, and fans everywhere have been drawn to its honest simplicity and the way it speaks directly to the heart.