



### Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny	Mostly Sunny
H 24°C L 22°C	H 29°C L 24°C	H 34°C L 26°C

JUST NOW

Haryana Assembly elections rescheduled to October 5 due to Bishnoi festival; counting for J&K and Haryana moved to October 8.

India is now a major geopolitical actor, says ex-Singapore diplomat Kishore Mahbubani, highlighting India's potential role with a UN Security Council seat.

India likely to see above-normal rainfall in September, except in extreme northwest, southern peninsula, northern Bihar, and northeast India.

Indian shooter Rubina Francis won bronze in the Women's 10m Air Pistol SH1 event at the Paris Paralympics, marking India's fourth shooting medal and fifth overall.

Preeti Pal wins bronze in the women's T35 100m at the Paris Paralympics and aims for gold in upcoming events.

# Heavy Rains In AP as Low Pressure Strengthens in Bay of Bengal



TPN, Andhra Pradesh: The Telugu states are experiencing widespread heavy rainfall due to a low-pressure system in the Bay of Bengal. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a warning, predicting heavy to very heavy rains across the states on Saturday and Sunday as the low-pressure area strengthens. The system is expected to intensify within the next 24 hours,

prompting authorities to issue alerts in coastal districts. Rayalaseema is currently experiencing particularly heavy rainfall.

The disaster management agency reported that the low-pressure system in the northwestern Bay of Bengal, adjacent to the central west, has gained strength and is projected to move west-northwestward

towards the coasts of North Andhra and South Odisha. This system is likely to evolve into a cyclone within 36 hours. As a result, heavy rains are expected in some areas on Saturday, moderate to heavy rains in some places on Sunday, and light rains in other regions.

In the Uttarandhra districts, including Visakhapatnam, Vijayanagaram, and

Srikakulam, rain has been continuous since morning. The highest recorded rainfall was 45.5 mm in Kunthalam, Alluri district, followed by 37 mm in Peddapasupalla, Kadapa district, 35.29 mm in Paravada, Anakapalli district, 34.5 mm in Edara, Prakasam district, 34 mm in Peddadevapuram, Nandyala district, and 30 mm in Chollangipet, Kakinada district.

A total of 124 locations recorded over 10 mm of rain, raising concerns about the potential damage to harvested apara seeds.

The authorities are on high alert as the situation develops, with the potential for severe weather conditions across the region.

## Landslides in Vijayawada killed four people; Temple Road closed

TPN, Vijayawada: The death toll from the landslide in Vijayawada's Mughalrajapuram area has risen to four, following two days of continuous heavy rains in the region. The landslide occurred earlier today at the Sunnapubatti Center in Mughalrajapuram, leading to the tragic loss of life. The deceased have been identified as Meghna, Annapurna, and Lakshmi, with the identity of the fourth victim yet to be confirmed.

Five others sustained serious injuries in the incident and have been taken to the hospital for treatment. Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Rammohan has arrived at the site and is overseeing the ongoing relief efforts.

The heavy rains over the past two days have caused significant destruction, with many houses in Vijayawada being damaged by landslides. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu expressed his deep regret over the rising death toll and assured that the government would provide full support to the families of the deceased.



## Torrential Rain Causes Havoc in Vijayawada

TPN, Vijayawada: Torrential rain has wreaked havoc in Vijayawada as a severe low-pressure area continues to hover over the Bay of Bengal, affecting the coasts of North Andhra Pradesh and South Odisha. Since last night, heavy rainfall has lashed various parts of Andhra Pradesh, leading to widespread flooding and disruptions.

In Vijayawada, roads in Vidyadharapuram, RR Nagar, Vijayawada Central Bus Stand, and Benz Circle Flyover areas were submerged, causing severe traffic congestion. Motorists struggled to navigate the waterlogged streets, leading to widespread concern.

The situation was particularly dire from Ramavarappadu Ring Road to Nidamanur, where vehicles came to a standstill due



to knee-deep water. At the RTC bus station, several buses were immobilized, trapped in rising floodwaters.

Tragically, a girl lost her life in a landslide at Sunnapubatti Center in Mogalrajapuram. Authorities fear that others may still be trapped under the rubble as rescue efforts continue.

## Car Washed Away in Guntur District Flood, Three Killed

TPN, Guntur: The relentless rains in Andhra Pradesh have led to devastating consequences in Guntur district, where a tragic incident claimed the lives of three people. Heavy rains have been wreaking havoc across the state, with Vijayawada and Guntur districts particularly affected by the deluge. Overflowing streams have disrupted traffic and created dangerous conditions on the roads.

In a heartbreaking incident, a car was washed away by a swollen stream in Uppalapadu, Pedakakani mandal of Guntur district. The stream near

Uppalapadu was flowing with great force when a car attempted to cross it despite the hazardous conditions. The powerful current proved too much, and the vehicle was swept away, leading to the tragic deaths of three individuals.

Raghavendra, a resident of Uppalapadu who worked at a school in Nambur, was driving the car. Earlier in the day, the school had declared a holiday due to the heavy rains, and Raghavendra was returning to his village with two students, Satvik and Manik, who attended the same school. Despite the

visibly dangerous flow of the stream, Raghavendra decided to push forward, hoping to cross safely. Unfortunately, the car was overwhelmed by the rushing waters and was carried away.

Local residents rushed to the scene and managed to recover the car and the bodies of Raghavendra and the two students. The incident has caused deep sorrow in the community, particularly in the families of the students and the teacher, as they mourn the loss of their loved ones in this tragic accident.

## Heavy Rains Cause Chaos at Kaja Toll Gate

TPN, Guntur: Andhra Pradesh is experiencing severe weather conditions due to a cyclone in the Bay of Bengal, leading to heavy and continuous rainfall, particularly in Vijayawada and the surrounding areas. The downpour has resulted in significant waterlogging, flooding roads and disrupting traffic across the region.

One of the most affected areas is the Kaja toll gate near Mangalagiri, where

water is flowing across the road, causing a massive traffic jam. In response to the situation, toll gate staff have begun allowing vehicles to pass through without collecting any fees in an effort to alleviate the congestion. Despite this measure, traffic remains chaotic, with vehicles backed up for kilometers.

The local police are working diligently to manage the traffic, but the situation remains challenging. Due to the severity

of the flooding, with water levels rising to the point where vehicles risk being swept away, the police are advising people to avoid traveling on the roads. In some cases, vehicles that are stuck in the gridlock are being turned back to prevent further complications.

Authorities continue to monitor the situation, urging residents to stay safe and avoid unnecessary travel until the conditions improve.







## Young Man Washed Away by Floodwaters in Krishna District



**TPN, Krishna:** The state of Andhra Pradesh is currently facing severe disruptions due to relentless heavy rains, with Vijayawada and Guntur districts among the hardest hit. Overflowing streams and significant waterlogging on roads have caused widespread traffic issues and posed serious risks to residents.

In a tragic incident in Krishna district, a young man was washed away by floodwaters in Muppala village, located in Chandarlapadu Mandal. The young man was attempting to cross a road when the stream, swollen by the heavy rains, overwhelmed him and carried him away.

This incident highlights the dangers posed by the severe weather conditions currently affecting the state. Authorities are urging residents to exercise extreme caution and avoid crossing flooded areas as the heavy rains continue. Rescue efforts are ongoing to locate the young man, and the local administration is on high alert to respond to any further emergencies.

## CM Cancels Orvakallu Tour Amid Heavy Rains, Conducts Review on Cyclone Impact

**TPN, Andhra Pradesh:** Amid the heavy rains caused by a cyclone forming from low pressure in the West and Central Bay of Bengal, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has canceled his scheduled visit to Orvakallu. The cyclone, expected to cross the coast at Kalingapatnam by midnight, has already led to significant rainfall across the state. Naidu was supposed to participate in a pension distribution program in Orvakallu but decided to remain in Amaravati to manage the state's response to the adverse weather conditions.

The heavy rains have caused concerns about rising flood levels in several major rivers, including the Godavari, Krishna, Tammileru, Gostani, Eleru, Vamsdharma, Sabari, Varaha, Sharada, and Suvarnamukhi. Low-lying areas in Uttarandhra and Coastal districts are at risk, with the weather department issuing warnings for residents to stay alert. In response, authorities are preparing to release water from barrages and reservoirs and have urged people in vulnerable areas to take necessary precautions.



### Teleconference Review and Precautionary Measures

In the wake of the heavy rains, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu held a teleconference with officials from various departments, including the Chief Secretary (CS), Director General of Police (DGP), Ministers, District Collectors, and

Superintendents of Police (SPs). During the review, Chandrababu emphasized the possibility of continued heavy rainfall in Andhra Pradesh for the next three days and urged officials to remain vigilant. He stressed that the proactive efforts of the officials could significantly mitigate the challenges faced by the public.

The CM directed the Irrigation and Revenue departments to coordinate closely and assess the condition of water bodies such as ponds, ensuring their stability. He also addressed the issue of road disruptions in urban areas caused by the rains, instructing authorities to implement traffic diversions as needed to prevent accidents and ensure smooth movement.

The CM also addressed public health concerns, stressing the importance of preventing the contamination of drinking water and food. He referred to a recent incident in the Alluri Sitaramaraju district, where contaminated food caused illness, and ordered an inquiry. Naidu also urged health officials to ensure proper medical care for tribals affected by fever during this period of heavy rainfall.

## AP Government Distributes Pensions a Day Early

**TPN, Andhra Pradesh:** In a move to ensure timely disbursement, the Andhra Pradesh government has initiated the distribution of pensions today, a day earlier than usual, as September 1st falls on a Sunday. The state government, which has committed to providing pensions and salaries on the first day of every month, took this step to avoid any delay due to the weekend.

The distribution of pensions began early this

morning and is being carried out swiftly. As of now, 56 percent of the pensions have already been disbursed, with Secretariat staff working diligently to ensure that beneficiaries receive their payments on time.

However, the process has faced challenges in areas affected by the ongoing heavy rains, where the distribution has been temporarily halted. Despite these obstacles, the government's

efforts to ensure that the majority of pensioners receive their payments today have been largely successful.

The decision to advance the pension distribution reflects the government's commitment to its welfare programs, ensuring that beneficiaries are not inconvenienced by the Sunday holiday.

## AP Government Takes Firm Stance on Scheme Implementation

**TPN, Amaravati:** The new Andhra Pradesh government has taken a decisive step to stabilize the state's economic situation, focusing on prioritizing key projects like Amaravati and Polavaram. With fresh support from the central government, the state is set to utilize every rupee received from the Centre effectively, marking a significant shift from the previous administration's approach.

Piyush Kumar, Principal Secretary of the State Finance Department, highlighted that loans received for other schemes will not be diverted to welfare programs, a clear departure from the practices under the previous YSR Congress Party (YCP) government. He emphasized that the Rs. 15,000 crore loan announced by the Centre for Amaravati will be taken as an External Assistance Program (EAP) loan, with the central government bearing 100 percent of the repayment burden. This

arrangement ensures that the state will not face any additional financial strain from this loan. Kumar also noted that central government schemes, which had been neglected over the past five years, are now being revitalized. The state has already utilized nearly the entire Rs. 47,000 crore sanctioned by the Centre for the current financial year (April to September). An additional Rs. 8,000 crore is expected to be approved for the October-December period, with further borrowing likely to be permitted in the final quarter.

However, Kumar cautioned that loans taken through EAPs are costly, with interest rates ranging from 9 to 10 percent. The depreciation of the rupee against foreign currencies has further increased the cost of these loans. He pointed out that more affordable loans are available from sources like the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), NABARD, JICA, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Addressing the financial practices of the previous government, Kumar stated that huge funds had been diverted to welfare schemes by taking loans from corporations, a mistake that the current administration is determined to avoid. He clarified that corporations should take loans based on their specific needs and use them accordingly.

Regarding the backlog of pending bills accumulated over the past five years, Kumar acknowledged the enormity of the task, revealing that Rs. 1.30 lakh crore in pending bills have been identified in a recently released white paper. The government aims to settle these bills by December next year, while also focusing on increasing revenue and reducing government expenditure. The government's latest decision signals a commitment to sound financial management, ensuring that state resources are used efficiently and effectively without repeating the missteps of the past.

## Retirement of Six Senior IAS Officers in Andhra Pradesh

**TPN, Amaravati:** In a significant administrative change, six senior IAS officers in Andhra Pradesh are set to retire today. The announcement was made through a government order released by Chief Secretary Nirab Kumar Prasad.

Among those retiring is Rajat Bhargava, who served as Special Chief Secretary during the previous YCP regime. Rajat Bhargava was known for his close association with the YCP government, and following the change in administration, he was transferred and assigned to report in the General Administration Department (GAD) without a posting. However, in a last-minute decision, the government appointed him as Special Chief Secretary in the General Administration Department's GPM&AR (General Personnel Management & Administrative

Reforms) division on Friday, just a day before his retirement. Rajat Bhargava will retire from this position after taking over his duties today.

Another notable retirement is that of Girija Shankar, the current Chief Commissioner of Revenue. In response to his departure, the government has appointed Mukesh Kumar Meena, the Principal Secretary of Excise and Mines, with the additional responsibilities of Chief Commissioner of the Taxation Department.

Additionally, Pollution Control Board Member Secretary B. Sridhar, Additional Election Officer P. Koteswara Rao, and Bapatla Joint Collector B. Subbarao are also retiring today, marking a day of significant transitions in the state's administrative cadre.

## Chandrababu and Pawan Kalyan Participate in Vana Mahotsavam at Mangalagiri Eco Park

**TPN, Mangalagiri:** In a bid to boost greenery across Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan participated in the Vana Mahotsavam, a large-scale tree-planting initiative, at the Eco Park in Mangalagiri. The event, part of the state's 'Vanam Manam' program, underscores the government's commitment to environmental conservation and enhancing green cover.

Originally, the Vana Mahotsavam was planned to take place at the JNTU

campus under Kakani Panchayat of Narasa Raopet Mandal in the Palnadu District. However, due to heavy rainfall that led to flooding in Narasa Raopet and surrounding areas, the planned visit by CM Chandrababu and Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan had to be canceled.

Instead, the event was relocated to the Eco Park at Mangalagiri AIIMS, where the CM, Deputy CM, and Union Minister Pemmasani Chandrasekhar participated in the tree-planting activities. Walking among the lush greenery, Chandrababu remarked on

the serene and fresh environment, emphasizing the importance of such initiatives in creating peaceful and healthy living spaces.

During the visit, the leaders inquired about the various species of trees and plants within the park. They also viewed photographs of different bird species that inhabit the area, reflecting the biodiversity that the Vana Mahotsavam aims to protect and promote across the state.



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## HYDRA Commissioner Ranganath Refutes News About Notices to YS Jagan

TPN, Telangana: HYDRA Commissioner Ranganath has publicly addressed and denied the rumors circulating on social media, which claim that the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Monitoring and Protection Agency (HYDRA) issued notices to former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy regarding his residence at Lotus Pond in Hyderabad.



have sparked widespread speculation and concern on social media.

Commissioner Ranganath categorically denied these allegations, stating that HYDRA has not issued any notices to YS Jaganmohan Reddy. He clarified that the reports are entirely baseless and part of

The false reports suggest that Jagan's residence is located within the Full Tank Level (FTL) zone and that HYDRA was preparing to demolish the property. These claims

a deliberate misinformation campaign.

Ranganath further emphasized that if any property were found to be in violation of FTL regulations, HYDRA would take direct and legal action, including demolition if necessary. However, in this case, the rumors about Jagan's property are completely unfounded.

The Commissioner urged the public to disregard the false information being spread on social media and assured that HYDRA remains committed to operating within the bounds of the law and maintaining transparency in all its actions.

## Jagan Responds to Wave of Resignations in YCP, Urges Loyalty Among MPs

TPN, Andhra Pradesh: The YSR Congress Party (YCP) has been rocked by a series of high-profile resignations, with two Rajya Sabha members and three MLCs already stepping down. Amid rumors that more leaders are in talks with the opposition, Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has taken swift action to address the crisis.



Jagan held discussions with key party leaders to assess the situation, particularly focusing on the recent resignations of MPs Mopidevi Venkataramana and Beda Mastana Rao. Reports suggest that three other MPs were also contemplating leaving the party. In response, Jagan met with Pili Subhash Chandra Bose, Raghunatha Reddy, and R Krishnaiyah, who subsequently reaffirmed their commitment to YCP, publicly declaring that they have no intention of leaving.

Jagan reportedly expressed concern that any further resignations from the Rajya Sabha could result in those seats being captured by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in upcoming by-elections. He questioned the rationale behind surrendering Rajya Sabha posts to the TDP, urging his colleagues to consider the long-term consequences.

The Chief Minister advised key leaders to engage with those considering leaving the party, reminding them that they have been given significant responsibilities within YCP. He emphasized that the party's

defeat in the last election does not mark the end, and expressed confidence that YCP will regain power.

Despite the turmoil, senior leaders like Bose and Ayyodhya Ramireddy have assured their continued allegiance to Jagan and YCP, with Ramireddy stating that personal losses and difficulties would not sway his loyalty. He confirmed that he would not be resigning from the Rajya Sabha.

Meanwhile, Golla Baburao and Raghunatha Reddy also reiterated their commitment to the party, with Bose revealing that Jagan personally requested them to stand by his side. As the political situation remains tense, Jagan has returned to Pulivendula, where he plans to pay tribute at Idupulapaya Ghat on Monday, September 2, marking the death anniversary of his father, YS Rajasekhara Reddy.

## YS Sharmila Slams Govt for Removing YSR's Name from Institutions

TPN, Andhra Pradesh: Andhra Pradesh PCC President YS Sharmila has intensified her criticism of the state government, particularly targeting Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu over a recent decision that has sparked her ire. Sharmila, who has been relatively restrained since the coalition government came to power, has now taken a more aggressive stance, expressing her displeasure over the removal of former Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy's (YSR) name from medical colleges and hospitals in the state.



In a tweet posted today, Sharmila compared Chandrababu's actions to those of former CM YS Jaganmohan Reddy, accusing Chandrababu of following Jagan's lead. She pointed out that Jagan had made a significant mistake by removing NTR's name from medical and educational institutions during his tenure, and now, Chandrababu is repeating that error by erasing YSR's legacy.

Sharmila condemned the move as an act of political revenge, argu-

ing that both NTR and YSR played pivotal roles in the development of the united Andhra Pradesh. She stressed that both leaders left an indelible mark on governance and should be seen beyond the realm of politics.

Highlighting YSR's achievements, Sharmila noted that schemes like Arogya Shri, fee reimbursement, loan waivers, free electricity, and pensions, all introduced by YSR, have become models for the entire country. She emphasized that YSR's legacy belongs to all Telugu

people, not just one party, and that his place in their hearts remains unshaken.

Sharmila also criticized the coalition government, stating that it is unjust to direct their anger toward YSR in response to their grievances with the YSR Congress Party (YCP). She further asserted that YCP no longer embodies YSR's vision, describing it instead as a party dominated by figures like YV Subba Reddy, Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy, and Sai Reddy.

## Jagan Blames Chandrababu for Gudlavalleru Engineering College Incident

TPN, Andhra Pradesh: The political landscape in Andhra Pradesh continues to be deeply polarized, with major parties engaging in a blame game over recent incidents in the state. In the latest controversy, YSR Congress Party (YCP) leader Jaganmohan Reddy has publicly blamed Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for the shocking discovery of secret cameras inside the female hostel bathrooms at Gudlavalleru Engineering College.



Jagan accused Chandrababu of destroying the educational system in the state within just three months, pointing out that the Chief Minister's son, who serves as the Education Minister, has failed to address the severity of the situation. "The Gudlavalleru incident has traumatized the lives of hundreds of female students. This negligence by the NDA government is unacceptable," Jagan stated, expressing outrage over the incident and holding the current government accountable.

Jagan's remarks have stirred significant backlash from the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and its supporters. Critics argue that it is inappropriate for Jagan, a former

Chief Minister himself, to lay the blame for such a sensitive issue on the sitting CM. "Blaming the CM for an incident involving college students is not wise, especially when the culprits are students who engaged in such reprehensible behavior. Jagan should exercise better judgment in handling this matter," a TDP supporter commented on social media.

The Gudlavalleru incident has become a focal point of political debate, highlighting the ongoing tensions between the YCP and TDP as they continue to clash over governance and responsibility in Andhra Pradesh.

## Chandrababu Naidu's Strategic Move Against YCP-Aligned Officers

TPN, Tirupati: As the Tirumala Brahmotsavam approaches, the Andhra Pradesh coalition government, led by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, is making strategic moves within the police force, particularly targeting those who were perceived to be aligned with the previous YSR Congress Party (YCP) government. Legal actions have already been initiated against police officers who allegedly cooperated with YCP leaders during their tenure. In contrast, the Naidu government is now rewarding those officers who maintained their neutrality and served the public without yielding to political pressures.



Recently, the Andhra Pradesh government issued promotions and transfers to several police officers in Tirupati district, a significant move as it coincides with the upcoming Brahmotsavam festivities. The Chief Secretary's office promoted three police officers and reassigned them to new roles. Notably, Ramakrishna, who was working at the Tirupati PTC office with an Intelligence DSP attachment, has been promoted to ASP and appointed to the Tirumala Peace and Security Department. Venkatadri, previously the DSP of Renigunta near Tirupati, was promoted to Additional SP and instructed to report to the DGP's office. Similarly, Ravi Manoharachari,

who served as DSP of CID, has been appointed as the SP of Tirupati Peace and Security Division.

Additionally, Nagabhushan Rao, who was the ASP of the Tirupati Peace and Security Department, has been promoted to SP of the Tirupati Crime Branch. Several other police officers have been directed to report to either the DGP's office or the respective district SP offices, further indicating a significant reshuffling within the force.

These actions by the Naidu government are seen as a clear message to those officers who previously supported YCP leaders. The timing of these promotions and transfers, just before the Brahmotsavam, has sparked considerable discussion, with many viewing it as a calculated move to solidify control and ensure loyalty within the police ranks as the major religious event draws near.

## RK Roja Breaks Silence: Clarifies Stance Amidst Speculation of Leaving YCP

TPN, Andhra Pradesh: RK Roja, a prominent figure in Andhra Pradesh politics and a former minister in the YSR Congress Party (YCP), has finally broken her silence after months of staying away from the political limelight. Once a vocal and active participant in YCP activities, Roja had become notably quiet following her defeat in the Nagari constituency during the last election. Her absence from YCP programs had fueled rumors that she might be distancing herself from the party.



Today, Roja made a public appearance in Tirumala, where she completed the darshan of Lord Venkateswara. Afterward, she addressed the growing speculation about her political future and the recent defections from YCP. In the past week, two Rajya Sabha MPs and three MLCs have resigned from the party, raising

concerns about the stability of YCP.

Roja responded to the defections by reminding those leaving the party of the fates of past defectors. She emphasized that individuals appointed by the party should carefully consider the implications of their actions, suggesting that such defections do not harm Jaganmohan Reddy or YCP in the long run. She asserted that betraying the party would lead to a loss of respect and trust, both within the party and among the public.

In a key statement, Roja indicated that she has no intention of leaving YCP, effectively quashing the rumors of her departure. Her comments today reaffirm her loyalty to the party and her commitment to its leadership, signaling that despite her recent silence, she remains a steadfast supporter of YCP.





## Nara Lokesh Urges Vigilance Amidst Heavy Rains in AP



**TPN, Mangalagiri:** In response to the ongoing heavy rains in Andhra Pradesh, Nara Lokesh has issued important guidelines for the residents of the state, urging them to remain vigilant to avoid any potential loss of life or property. He emphasized the need for the public to closely monitor alert messages from the Government and the Disaster Management Department and to take appropriate protective measures accordingly.

Lokesh specifically advised people to stay away from flood-affected areas, highlighting the increased risk for

those living in low-lying regions prone to landslides and flooding. He urged residents of such vulnerable areas to relocate to safer locations as indicated by the authorities to ensure their safety.

Furthermore, Lokesh called on public representatives, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leaders, and workers in the affected regions to fully cooperate with the ongoing relief efforts. He assured the people that the TDP will stand by them during these challenging times, offering support and assistance as the state navigates through the calamity.

## Heavy Rains Cause Chaos in Andhra Pradesh: Penamaluru MLA Takes Action



**TPN, Vijayawada:** Torrential rains continue to wreak havoc across Andhra Pradesh, with Vijayawada and Guntur districts bearing the brunt of the downpour. The relentless rainfall has led to overflowing streams and severe waterlogging on roads, causing significant disruptions to traffic and daily life.

In response to the heavy rains that have paralyzed the Penamaluru Constituency and the Nidamanur-Poranki main road, Penamaluru MLA Bode Prasad has taken immediate action. Since early morning, the MLA has been on-site, overseeing the clearing of blocked canals using JCBs. The ef-

orts are aimed at alleviating the waterlogging that has created major traffic issues in the area.

The heavy rains have turned several roads into rivers, and the situation has been particularly challenging for motorists trying to navigate the flooded streets. MLA Bode Prasad's proactive measures are part of a broader effort to restore normalcy and ensure the safety of residents in the affected areas.

As the rain continues, authorities remain on high alert, working tirelessly to manage the situation and minimize the impact on the local population.

## Sand Supply Disrupted in Andhra Pradesh Due to Heavy Rains

**TPN, Amaravati:** The heavy rains that have been lashing Andhra Pradesh over the past two days have caused significant disruptions in the supply of sand across the state. Mukesh Kumar Meena, Principal Secretary of Mines, Excise, and Commercial Taxes, announced that the supply from various sand reaches has been halted temporarily due to the adverse weather conditions.

Meena assured the public that the supply of sand will resume once the rains subside, allowing operations to continue from all the affected reaches. He also noted that there is currently a stock of 15,19,239 metric

tonnes of sand available at 39 sand storage centers throughout the state.

Despite the disruption, the state has been managing ongoing demand. On Saturday, 1,412 applications were received for a total of 18,031 metric tonnes of sand. Of these, 15,636 metric tonnes were successfully supplied to 1,115 applicants.

The government urges consumers to be patient and cooperate during this period, as efforts are being made to restore normal sand supply as soon as the weather permits.

## RP Sisodia Leads Immediate Relief Operations Amid Cyclone Impact

**TPN, Vijayawada:** As Andhra Pradesh grapples with the aftermath of heavy rains caused by a cyclone, Special Principal Secretary for Disaster Management (Revenue), RP Sisodia, has taken direct charge of the relief operations. From the early hours of Saturday, Sisodia has been personally overseeing the state's response, ensuring swift and coordinated action across the affected regions.



Operating from the Disaster Management Office, Sisodia has been in constant communication with district administrations, particularly alerting District Collectors about the severe weather conditions. Through a teleconference from the control room at the Disaster Management Institute, he provided detailed instructions to officials from various departments, emphasizing the need for immediate relief and rehabilitation efforts.

One of the critical areas of focus was the landslide near the lime kiln center in Mughalrajapuram, Vijayawada, where Sisodia promptly arrived to direct the on-ground rescue operations. He instructed District Collector Srijana to oversee the rescue efforts and ensure that the injured receive the best possible medical care. The

tragic incident claimed four lives, prompting the Chief Minister to announce a financial aid of Rs. 5 lakh for the families of the deceased.

Throughout the day, Sisodia personally inspected several parts of the city, providing real-time updates to Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and relaying further instructions based on the evolving situation. He stressed the importance of keeping the public informed and taking preemptive measures to prevent loss of life. Sisodia highlighted the critical role of the power department, particularly in addressing potential hazards from downed trees and power lines, and ensuring a rapid response to any disruptions in the power supply.

He also emphasized the need for set-

ting up rehabilitation centers where necessary, and for officials to proactively identify and mitigate potential problems before they escalate. With the meteorological department predicting continued heavy rainfall for the next two to three days, Sisodia urged the district administrations to alert residents of low-lying areas and ensure that emergency teams are on standby. He also directed that warning boards be installed at vulnerable spots like brooks and bends, and that indicators be placed at manholes to prevent accidents.

Additionally, Sisodia ordered the sanitation teams to be prepared to clear any blockages in the drainage systems, ensuring that water does not accumulate in low-lying areas or on roads, which could exacerbate the situation.

RP Sisodia's leadership and hands-on approach have been pivotal in the state's coordinated response to the cyclone's impact, reflecting a strong commitment to minimizing the damage and ensuring the safety of the affected communities.

## MLA Vasantha Venkata Krishna Prasad Inspects Flooded Areas in Kondapalli

**TPN, Kondapalli:** Andhra Pradesh continues to reel under the impact of heavy rains, with Vijayawada and Guntur districts among the worst affected. The torrential downpour has led to overflowing streams and severe waterlogging on roads, causing significant traffic disruptions and hardship for residents.

In Kondapalli, located in the NTR district, MLA Vasantha Venkata Krishna Prasad personally inspected the flood-affected areas, wading through waist-deep water to assess the situation firsthand. The



MLA's visit underscores the seriousness of the flooding caused by the heavy rains and the urgency of the relief efforts.

Local authorities, in coordination with MLA Vasantha Venkata Krishna Prasad, are actively engaged in taking relief measures to ensure the safety and well-being of the affected residents. The authorities are working tirelessly to address the waterlogging issues and to provide necessary support to those impacted by the floods.

As the rain continues to batter the region, officials are on high alert, committed to minimizing the suffering of the people and restoring normalcy as quickly as possible.

## MLA Bonda Uma Responds to Flooding in Vijayawada Central

**TPN, Vijayawada:** The state of Andhra Pradesh is grappling with the severe effects of heavy rains, particularly in the districts of Vijayawada and Guntur. The relentless downpour has led to overflowing streams and widespread waterlogging, causing significant disruptions to traffic and daily life.



In response to the situation, MLA Bonda Uma visited the flood-affected areas within the Vijayawada Central Constituency. With many parts of the constituency experiencing severe waterlogging, Bonda Uma, accompanied by local officials, assessed the situation and took immediate action to assist residents.

Efforts are underway to pump out the water from flooded houses using motors, while the cleaning of canals is being prioritized to prevent further water accumulation. In addition to these measures, arrangements are being made to provide food and clean drinking water to the affected residents.

The MLA's prompt response reflects the ongoing efforts by local authorities to mitigate the impact of the heavy rains and provide relief to those affected. As the weather continues to challenge the region, officials remain committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of the community.

## TDP Leader Devineni Uma Visits Flood-Affected Areas in Kondapally

**TPN, Kondapally:** Former Minister and TDP leader Devineni Umamaheswara Rao visited the flood-affected areas of Qazi Manyam in Kondapally Municipality, where severe flooding has disrupted the lives of residents. The recent heavy rains have caused unprecedented water levels, with locals from Ibrahimpatnam's Khajimanyam area stating that they have never witnessed such heavy rainfall in the region's history.

The heavy rains have resulted in extensive flooding across the entire Vijayawada metropolis and the Guntur highway, severely impacting daily life. The Budameru river has experienced a significant surge in water levels, exacerbated by the non-operation of the BDC diversion channel over the past five years. As a result, the gates at the Velagaleru regulator have been lifted to manage the floodwaters.

Devineni Umamaheswara Rao expressed concern over the flooding in the Vijayawada Rural Mandal, including Jakkampudi Colony, Singh



Nagar, and the Budameru catchment area. Fields in Kavuluru, Welagaleru, and Paidurupadu are also facing severe waterlogging due to the ongoing heavy rains.

The TDP leader urged residents to heed the government's warnings and take necessary precautions to ensure their safety during this challenging time. Authorities continue to monitor the situation closely and are working to mitigate the impact of the floods on the affected communities.





# Now That Champai Soren Is Finally With BJP, Can He Help It Win?

The former Chief Minister of Jharkhand, Champai Soren of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) today, ending days of speculation. 'Tiger', as Soren is fondly called, is a strong tribal leader with a credible image. He is considered the right-hand man of JMM patriarch Shibu Soren and played a big role in the movement to carve out a separate state of Jharkhand from Bihar.

With Soren's entry, the BJP hopes to make a dent in the ST vote bank of the INDIA bloc, comprising the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), the Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD). It also boosts the BJP's chances of making a comeback in the state by exploiting the anti-incumbency against the Hemant Soren government amidst allegations of unfulfilled promises.

## BJP's Need For A Stalwart Leader

Champai was appointed as Chief Minister after Hemant Soren was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in February 2024. Under his leadership, the INDIA bloc won five of the 14 Lok Sabha seats in the state, three more than the last time. The INDIA bloc, meanwhile, won all the five ST-reserved seats in the state, highlighting the anger in the community over the arrest of its leader. While the opposition alliance bagged 37% votes - a rise of 5 percentage points - the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) registered a vote share of 48%, a drop of 8 percentage points over the previous general election.

Following the BJP's losses, questions had been raised about the leadership of party president Babulal Marandi former chief minister and Arjun Munda. In that context, the entry of Champai Soren fulfils to some extent the BJP's need for stalwart tribal leaders.

## Why Champai Left

Perhaps the abrupt manner in which Champai Soren was asked to vacate the top post after the release of Hemant Soren hurt the 'Tiger'. The JMM was born out of a struggle for a separate state. But, over the years, like any other regional party, it has become a family-controlled unit.

The STs account for 26.2% of the state's population and hold the key to government formation. There are 28 ST-reserved seats, sixteen of which are located in the Santhal Pargana (northeast) and Kolhan (south) regions. The BJP could manage to win just two ST seats in 2019, down from 11 in 2014. This poor show is often cited as one of the main reasons for its loss in 2019. In contrast, the INDIA bloc swept these two regions in 2019, winning all the 16 seats.

Champai himself hails from the Kolhan region, which includes East and West Singhbhum and Saraikela districts, and houses the industrial town of Jamshedpur. While the BJP had won five of the 14 seats here in 2014, in the next assembly election, it drew a blank. The party now hopes Champai Soren's name will help it not only reverse its fortunes in the region but also bag a section of ST votes in the state overall, while it tries to consolidate OBC, upper caste and SC support.

## A Close Contest In Jharkhand

Of the four states that will see elections to their assemblies this year - the other three being Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra and Haryana - Jharkhand is the only one where the BJP is not in power. As of now, the battle in the state is shaping up to be a close, seat-by-seat contest. A bulk of the BJP's weak seats are in Santhal Pargana and Kolhan divisions, where Champai can help. In the latter, the huge Kurmi population has turned against the JMM as their demand for being included in the ST category hasn't been met.

New entrant Jairam Mahato's Jharkhandi Bhasha Khatian Sangharsh Samiti (JBKSS) could play spoilsport here. In this year's Lok Sabha polls, its entry split the opposition votes, which ultimately helped the BJP. The party bagged over 1.25 lakh votes in three seats.

## The Sarna Code

There's another social factor. In recent years, many tribals have converted to Christianity, which has



caused social friction. Tribal Christians dominate politics, especially in the JMM. The BJP has been exploiting these tensions, with most ST voters backing it being 'Sarna' tribals, who follow nature worship. Even so, in the Lok Sabha polls, the INDIA bloc got some support from them as it promised to fulfil a long-time demand that the BJP has been reluctant to consider: the implementation of a 'Sarna Code', which proposes a separate religious code for tribals who follow the Sarna religion.

As Chief Minister, Champai Soren had promised to fulfil this demand and even accused the Centre of dragging its feet on it. It will be interesting to see how he now manages to balance this. Undoubtedly, the JMM will try to play up this 'doublespeak' to attack Soren.

## Battle Lines Drawn

The JMM hopes to consolidate its SC-ST-Muslim vote base, which accounts for 50% of the state's population. It also hopes that Mahato's party will split the Kurmi vote, damaging the prospects of the All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU). It is also counting on the Congress to tap some urban voters after its improved national performance in the Lok Sabha election.

On the other hand, the BJP is working on a state-level narrative to highlight the failures of the Hemant Soren government and its non-fulfilment of promises like unemployment allowance to youth, stove expense allowance to women, etc. It's also hoping to attract young voters by highlighting the state's jobs problem and its own promises in the recent Union Budget.

A keen battle is on the cards. Champai's entry definitely strengthens the BJP, but it remains to be seen whether he can ultimately deliver a win.

## Haryana Assembly Elections 2024: Will Regional Parties Hold the Key?

As Haryana approaches its 2024 Assembly elections, the political landscape is heating up, with regional parties poised to play a crucial role in the outcome. The state's electoral battle is shaping into a five-cornered contest, with major national players like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress vying for dominance. However, it's the smaller regional parties that could end up being the kingmakers in this unpredictable electoral showdown.

### BJP's Strategy Post-Breakup with JJP

The BJP, after parting ways with its former ally, Dushyant Chautala's Jannayak Janta Party (JJP), is now focusing on forming alliances with smaller regional parties to bolster its chances. The party, which has been in power for the past decade, is facing significant anti-incumbency and is planning to replace half of its sitting MLAs to counter this sentiment. The BJP's strategy includes fielding new faces, including the grandchildren of former chief ministers and even prominent sportspersons, to rejuvenate its image among voters.

The BJP is also eyeing potential alliances with Gopal Kanda's Haryana Lokhit Party and Venod Sharma's Haryana Jan Chetna Party, both of which are targeting specific seats in the upcoming elections. Additionally, there is speculation that Jayant Chaudhary's Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) might enter the fray in Haryana, particularly targeting the Jat vote bank that has drifted away from the BJP due to various grievances, including the farmers' and wrestlers' protests.

### Congress and AAP Go Solo

On the other side, the Congress, under the leadership of former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, is gearing up for a solo fight. Despite internal rivalries, Hooda has managed to consolidate the party's position in the state, and the Congress is confident of performing well. The party is banking on its traditional vote banks, particularly the Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Jats, to challenge the BJP.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), led by Arvind Kejriwal, is also contesting all 90 seats independently. AAP is focusing on border constituencies and promoting its '5 guarantees'—free electricity, employment, education, healthcare, and a monthly stipend for women. Although AAP has not yet announced its candidates, it hopes to make significant inroads, especially in areas neighboring Delhi and Punjab, where it has a strong presence.

### JJP's Existential Battle and New Alliances

For the JJP, this election is crucial for its survival. The party, which won 10 seats in its debut in 2019 and played a pivotal role in forming the government, is now struggling after breaking ties with the BJP. Seven of its MLAs have defected, and the party is left with only three sitting legislators, including Dushyant Chautala and his mother Naina Chautala. The JJP has now allied with Chandrashekhar Azad's Azad Samaj Party-Kanshi Ram (ASP-KR) and will contest 70 seats, leaving 20 for its new ally. This partnership is aimed at combining the JJP's Jat support base with the ASP's expected Dalit backing, making it a potentially formidable force in the elections.

### INLD and BSP Alliance

The Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), JJP's parent party, has allied with Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and is projecting Abhay Chautala, Dushyant's uncle and the party's only MLA, as its chief ministerial candidate. The INLD-BSP alliance is banking on the Dalit-Jat combination to make a significant impact in the elections. However, the INLD's performance in recent elections has been underwhelming, and this election will be a litmus test for its future in Haryana politics.

### The Decisive Role of SCs and Local Issues

Scheduled Castes (SCs), who make up around 20% of Haryana's population, could be the deciding factor in this election. Both the BJP and Congress are targeting this crucial vote bank, which could tilt the balance in a close contest. Moreover, local issues are likely to take precedence over national narratives, as voters focus on factors such as employment, education, and law and order.

### A Thrilling Electoral Contest Awaits

With an unpredictable electorate and fluid alliances, the Haryana Assembly elections promise to be a thrilling contest. The BJP's attempts to forge new alliances, the Congress's confidence in its solo strategy, AAP's aggressive campaign, and the survival battles of regional parties like the JJP and INLD make this election one of the most closely watched in recent history. As the state heads to the polls, all eyes will be on October 4, when the results will reveal who holds the key to Haryana's political future.







## Kerala's Wayanad District Faces Permanent "No Habitation" Zones After July 30 Landslides

In the wake of the devastating landslides on July 30, 2024, Kerala's Wayanad district is grappling with severe aftermaths, including the potential declaration of some areas as permanent "no habitation" zones. The catastrophic event has drastically altered the topography and left many survivors struggling to cope with the loss of their homes, livelihoods, and the psychological trauma inflicted by the disaster.

The landslides, which struck the Meppadi panchayat and specifically impacted the villages of Punchirimattam, Chooralmala, and Mundakkai, have caused significant

damage. Authorities are now assessing the feasibility of future human habitation in the severely affected wards of Punchirimattam and Chooralmala. The swollen Gayathri river, which carried massive debris, has irreversibly changed the landscape, destroying residential properties, public infrastructure, and crucial facilities such as schools and temples.

Local residents are expressing deep concerns about returning to their former homes. Rajesh T, 39, a tailor from Punchirimattam, described his devastation as he sifts through the wreckage of his home, built by his

parents seven years ago. "I cannot believe my house is all filled up with muck. Two houses right in front of mine were washed away," he said, voicing the collective uncertainty of many in the area who are now living in government shelters or rented accommodations.

Similarly, Unais C, a 35-year-old goods auto driver from Mundakkai, lamented the loss of his small business supplies, including 300 cement bags and asbestos sheets, washed away by the floods. "I have applied to the government for compensation and am awaiting a response," he said, highlighting the

economic hardships faced by those affected.

The emotional toll is equally profound. Dance teacher Jithika Prem, who witnessed the landslides, described the scene as "straight out of a scary movie" and expressed her unwillingness to return to her devastated home. She is now residing in a temporary shelter in Kalpetta and hopes for improved public transport to continue her work.

Arif, a daily wage worker from Chooralmala, who lived in a rented house, is concerned about finding new employment and securing

permanent housing. His family is currently receiving government aid but remains uncertain about their future stability. "I just want to settle in a permanent house away from the disaster site," he said, emphasizing the ongoing struggles faced by displaced families.

The magnitude of the disaster is underscored by the reported death toll, with over 200 people confirmed dead and a similar number of body parts recovered during search operations. The crisis has highlighted the region's vulnerability, given its fragile ecology in both coastal and hilly areas.

### PM Modi Emphasizes Need for Swift Justice for Women at National Judiciary Conference

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday highlighted the imperative of delivering swift justice in cases involving crimes against women, asserting that such measures are crucial for ensuring their safety and providing reassurance to half of the population. Speaking at the inaugural session of a national conference of the district judiciary, PM Modi stressed the importance of effective coordination within the criminal justice system to expedite legal proceedings and enhance the protection of women.

In his address, PM Modi acknowledged the existing stringent laws designed to address crimes against women and called for improved synchronization among judicial and law enforcement agencies to achieve timely justice. His remarks come against the backdrop of recent high-profile cases, including the alleged rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata and the sexual assault of two kindergarten girls in Thane, which have heightened public concern over women's safety.

### After Champai Soren, Ex-JMM MLA Lobin Hembrom Joins BJP

In a significant political development, Lobin Hembrom, a former Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) legislator, officially joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday. Hembrom was welcomed into the BJP by the party's state chief Babulal Marandi and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma at a ceremony held at the BJP's state headquarters.

Hembrom's shift to the BJP follows the recent defection of former Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren, who joined the BJP just a day earlier. Hembrom, who represented the Borio constituency, cited a lack of respect for senior leaders and dissatisfaction with the current leadership of the JMM as his reasons for leaving the party. "The JMM has changed from what it was during Guruji's (JMM supremo Shibu Soren) time. There is no respect for senior leaders now, and I decided to join the BJP for the development of Jharkhand and the upliftment of tribals," Hembrom stated.

### CBI Seeks Custodial Interrogation of Coaching Institute Owner and Associates Over UPSC Aspirants' Deaths

In a significant development regarding the tragic drowning of three UPSC aspirants in Delhi, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has sought custodial interrogation of Abhishek Gupta, the owner of Rau's IAS Study Circle coaching institute, and five other accused. The request for custody was made in light of the "seriousness" of the allegations, which include violations of building regulations and failure to implement safety measures. On August 27, Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Nishant Garg granted the CBI's request, remanding Gupta, Deshpal Singh, Harvinder Singh, Parvinder Singh, Sarabjeet Singh, and Tajinder Singh into CBI custody until September 4. This move marks a critical step in the investigation, which has drawn attention due to the severity of the allegations and the circumstances surrounding the incident. The CBI's investigation alleges that Gupta and the other accused knowingly used the basement of the building for commercial purposes, despite municipal regulations that specified the basement could only be used for essential services such as staircases, toilets, and parking.

### Rahul Gandhi to Campaign in Jammu and Kashmir on September 4 for NC-Congress Alliance

In a strategic move ahead of the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections, the Congress party has announced that Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, will address two key rallies in the region on September 4. This decision comes as part of the Congress's broader campaign efforts to support candidates of the NC-Congress alliance. AICC General Secretary Ghulam Ahmad Mir confirmed the plans, stating that the campaign rallies will take place in both Kashmir and Jammu. Mir, who is also contesting the elections from Dooru in South Kashmir, revealed that Gandhi will address a rally at the Dooru stadium and another in the Sangaldan area of Jammu.

"We are pleased that Rahulji has accepted our invitation to campaign in Jammu and Kashmir. This visit is part of the first phase of our election campaign, and he may return for subsequent phases as well," Mir said. The Congress has mobilized a robust lineup of over 40 star campaigners for the upcoming elections, including party president Mallikarjun Kharge and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

### India to Lead Bio-Manufacturing Revolution with New 'BioE3' Policy

Union Minister Jitendra Singh announced on Saturday that India is poised to become a global leader in the bio-manufacturing sector, thanks to its rich and largely untapped bio-resources. Singh highlighted the government's new 'BioE3 (Biotechnology for Economy, Environment and Employment) Policy for Fostering High Performance Biomanufacturing,' which aims to spearhead advancements in research, technology development, and commercialisation within the bio-manufacturing sector.

Speaking on the policy's potential, Singh emphasized that while the West pioneered the IT revolution, India is now set to drive the next major global revolution through bio-manufacturing. "India has an opportunity to lead the next big revolution which will be driven by bio-manufacturing," Singh stated. He explained that bio-manufacturing not only addresses critical global issues such as climate change, resource depletion, waste generation,

### Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana Assembly Election Results Postponed to October 8 Following Poll Date Revision

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced a revision in the schedule for the Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana Assembly elections, with results now set to be declared on October 8, 2024. This change comes in response to a request by the BJP and the observance of the Asoj Amavasya festival.

Originally scheduled for October 1, the Haryana Assembly election polling date has been moved to October 5. The BJP had appealed for the shift, arguing that the initial date fell between

a weekend and other holidays, which could potentially impact voter turnout adversely. The ECI's decision also accommodates the Bishnoi community's traditional observance of the Asoj Amavasya festival, which is celebrated in remembrance of Guru Jambheshwar.

The ECI's revised schedule includes changing the counting day for both Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana Assembly elections from October 4 to October 8, 2024.



# Awami League Leader Ishaque Ali Khan Panna's Body Handed Over to Bangladesh Officials

The body of Ishaque Ali Khan Panna, a prominent Awami League leader and former general secretary of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), was officially handed over to Bangladeshi authorities this afternoon. The transfer took place at the Dawki Land Port following the completion of all necessary paperwork and formalities.

The transfer was carried out at 5 am today, when Panna's body was delivered to an associate authorized by the Bangladesh High Commission at Khliehriat Civil Hospital in East Jaintia Hills district. The body will be transported to Panna's home in Pirojpur district, Bangladesh, through the Dawki Land Port in West Jaintia Hills.

Ishaque Ali Khan Panna, closely associated with former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, was found deceased in a betel nut plantation in Dona Bhoi village in East Jaintia Hills on August 26. His body was identified using a Bangladesh passport.

The Ministry of External Affairs of India and its counterpart in Bangladesh coordinated closely throughout the process to ensure the smooth repatriation of Panna's remains. The collaboration highlights the strong diplomatic and administrative efforts between the two countries in handling such sensitive matters.



## USCIS Updates Guidelines for STEM OPT: Extended Duration, Online Study, and More



The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has released updated policy guidelines for international students seeking Optional Practical Training (OPT) in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. The revised guidelines, effective from August 27, introduce several key changes aimed at providing greater clarity and flexibility regarding online study, school transfers, grace periods, and study abroad programs. These updates will apply to both pending and future OPT requests.

### Extended OPT Duration for STEM Students:

Under the new policy, international students in STEM fields are now eligible for up to three years of OPT, a significant increase from the previous one-year duration afforded to students in non-STEM disciplines. This extension will allow STEM students to gain more extensive work experience in the U.S.

### Online Study Allowances:

Students can now count one online class or up to three credits per academic session towards their full course of study without violating F1 visa regulations. This provision applies to online or distance learning courses that do not require physical attendance.

### School Transfers:

The updated guidelines facilitate smoother transitions for students transferring between Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) schools, as certified by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This includes transfers at the same educational level or even between different levels of education.

### Eligibility for Post-Completion OPT:

Students who have completed associate, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree programs are now eligible to apply for post-completion OPT under the new rules.

### OPT Extensions:

Students can apply for a STEM OPT extension up to 90 days before their current employment authorization expires. To qualify for the 24-month STEM OPT extension, students must have a valid post-completion OPT period, a qualifying STEM degree from an accredited institution, and employment with an E-Verify enrolled employer.

### 60-Day Grace Period:

Upon completing their OPT, students will have a 60-day grace period during which they can change their educational level, transfer to another SEVP-certified school, or apply for a different nonimmigrant or immigrant status. During this period, employers can also sponsor students for an H-1B visa.

### Clarification on Application Period:

The revised manual includes corrections to the application timeline for STEM OPT extensions and other technical adjustments, ensuring students can submit their applications within the appropriate timeframe.

### Guidelines for Study Abroad Programs:

Students enrolled in SEVP-certified schools can maintain their active status in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) during study abroad programs lasting less than five months. For longer programs, a new Form I-20 will be required.

Students with a STEM OPT extension must report any changes in their legal name, address, or employment details to their Designated School Official (DSO) within 10 days. They are also required to confirm their information every six months, even if there are no changes. The updated guidelines aim to provide greater flexibility and support for international students, enhancing their educational and professional opportunities in the U.S.

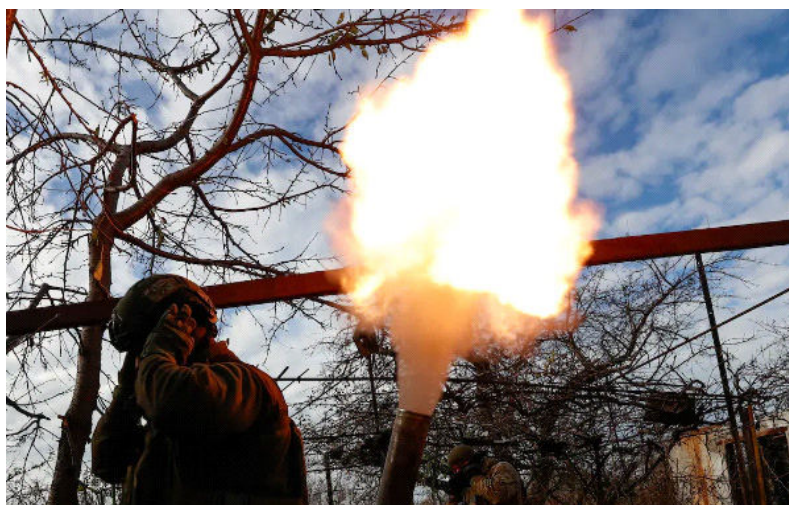
## Mediazona Reports Over 66,000 Russian Military Deaths in Ukraine War

Independent Russian media outlet Mediazona has reported that more than 66,000 Russian military personnel have died in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. This figure, compiled in collaboration with the BBC Russian Service using open-source data, represents a significant increase from the 50,000 deaths reported in April.

As of August 30, Mediazona's list includes 66,471 names of Russian soldiers killed, an increase of over 4,600 deaths in the past four weeks. However, the organization notes that this number is not comprehensive, as many soldiers' deaths remain unreported or undisclosed.

Anastasia Alekseyeva, a journalist at Mediazona, clarified that the updated death toll is not directly tied to recent Ukrainian offensives or Russian advances in the east. The increase in reported deaths reflects ongoing efforts to process a backlog of death reports rather than recent battlefield events.

The report indicates that 172 conscripts have been killed, predominantly in the early months of the conflict. The figures for conscripts may be imprecise, as some conscripts might have signed professional army contracts without informing their families, according to Mediazona editor Dmitry Treshchanin. Geographically, the southern republic of Bashkortostan has reported the highest number of casualties, with 2,578 deaths.



The age group with the most significant number of deaths is between 33 and 35 years old, totaling 6,877. The report also highlights that more than 12,000 of the deceased were prisoners recruited by Russia with promises of freedom after serving on the front lines. However, recruitment of prisoners has reportedly decreased recently.

## UN Launches Polio Vaccination Campaign in Gaza Amid Ongoing Conflict



The United Nations is set to begin a crucial polio vaccination campaign for approximately 640,000 children in Gaza, relying on daily eight-hour ceasefires between Israeli forces and Hamas to facilitate the effort. The campaign comes in response to the recent confirmation of a type 2 polio virus case that partially paralyzed a baby, marking the first such incident in Gaza in 25 years.

The UN's vaccination initiative aims to administer the vaccine twice to at least 90% of children, with a four-week interval between doses. However, the campaign faces significant challenges due to the ongoing conflict and extensive damage from nearly 11 months of war.

On Saturday, Israeli strikes in Gaza resulted in at least 48 deaths, according to Palestinian health authorities. The strikes hit central and southern areas of the enclave as clashes continued. In Nuseirat refugee camp, separate Israeli attacks killed at least 19 people, including nine members of one family. Further strikes across Gaza resulted in over 30 additional fatalities.

Despite these challenges, the vaccination campaign is moving forward. Medics have started administering vaccines in symbolic gestures at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, with full-scale operations planned as soon as the ceasefires are in place. Yousef Abu Al-Reesh, Gaza's deputy minister of health, emphasized the need for a comprehensive ceasefire to ensure the campaign's success and protect children from the virus.

The conflict between Israel and Hamas, which erupted on October 7 with a Hamas attack killing 1,200 Israelis and taking around 250 hostages, has led to more than 40,600 Palestinian deaths, according to Gaza's health ministry. The violence has displaced nearly the entire population of Gaza, exacerbating a severe hunger crisis.

In the West Bank, Israeli military operations continue in Jenin, with drones and helicopters surveying the area amid sporadic gunfire. The international community remains concerned about the humanitarian impact of the ongoing conflict and the dire conditions in Gaza.



## Telegram CEO Pavel Durov Under Formal Investigation in France Over Alleged Platform Misuse

In an unprecedented legal action against a major tech CEO, Pavel Durov, the founder and CEO of Telegram, has been placed under formal investigation by French authorities. The investigation, led by the J3 cybercrime unit within the Paris prosecutor's office, marks a significant escalation in the French approach to holding tech executives accountable for illegal content on their platforms.

Durov, 39, was arrested last Saturday in connection with allegations of organized crime. Prosecutors have accused him of complicity in facilitating the dissemination of illegal content on Telegram, including child sex abuse images, drug trafficking, and fraud. The investigation is spearheaded by Johanna Brousse, a 38-year-old prosecutor known for her rigorous stance on cybercrime.

This move signifies a shift in how global authorities may confront tech leaders who are perceived to be insufficiently policing illegal activities on their platforms. The investigation could set a legal precedent, but it remains uncertain how successful Brousse will be in securing a conviction based on this largely untested legal theory.

Durov's defense has labeled the charges as "absurd," asserting that Telegram operates in compliance with European laws. The company and Durov himself maintain that they take appropriate measures to address illegal content and comply with legal requirements. Being placed under formal investigation does not imply guilt but indicates that judges believe there is sufficient evidence to proceed with the inquiry. Durov is currently out on bail but is barred from leaving France. The investigation into Telegram began earlier this year following numerous reports of the app being used for criminal activities and a lack of adequate response from the company to judicial requests, according to Paris Prosecutor Laure Beccau.





# Mastercard to Replace Passwords with Biometric Tokens to Combat Fraud



A decade after introducing token technology to protect consumers' card information, Mastercard has reached a milestone of processing 1 billion tokenized transactions each week, CEO Michael Miebach revealed in an interview. This marks a significant increase from the time it took the company three years to reach its first billion token transactions.



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es affecting retailers like Target and Best Buy, which exposed millions of credit card details. The technology replaces card numbers with a unique token that only payment networks can decipher, rendering stolen data useless to hackers.

This innovation, supported by payment services such as Apple Pay, has significantly reduced in-store fraud. However, e-commerce platforms, where consumers manually enter card details, are increasingly targeted by criminals. Additionally, one-time passwords, used by websites and banks to verify identities, have also become vulnerable to fraud.

To counter these threats, Mastercard is collaborating with banks and payment providers globally to substitute one-time passwords with tokens derived from biometric data. The company has already launched this service in India, partnering with PayU and Axis Bank Ltd.

Miebach emphasized that tokenization is crucial for mitigating risks associated with data breaches and fraud, which are significant obstacles to the digital economy.

Mastercard is now planning to extend this technology to enhance security further by replacing traditional measures like passwords with biometric data, such as fingerprints or facial recognition. This move is part of a broader effort to address the growing problem of online payment fraud, which is projected to exceed \$91 billion by 2028.

In the past, securing transactions primarily relied on passwords, a strategy that initially worked well. However, as Miebach noted at Mastercard's London offices, this approach has become a vulnerability rather than a safeguard.

Mastercard and Visa Inc. pioneered token technology about ten years ago in response to major data breach-

## Bank Credit Growth Outpaces Deposit Growth, RBI Data Shows

According to the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), non-food bank credit has increased by 15.1 percent, reaching Rs 162.92 lakh crore as of July 2024. This marks a rise from 14.7 percent growth recorded a year earlier. The robust growth in credit extends to agriculture and allied activities, which saw a significant increase of 18.1 percent, totaling Rs 21.55 lakh crore, compared to 16.7 percent growth the previous year.

In contrast, bank deposit growth has lagged behind at 11.3 percent, with the total deposits amounting to Rs 213.28 lakh crore. This slower growth in deposits is prompting banks to seek alternative ways to attract funds. Many are introducing special deposit schemes and other innovative financial products to address the growing credit demand.

The slowdown in deposit growth is attributed to a shift in customer preferences. During the quarter ending June 2024, banks experienced a decline in deposits as customers increasingly turned to capital markets and other investment avenues offering better returns. This trend highlights the need for banks to adapt their strategies to sustain deposit growth and meet the rising credit needs effectively.



## RBI Fines UCO Bank and Cent Bank Home Finance for Regulatory Violations



On Friday, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that it has imposed a penalty of Rs 2.68 crore on UCO Bank. This penalty is a result of the bank's violation of several regulatory provisions, including those related to the opening of current accounts, interest rates on deposits, and the classification of frauds.

In a separate action, the RBI has fined Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd Rs 2.1 lakh for failing to comply with certain Know Your Customer (KYC) guidelines.

The RBI clarified that these penalties are enforced to ensure regulatory compliance and do not reflect on the legitimacy of any transactions or agreements made between the banks and their customers. The central bank's actions aim to uphold adherence to its regulations and maintain the integrity of financial operations within the banking sector.

lower, growth in most sectors has surpassed 7 percent."

Das highlighted that key drivers of GDP growth—consumption, investment, manufacturing, services, and construction—all experienced growth rates above 7%. He attributed the minor decline to two main factors: lower government expenditure and slower growth in agriculture. "The slight dip can be attributed to two aspects: lower government ex-

## India's UPI Surges Ahead: Processed Rs 81 Lakh Crore Transactions in April-July

India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has achieved a remarkable milestone, processing nearly Rs 81 lakh crore in transactions from April to July this year, marking a 37% year-on-year increase. This surge has positioned UPI ahead of leading global digital payment platforms, including China's Alipay, PayPal, and Brazil's PIX.

According to data from global payments hub Paysecure, UPI processed 3,729.1 transactions per second, a 58% increase from the 2,348 transactions per second recorded in 2022. In July alone, UPI transactions surpassed Rs 20.6 lakh crore, the highest monthly figure ever recorded. For three consecutive months, the total value of UPI transactions remained above Rs 20 lakh crore.

Paysecure's analysis of 40 top global payment methods highlights India's dominance in digital transactions, with UPI being a major driver. Dilip Asbe, CEO of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), projects UPI could reach 100 billion transactions within 10-15 years, bolstered by growth in credit offerings. UPI's credit feature has already been introduced, with commercial details expected soon.



June saw 13.89 billion UPI transactions, slightly down from 14.04 billion in May. PwC India forecasts a significant rise in UPI transactions, predicting more than a threefold increase from about 131 billion in 2023-24 to 439 billion by 2028-29, making up 91% of retail digital transactions.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das announced plans to globalize UPI and RuPay at the Global Fintech Fest in Mumbai. Future initiatives include implementing UPI-like systems abroad, enabling QR code payments at international merchants, and integrating UPI with other countries' Fast Payment Systems for cross-border remittances.

## NCLT Approves Reliance-Disney Merger, Creating India's Largest Media Empire



The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has approved the merger of Reliance Industries-owned Viacom18 Media with Star India, marking a significant development in India's media sector. This decision follows the Competition Commission of India's (CCI) recent nod for the merger, which will create a media conglomerate valued at over Rs 70,000 crore.

The NCLT's approval was given for a composite Scheme of Arrangement among Viacom18, Digital18, and Star India, a subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company. The tribunal described the scheme as "fair and reasonable" and compliant with legal provisions and public policy.

The merger plan involves transferring media operations from Viacom18 and JioCinema to Digital18, a Viacom18 subsidiary. This will be followed by the demerger and transfer of the V18 Undertaking from Digital18 to Star India. The scheme will become effective only after receiving final approval from the CCI.

Reliance Chairman Mukesh Ambani hailed the merger as a transformative moment for India's entertainment industry. He expressed enthusiasm about integrating Disney into the Reliance ecosystem, comparing it to the significant impact of Jio and Reliance Retail.

The deal, valued at approximately \$8.5 billion, faced scrutiny from antitrust regulators and required compliance with various conditions. The CCI's approval included mandatory modifications, although specifics were not disclosed.

Under the agreement, Reliance Industries will hold a 63.16% stake in the combined entity, which will include two streaming services and 120 TV channels. Walt Disney will retain a 36.84% stake. Reliance has committed nearly Rs 11,500 crore to the venture, aimed at competing with global rivals like Sony and Netflix. Nita Ambani will head the joint venture, with Uday Shankar serving as Vice Chairperson.

## RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Addresses Q1 Growth Figures

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das discussed the first quarter growth figures for the current financial year, revealing a discrepancy between the Reserve Bank's projection and the actual data. While the RBI had anticipated a growth rate of 7.1%, the National Statistical Office (NSO) reported a slightly lower figure of 6.7%.

Despite the shortfall from the projected 7.1%, Das emphasized that growth across most sectors remains strong, exceeding 7%. He stated, "For the first quarter, the Reserve Bank's projection was 7.1 percent. The actual figure reported by the NSO is 6.7 percent. Although this figure seems

penditure at both the central and state levels and slower growth in agriculture, which grew at about 2 percent," he explained.

Overall, Das's remarks underscore a positive growth trend despite a slight deviation from initial projections, with robust performance across essential sectors balancing out the impact of reduced government spending and slower agricultural growth.







# Rahul Gandhi's Focus on Caste to Challenge to Modi 3.0

On August 24, Rahul Gandhi intensified his criticism of the Modi government during his visit to Prayagraj for the Samvidhan Samman Sammelan, organized by an NGO. His speech centered on the need for a caste census and opposition to lateral entry into government roles. However, the statement that grabbed the headlines was his remark: "I checked the list of Miss India to see if there were any Dalits or Tribals in it; but there were no women who were Dalit, Tribal, or OBC." This echoed his earlier query in Parliament about the number of SCs/STs/OBCs among the 91 Secretaries at the Centre.

Rahul's focus on caste contrasts sharply with the fact that India currently has a tribal woman as President and an OBC as Prime Minister. Yet, his remarks have found resonance on social media and within his party, with many applauding his challenge to the Modi 3.0 regime.

## Rahul Gandhi's Inconsistent Stance on Key Issues

In recent times, West Bengal has been engulfed in public unrest following the Kolkata doctor rape issue. Rahul Gandhi, however, chose to remain silent on this matter, despite being asked about it by reporters. When questioned, he deflected by stating that the issue should not be diverted to please their INDIA alliance partner, Mamata Banerjee, without explicitly naming her. Such inconsistency from a national leader and the main opposition figure is seen as deplorable.

This selective silence raises concerns, especially when juxtaposed with the Congress party's celebration of its 2024 electoral performance. Under Rahul Gandhi's leadership, the Congress secured 99 seats, a significant improvement from its previous two elections but still its worst defeat since the 1977 election under Indira Gandhi, where the party won 154 seats. The decision to celebrate the 2024 outcome as a major victory, despite the historical low, has been criticized as akin to "digging their own grave" without achieving substantial progress.

## Challenges Facing Modi 3.0's NDA

Modi 3.0's National Democratic Alliance (NDA) faces distinct challenges compared to the Vajpayee-era NDA, primarily due to the absence of a Common Minimum Programme (CMP) and a designated convener, like George Fernandes, who played a crucial role between 1999 and 2005. Currently, the BJP, with 240 seats, is 32 seats short of a majority in the Lok Sabha, surpassing the opposition INDIA alliance's total of 235 seats.

However, key initiatives such as Waqf reform and lateral entry for domain experts through the UPSC have

encountered resistance from some NDA allies, leading to the shelving of the lateral entry initiative and the referral of the Waqf matter to a Joint Parliamentary Committee. This lack of structured consensus-building and perception management could potentially hinder the implementation of Modi 3.0's progressive policies, as spontaneous reactions from allies echo opposition concerns.

## Rahul Gandhi's Rising Popularity Among Opposition

A recent mood of the nation poll has shown Rahul Gandhi as India's leading opposition figure, with a 21% approval rating, significantly ahead of other leaders like Akhilesh Yadav, Arvind Kejriwal, and Mamata Banerjee. This growing popularity was evident when Rahul made headlines by taking an Uber from Noida to Akbar Road in New Delhi, posting on social media about the plight of gig workers. However, this well-meaning sentiment highlighted a disconnect with the Congress's governance history.

Shortly after coming to power in 2004, the UPA government set up the National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganised Sector (NCEUS), chaired by Arjun Sengupta, to address issues faced by informal sector workers, including gig workers. The commission's recommendations, which included social security measures for workers, were never fully implemented during the UPA's tenure, leaving a gap in the party's legacy that Rahul's social media posts inadvertently exposed.

## The Importance of Statesmanship Which Lacks in Rahul Gandhi

Rahul Gandhi's position as the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) carries statutory significance, established during Morarji Desai's regime. However, his recent comments, particularly his remark about reservations for Miss India, drew sharp criticism from the BJP, with Minister Kiren Rijiju dismissing the statement as "juvenile."

Rahul's informal style, reminiscent of Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, contrasts with the gravitas expected of a national leader. As he continues to challenge the Modi government, Rahul Gandhi would do well to embody the legacy of his forebears—Feroze Gandhi's parliamentary acumen and the political leadership of Nehru, Indira, and Rajiv Gandhi. With the opposition revitalized, the coming months will reveal whether Rahul's strategy can translate into electoral success or if it will be dismissed as mere rhetoric.







## WhatsApp to Introduce Custom Chat Filters for Enhanced Organization

WhatsApp is set to roll out a new feature allowing users to filter chats using custom lists. According to a recent report by WABetaInfo, this upcoming functionality aims to simplify communication with key contacts and groups.

The new feature will enable users to create personalized lists, similar to the Lists feature on X (formerly Twitter). These custom filters will appear at the top of the app, alongside the existing filters for Unread, Favourites, and Groups. This addition is expected to help users better manage their conversations and prioritize important chats.

Currently, WhatsApp offers only three chat filters: Unread, Favourites, and Groups. The introduction of custom chat filters will provide greater flexibility and organization for users, allowing them to



tailor their chat experience according to their preferences.

The update is anticipated to enhance user experience by streamlining how conversations are accessed and managed, making it easier to keep track of important messages and interactions.

## Zomato Agent Braves Floods to Deliver Food, Goes Viral on Social Media

A video showing a Zomato delivery agent navigating through knee-deep water during heavy rains in Ahmedabad has captured widespread attention on social media. The clip, which has gone viral on X (formerly Twitter), depicts the agent's remarkable dedication as he delivers food despite the challenging conditions. The footage highlights the agent wading through flooded streets, reflecting his commitment to fulfilling his duties even in adverse weather.



Zomato delivering in Ahmedabad amidst extremely heavy rains!!

The video has garnered significant praise from social media users, who have been quick to commend the delivery agent's perseverance. Many users have taken to Twitter to call on Zomato's CEO, Deepinder Goyal, to recognize and reward the agent for his exceptional service. The accompanying text of the video reads, "#ZO-

The incident has sparked a broader discussion about the dedication of delivery personnel and the challenges they face during extreme weather conditions. It also underscores the impact of social media in highlighting and celebrating the hard work of individuals who go above and beyond in their roles.

## Woman Eats 'Suitcase Cake' at Airport, Sparks Hilarious Reactions



If you've been scrolling through social media lately, you might have come across hyper-realistic cake videos that trick viewers into thinking ordinary objects are actually cakes. In one viral instance, a woman took this trend to a new level by taking a bite out of a suitcase cake at an airport, and the reactions have been priceless.

In a clip posted on Instagram, the woman is seen strolling through the airport with what appears to be a suitcase. The twist? She starts eating her luggage. As she takes bites out of the cake disguised as a suitcase, other passengers react with shock and disbelief. While some catch on to the prank and laugh, others are visibly stunned by the bizarre sight.

The Portuguese text accompanying the post translates to, "The day I ate a CAKE bag and looked at the reactions!!" The video has racked up over 27 million

views, generating a wave of amused and surprised comments. One user joked, "I would have stopped and helped her eat," while another expressed curiosity about the cake-making process, saying, "Show me the video of how you make the cake, I'm dying of curiosity."

Some comments pointed out specific reactions from bystanders, with one noting, "The sisters were in panic." Others expressed their admiration for the creative prank, with one fan saying, "I love these cake videos and you too much." The playful nature of the video led to humorous remarks, such as, "I hope that the broom to clean this dirt is not made of cake either," and, "My dream is to find you with a bag like that."

Overall, the video highlights how creative cake art can capture people's imaginations and provoke amusing reactions. What do you think of this trend?

## User Blames Google Maps for Missing Bengaluru to Mumbai Flight, Post Goes Viral

A recent post on X (formerly Twitter) has gone viral, amassing over 243,000 views, after user Ashish Kacholia blamed Google Maps for missing his flight from Bengaluru to Mumbai. In his post, Kacholia recounted how the app's inaccurate travel time estimate caused him to miss his flight. He explained that he needed to travel from Bengaluru's HSR Layout to Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), a distance exceeding 50 kilometers. Google Maps had predicted a travel time of 1 hour and 45 minutes, but the journey took him three hours instead.



Kacholia expressed frustration with the app's failure to provide accurate travel estimates, highlighting the inconvenience it caused. He also took the opportunity to thank the Mumbai administration (@mybmc) for their efforts in improving traffic management in

the city, contrasting it with his experience in Bengaluru. "Yesterday missed my flight from Bengaluru to Mumbai because journey took 3 hours instead of 1.45 as shown by Google maps. Deeply grateful to Mumbai administration @mybmc for investing in infrastructure to keep traffic moving in maxi-

mum city. Life is relative," Kacholia wrote in his post. The incident underscores ongoing issues with navigation apps and their impact on travel plans, reflecting broader concerns about the reliability of digital tools in critical situations.

## Tamil Nadu Signs AI Deal with Google, Launches 'Tamil Nadu AI Labs'

The Tamil Nadu government has forged a significant partnership with Google to advance artificial intelligence (AI) initiatives within the state, according to a recent announcement. The agreement, formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed at Google's Mountain View office in the US, is part of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin's visit to the country. Alongside the deal with Google, the state administration has secured additional agreements with Nokia, PayPal, and Infinix, which will lead to the establishment of new centers in Chennai, Madurai, and Coimbatore.



small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and rural areas. networks marketplace.

Dr. TRB Rajaa, Tamil Nadu's Minister for Industries, revealed the details on social media, emphasizing that the new 'Tamil Nadu AI Labs' facility will be set up in Chennai. Google will collaborate with Guidance, the state's nodal investment agency, to integrate AI technology across startups, micro,

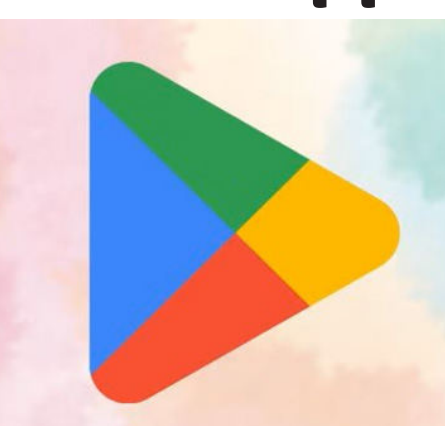
The partnership aims to equip 2 million young people with AI skills through the state's Naan Mudhalvan upskilling platform. Additionally, the collaboration will offer regional startups access to mentorship and networking opportunities, while MSMEs can leverage Google Cloud's AI tools via an open

Google Cloud Platform Head Amit Zavery highlighted the shared goal of fostering inclusive growth and technological advancement. He expressed enthusiasm about developing a robust AI ecosystem in Tamil Nadu that drives innovation, creates new opportunities, and empowers individuals with crucial digital skills.

## Google Play Store Now Supports Simultaneous App Updates

The Google Play Store, recently under global scrutiny for its billing policies, continues to enhance user experience with new features. Following its previous update allowing the installation of two apps at once, Google is now introducing a feature for updating multiple apps simultaneously.

This new functionality aims to streamline the app management process by enabling users to update several apps in parallel. Previously, users could only update apps one by one, which could be time-consuming, especially for



those with numerous applications installed.

With this update, the Play Store

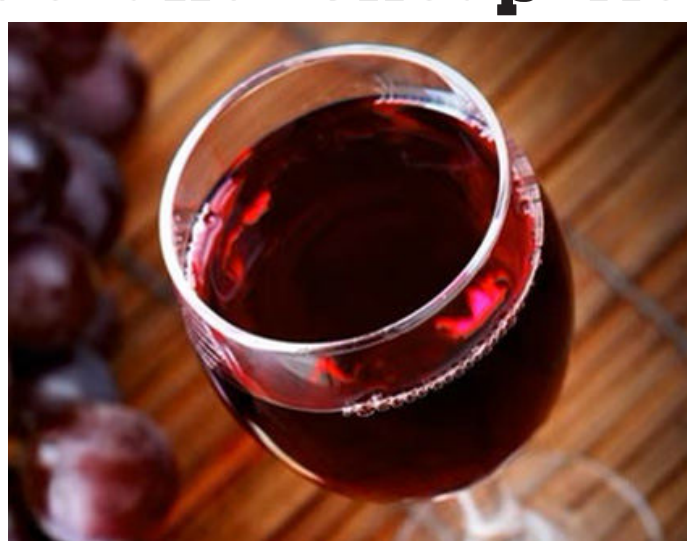
will allow users to select multiple apps for updating, thus reducing wait times and improving efficiency. This enhancement reflects Google's ongoing efforts to refine its app ecosystem despite external challenges and regulatory pressures.

The update is part of Google's broader strategy to improve user convenience and satisfaction on its platform, ensuring that users can manage their apps more effectively and keep them up-to-date with the latest features and security patches.

## Gatorwine The Viral Mix of Gatorade and Cheap Red Wine

A new internet trend, Gatorwine, is making waves on social media. This unusual drink combines equal parts Gatorade, specifically the Glacier Freeze flavor, with inexpensive red wine priced under \$12.

The trend gained traction after Andrew Rea, the popular YouTuber behind 'Binging with Babish', featured Gatorwine in a recent tasting video. Initially skeptical, Rea found the mix surprisingly enjoyable. He humorously remarked, "This is exactly what I need right now — some electrolytes, some



booze," and described the taste as unique and unconventional. Although he admitted it wasn't as delightful as Sangria, he rated it a six out of ten, saying, "In a very disgusting, perverse way, I like it."

Gatorwine's distinctive flavor profile has intrigued many, with some finding it a refreshing twist on traditional cocktails. The fruity notes from the Gatorade give it a resemblance to Sangria, making it a curious and surprisingly pleasant option for adventurous drinkers.





## Suryakumar Yadav Injured Ahead of India's Test Series Against Bangladesh

India is set to face Bangladesh in a two-match Test series starting September 19 in Chennai. This series will mark India's return to Test cricket after a hiatus of over six months, following their five-Test series against England earlier this year. The team is also returning to action after a month-long break since their last white-ball series against Sri Lanka.

However, the build-up to the series has been marred by injury concerns. Explosive T20I batter Suryakumar Yadav, who has played just one Test match in his career, suffered a hand injury during the ongoing Buchi Babu tournament while fielding against Tamil Nadu in Coimbatore. Yadav had been eyeing a possible return to Test cricket and was also named in the squad for the upcoming Duleep Trophy starting September 5.

As reported by ESPN Cricinfo, there is currently no clarity on Yadav's participation in the Duleep Trophy or the Test series against Bangladesh. His injury could significantly impact India's plans for the series, which is eagerly anticipated.

Earlier, Yadav had expressed his determination to secure a place in the Indian Test team. He made his Test debut in February 2023 against Australia and had hoped to establish himself further in the longest format



of the game. Despite his injury setback, Yadav remains committed to earning his spot and acknowledges the efforts of other players who have seized opportunities in his absence.

The Test series against Bangladesh will be crucial for India as they look to build momentum and reinforce their position in the longest format of the game.

## Samit Dravid Joins India U-19 Squad for Series Against Australia U-19



Samit Dravid, the 18-year-old son of former Indian captain and head coach Rahul Dravid, has been named in the India U-19 squad for their upcoming series against Australia U-19. The series will consist of three one-day internationals and two four-day matches. The one-day games will be held in Puducherry, while the four-day matches are scheduled to take place in Chennai.

Samit, an all-rounder, has recently been in the spotlight for his impressive performance in the Maharaja T20 KSCA tournament. Representing the Mysore Warriors, he has scored a total of 82 runs

in seven innings, with a highest score of 33 against the Gulbarga Mystics. His standout performance, including a remarkable six in the tournament, has drawn attention and highlighted his burgeoning talent.

His selection for the India U-19 squad is a significant milestone in his young career and reflects his potential as a promising cricketer. This opportunity to play against Australia U-19 is expected to be a valuable experience for him, providing a platform to further showcase his skills and gain exposure at a higher level of competitive cricket.

## Djokovic Faces Early US Open Exit, Describes Performance as Worst Ever



Defending champion Novak Djokovic has suffered his earliest exit at the US Open in 18 years, falling to 28th-seeded Alexei Popyrin 6-4, 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 in the third round. This defeat, marked by Djokovic's uncharacteristic 14 double faults and 49 unforced errors, prevents him from securing a record 25th Grand Slam title and leaves him stranded at 24.

The 37-year-old Serbian admitted to playing "some of my worst tennis ever" and acknowledged the physical and mental toll of his recent Olympic gold victory in Paris. Djokovic revealed that his performance in New York was affected by fatigue and the residual effects of his Olympic triumph. Despite not having any

physical issues, he felt "out of gas" and struggled to find his best form.

This year's setbacks for Djokovic include losses to Jannik Sinner at the Australian Open, Carlos Alcaraz at the French Open, and Alcaraz again in the Wimbledon final. His earlier knee surgery also forced him to withdraw from the French Open. As a result, 2024 will end without a Grand Slam victory for Djokovic, a first since 2017.

The US Open has been further dampened by Carlos Alcaraz's second-round exit earlier in the week. Popyrin, buoyed by recent success including a Masters title in Montreal, capitalized on Djokovic's off day, breaking crucial points and taking control of the match.

Djokovic's only consolation this year is his Olympic gold, which he has described as his "greatest achievement." He remains hopeful for a comeback, potentially becoming the oldest male Grand Slam champion if he secures the Australian Open in January 2025.

## Ahmed Shehzad Slams PCB, Withdraws from Domestic Cricket Champions Cup

Pakistan batter Ahmed Shehzad has announced his decision to withdraw from the Domestic Cricket Champions Cup, criticizing the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for "favouritism, false promises, and injustice." The 32-year-old expressed his dissatisfaction with the board's handling of domestic players and their issues.

In a statement posted on X (formerly Twitter), Shehzad explained his decision, saying, "With a heavy heart, I've decided not to play in the Domestic Cricket Champions Cup. The PCB's favouritism, false promises, and injustice towards domestic players are unacceptable."

Shehzad's comments highlight ongoing frustrations within Pakistani domestic cricket, where players have often voiced concerns about



uneven treatment and lack of opportunities. His withdrawal from the tournament reflects a broader dissatisfaction among

players regarding the PCB's management and support for domestic cricket.

## NorthEast United Wins First Trophy in Dramatic Penalty Shootout

NorthEast United FC achieved a historic victory by securing their first-ever trophy in club history with a dramatic win over Mohun Bagan Super Giant in a penalty shootout. The match, which took place under high-stakes conditions, saw NorthEast United come from behind to clinch the title.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant initially dominated the game, leading 2-0 at half-time thanks to goals from Jason Cummings and Sahal Abdul Samad. Despite the early setback, NorthEast United mounted a remarkable comeback. The turning point came with two exceptional individual performances: Alaeddine Ajarai and Guillermo Fernandez scored stunning goals, leveling the match and sending it into extra time.

The intense contest culminated in a penalty shootout, where NorthEast United's goalkeeper Gurmeet Singh played a crucial role. Singh made key saves against Liston Colaco and Mohun Bagan captain Subhasish Bose, which proved decisive. Mohun Bagan, who had previously won back-to-back penalty shootouts, found themselves unable to secure a third consecutive win from the spot.

NorthEast United's resilience and tactical prowess throughout the match were pivotal in their triumph. Their ability to recover from a two-goal deficit and excel in the penalty shootout showcased their determination and skill. The victory not only marks a significant achievement for the club but also adds a memorable chapter to their history.







## Shruti Haasan Joins Rajinikanth's Coolie Cast



The excitement surrounding the film \*Coolie\* continues to build as the makers unveil new cast additions. Rajinikanth is set to star in the lead role, with recent announcements adding to the film's star-studded lineup. Soubin Shahir's involvement was revealed earlier this week, and on Nagarjuna's 69th birthday, his participation in the project was also confirmed.

The latest addition is Shruti Haasan, who has been cast in the role of Preethi. Director Lokesh Kanagaraj shared a new poster featuring Haasan on X (formerly Twitter), expressing his enthusiasm: "Kicked to have Shruti Haasan joining the cast of Coolie as Preethi. Welcome on board." The film's growing ensemble promises to bring significant attention and anticipation as production progresses.

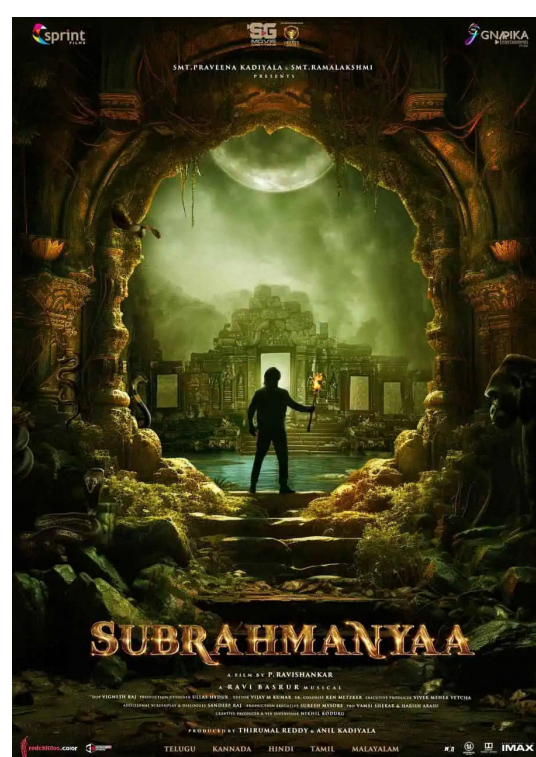
## Saif Ali Khan Returns to Race Series with Race 4 After Being Replaced in Race 3

Saif Ali Khan, whose role in the Race film series is a fan favorite, is set to return for Race 4. The actor first captured audiences with his performance in Race (2008), directed by Abbas-Mustan, alongside Bipasha Basu, Akshaye Khanna, Anil Kapoor, and Katrina Kaif. The film was a high-octane neo-noir action crime thriller, filled with unexpected twists.

In 2013, Saif reprised his role in Race 2, which featured Deepika Padukone and John Abraham, maintaining the series' gripping appeal. However, fans were disheartened when Saif was replaced by Salman Khan in Race 3 (2018), directed by Remo D'Souza.



Now, the excitement is building as Saif Ali Khan is set to return to the series with Race 4, bringing back his iconic role and much-loved persona. This development marks a highly anticipated comeback for the actor in the franchise that helped define his action-hero image.



## Advay in Debut Film Subrahmanya Pre-Look Poster Revealed

Renowned actor and dubbing artist P Ravi Shankar is stepping into the director's role for the second time with his new film \*Subrahmanya\*, which marks the debut of his son, Advay. The film's pre-look poster, recently unveiled, hints at an adventurous and imaginative story. It depicts Advay holding a torch as he embarks on a journey into a fantastical world, with elements such as a large moon, serpents, and swirling clouds contributing to the film's enigmatic atmosphere.

Produced by Thirumal Reddy and Anil Kadiyala under SG Movie Creations, \*Subrahmanya\* is a socio-fantasy adventure featuring a unique concept. The film, crafted on a grand scale with a high budget, promises top-notch CGI effects.

## "Joker: Folie à Deux" to Premiere Early in India

Movie enthusiasts, get ready for a whirlwind of chaos and madness as \*Joker: Folie à Deux\* makes its way to theaters. The highly anticipated sequel to the 2019 Oscar-nominated \*Joker\* is set to release globally on October 4. However, Indian audiences have a special treat—the film will premiere two days earlier on October 2.

Directed by Todd Phillips, \*Joker: Folie à Deux\* stars Joaquin Phoenix reprising his role as the iconic Joker. Joining him is Lady Gaga as Harley Quinn, adding a new layer of intrigue and madness to the film. The sequel continues the dark, psychological journey of the character first introduced in the original film.

On Saturday, Warner Bros unveiled new posters for \*Joker: Folie à Deux\* on Instagram, showcasing the film's lead cast. The images highlight Joaquin Phoenix's painted face, capturing the essence of his portrayal. Lady Gaga's portrayal of Harley Quinn is equally striking, with her grim expression and smudged black ink under her eyes adding to the film's dark tone. The caption on the poster reads, "The spotlight is theirs to take. Joker: Folie à Deux - only in theaters and IMAX, October 4." Prepare yourself for an intense cinematic experience as Arthur Fleck returns to theaters, bringing his unique brand of madness to the big screen.



## Mohanlal Supports Release of Hema Committee Report Amid Mollywood Scandal

Actor Mohanlal has publicly praised the government for releasing the Justice Hema Committee report, which addresses allegations of sexual harassment within the Malayalam film industry. His remarks come amid a wave of accusations against prominent figures in Mollywood, including veteran actor Siddique and filmmaker Ranjith Balakrishnan.

In a statement, Mohanlal welcomed the report, stating, "We welcome the Hema Committee report. It was the right decision by the government to release it. AMMA cannot answer all the questions; these should be addressed by everyone involved. This is a very hardworking industry with many people, but not everyone should be blamed. Those responsible will face consequences as investigations continue."

The 235-page report, which has been published after redacting the names of witnesses and the accused, reveals that the Malayalam film industry is dominated by 10-15 male producers, directors, and actors.

Mohanlal clarified that he is not part of any such power group and claimed he is unaware of its existence. He stressed that Malayalam cinema is a large industry with thousands of workers, and that the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA) cannot address every issue arising within it.

This is Mohanlal's first public statement since the release of the report. He emphasized that any wrongdoing should be punished if there is evidence against those involved. The 64-year-old actor recently resigned from his position at AMMA amid criticism for not ensuring justice for victims of sexual misconduct. Following his resignation, other members of the executive committee also stepped down as the #MeToo movement gained momentum in the state.

AMMA released a statement indicating that the top decision-making body had dissolved itself "in light of the allegations made by some actors against members of the committee."

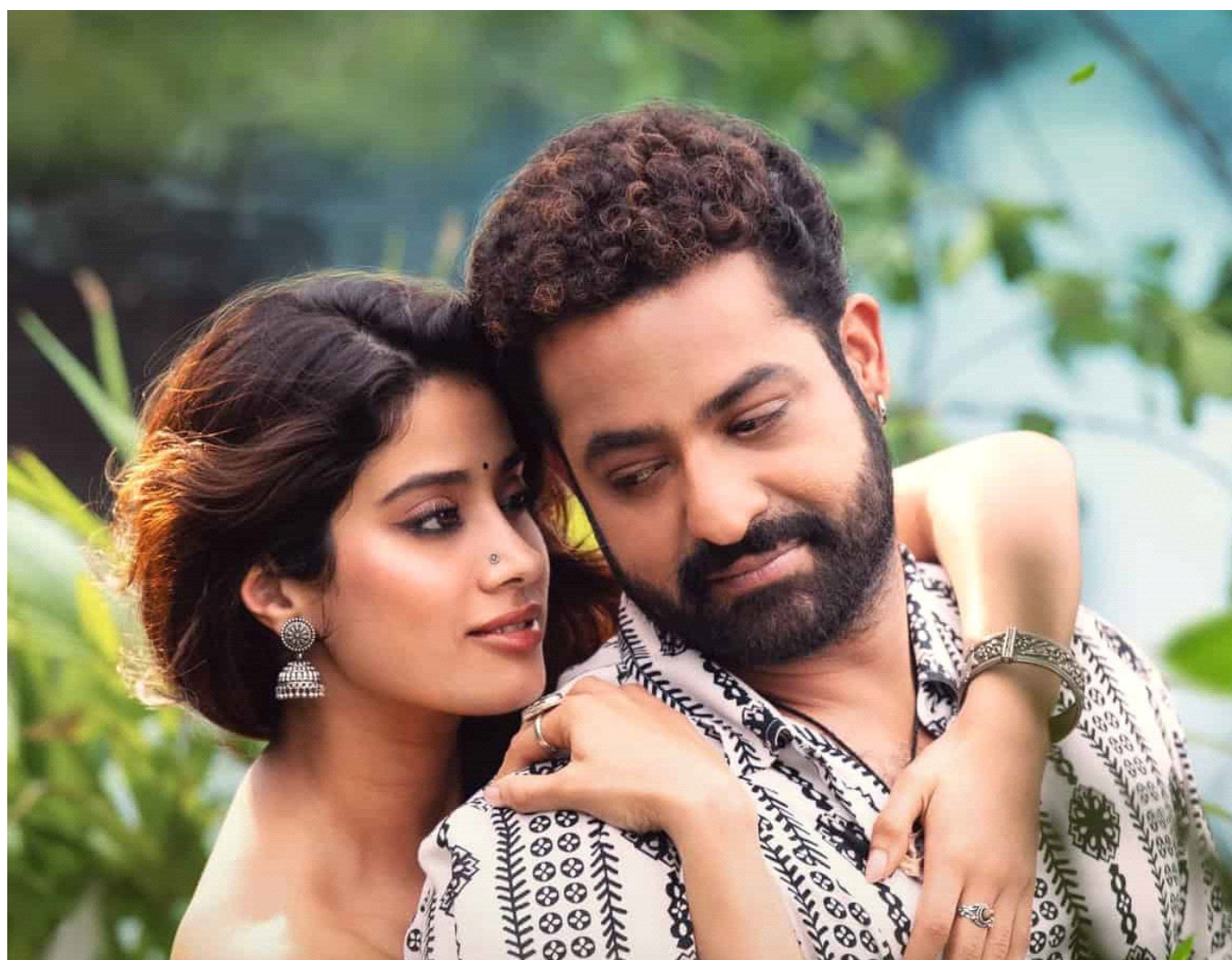
## Samantha Ruth Prabhu Calls for Sexual Harassment Report in Telugu Film Industry

Today, Samantha Ruth Prabhu publicly praised the Hema Committee report, which has spurred several actors from Kerala to share their experiences of abuse in the industry. She also urged the Telangana government to release a similar report on sexual harassment within the Telugu film industry, emphasizing that such a report could help in creating policies and ensuring a safer working environment for women.

In an Instagram story, Samantha commended the WCC's continuous efforts in Kerala, stating, "We, the women of the Telugu film industry, welcome the Hema Committee report and applaud the persistent efforts of the WCC in Kerala, which has paved the way to this important moment."

She further urged the Telangana government to publish the findings of the sub-committee report on sexual harassment, highlighting its potential to guide policy-making and improve safety for women in Tollywood. "We hereby urge the Telangana government to make public the submitted report, which could be instrumental in framing government and industry policies for a safer working environment in the Telugu Film Industry," she added.

The comprehensive 235-page report by the Justice Hema Committee, completed in 2019, was held back from public release due to ongoing legal issues. The report indicates that the Malayalam film industry is dominated by a small group of male producers, directors, and actors.



## Devara: Part 1 Advance Bookings Surge with \$100,000 in Sales

Bollywood fans are eagerly anticipating the release of \*Devara: Part 1\*, featuring Jr. NTR, set for September 27. Directed by Koratala Siva, this film also marks the Telugu debut of Bollywood star Janhvi Kapoor, alongside Saif Ali Khan. With the release date approaching, excitement is high, and advance ticket bookings have just begun.

In the U.S., the response has been remarkable. Within hours of opening, \*Devara\* sold nearly 3,000 tickets, amassing \$100,000 in sales. Several shows are already sold out, and many more are quickly filling up. This strong early performance indicates that demand will likely increase as full bookings become available.