

Weather Forecast: HYDERABAD (Mostly Sunny, H 24°C, L 22°C), VIJAYAWADA (Mostly Sunny, H 29°C, L 24°C), TIRUPATHI (Mostly Sunny, 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.

INSIDE..

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800 MW Power Plant at Ramagundam, Rural Technology Center at Godavarikhani

TPN, Telangana: Deputy Chief Minister of Telangana, Bhatti Vikramarka, announced the construction of an 800 MW power project at the site of the decommissioned 62.5 MW B Powerhouse in Ramagundam.



During his visit to Ramagundam on Saturday, accompanied by Ministers Sridhar Babu and Ponnamp Prabhakar, Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka inspected the B Powerhouse.

along with Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka and Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar, laid the foundation stone for several development works in the area, totaling Rs. 8,000 crores.

Furthermore, Sridhar Babu addressed concerns about the ongoing loan waiver process for farmers, assuring them that all eligible farmers would receive their loan waivers.

Addressing the public, the Deputy CM highlighted the historical significance of the B Powerhouse, which was established 50 years ago and played a crucial role in the region's development.

Sridhar Babu expressed his satisfaction at the foundation of a skill training center, which aims to benefit the youth of the region. He noted that the rural technology center, which local MLA Raj Thakur has strongly supported, will be developed to train 1,000 individuals by next year.

These initiatives are expected to significantly boost the local economy, providing both energy and employment opportunities for the people of Ramagundam and Godavarikhani.

In addition to the power project, IT Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu announced the establishment of a rural technology center in Godavarikhani. He,

Heavy Rains Lash Telugu States as Low Pressure Strengthens in Bay of Bengal



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.

The Hyderabad Meteorological Center has echoed the warnings, stating that heavy to very heavy rains are expected in the state on Saturday and Sunday due to the intensified low-pressure system.

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

Harish Rao and Sabitha Slam Government Over Conditions in Gurukul Schools

TPN, Telangana: Former Ministers T. Harish Rao and Sabitha Indra Reddy have strongly criticized the Telangana government for its handling of Gurukul schools, citing severe issues that have led to student protests and extreme distress.

Harish Rao expressed outrage over reports that students in these residential schools have been driven to the brink of suicide due to the harsh conditions. He accused the Chief Minister of neglecting the welfare of students, focusing more on criticizing the opposition than addressing critical governance issues.

During his visit, Harish Rao highlighted that students have been provided with only one set of uniforms, with the promised second set still undelivered. He also pointed out the lack of basic educational supplies, such as books.

Harish Rao revealed that over 500 students have been hospitalized, and 38 deaths have been reported due to snake bites and rat infestations in hostels. He called for an urgent overhaul of the school administration, including new teachers and better facilities.



Sabitha Indra Reddy echoed these concerns, accusing the government of completely neglecting Gurukul schools. She criticized the Education Department for ignoring repeated pleas for improvement and highlighted the financial struggles of minority Gurukul schools.

HYDRA Commissioner Ranganath Refutes News About Notices to YS Jagan 2nd page



CS Shanti Kumari Directs Precautions Amid Heavy Rainfall Warnings in Telangana

TPN, Telangana: With the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting heavy rainfall in Telangana over the next two days, Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari has issued urgent directives to district collectors across the state. During a teleconference, she emphasized the need for comprehensive preparedness, especially in border areas expected to be heavily impacted.

The Chief Secretary warned of potential cloudbursts and instructed the establishment of control rooms in each district, as well as within the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) and the State Secretariat. Special officers will oversee critical areas, particularly near rivers that may overflow due to excessive rainfall.

To safeguard lives and property, district collectors were urged to develop advance evacuation plans and



establish resettlement camps where necessary. The possibility of declaring school holidays in severely affected districts was also discussed.

Shanti Kumari stressed the importance of public communication through media to disseminate updates on weather conditions and safety

measures. She also directed measures to prevent water contamination in rural areas by ensuring the regular use of bleaching powder and chlorination to curb waterborne diseases.

Medical teams have been put on high alert, with essential medicines stockpiled at primary health centers. The Chief Secretary assured that National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams are ready for deployment if needed, particularly in districts along the Godavari and Krishna rivers.

In Greater Hyderabad, Monsoon Emergency Teams have been activated, with a focus on preventing accidents caused by open manholes. Coordination among police, irrigation, disaster management, and other departments was emphasized to ensure a unified emergency response.

Landslide Warning Issued in Nagarkurnool Amid Heavy Rains

TPN, Nagarkurnool: Authorities have issued a landslide warning in Nagarkurnool district following continuous heavy rainfall since August 30. The warning particularly concerns the area near the Uma Maheswara temple, where floodwaters have begun cascading over the temple premises, raising significant safety concerns for locals and visitors.

The region, along with several parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, is experiencing flood-like conditions due to the relentless downpour. Streams and rivers across these states have been overflowing, leading to dangerous situations in many areas. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted that the heavy rainfall will continue across Telangana until September 3, exacerbating the risk of floods and landslides.

In Shadnagar constituency of Rangareddy district, the situation is equally dire. The Yenkiryal stream near Kondurg and Nawabpet villages has overflowed due to the heavy rains, washing away the road connecting the two villages. Local authorities have warned villagers to remain vigilant and avoid approaching the flooded stream to prevent accidents.

Residents in these affected regions are urged to stay indoors, monitor local weather updates, and adhere to safety instructions issued by the authorities as the heavy rains persist. Emergency teams are on high alert to respond to any incidents, and efforts are underway to mitigate the impact of the severe weather.



Criminal Cases Filed Against Six Officials for Illegal Construction Permissions in Ponds

TPN, Hyderabad: In a significant move to crack down on illegal constructions, the Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Monitoring and Protection Agency (HYDRA) has filed complaints against six government officials who allegedly granted unauthorized permissions for buildings within Full Tank Level (FTL) areas of local ponds.

Cyberabad Commissioner of Police (CP) Avinash has registered criminal cases against the six officers in the Economic Offenses Wing (EOW) of Cyberabad, following HYDRA's complaint. The cases involve permissions granted for construction projects that violated regulations designed to protect water bodies.

The officials named in the criminal cases include:

1. Ramakrishna- Nizampet Municipal Commissioner
2. Sudhansh- Deputy Commissioner of Chandanagar GHMC
3. Pool Singh- MRO of Bachupally
4. Srinivasulu- Assistant Director of Land Records, Medchal-Malkajgiri
5. Sudhir Kumar- Assistant Planning Officer, HMDA
6. Rajkumar- City Planner, HMDA

These officers are accused of granting construction permissions within the FTL boundaries of ponds, which is prohibited under environmental and land-use regulations. The actions taken against these officials are part

of a broader effort by HYDRA to address and prevent illegal encroachments that threaten the ecological balance of Hyderabad's water bodies.



Telangana Board Extends Deadline for Intermediate Admissions to September 7

TPN, Telangana: The Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TSBIE) has extended the deadline for first-year intermediate admissions to Wednesday, September 7, 2024. This extension aims to ensure that no student misses the opportunity to continue their education due to a late registration.

In a notification sent to the principals of all affiliated colleges and educational institutions, the board emphasized the importance of accommodating students who might have missed the initial deadline. Students can apply for

admissions through the official websites: acadtgbie.cgg.gov.in and tgbie.cgg.gov.in.

Earlier this year, the board reported a pass percentage of 60.01% among first-year students and 64.19% for second-year students in the intermediate exams conducted in 2024. The extension of the admission deadline reflects TSBIE's commitment to ensuring that all eligible students have the opportunity to enroll and pursue their studies.

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.

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 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 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.

Govt Appeals Single Judge's Order on Hyderabad Pharma City Land Acquisition

TPN, Telangana: The Telangana government has filed an appeal with the Telangana High Court, contesting a single judge's ruling that ordered the state to restart the land acquisition process for the proposed Hyderabad Pharma City in Ibrahimpatnam. The judge's decision was based on the government's failure to determine appropriate compensation for farmers since 2017, leading to the annulment of previous acquisition notifications and mandating a fresh start.

Farmers have raised objections to the appeal, arguing that the government did not submit it within the designated timeframe, further complicating the legal battle surrounding the project.

The Hyderabad Pharma City project, which aims to establish a major pharmaceutical industrial park near Mucherla, has been mired in controversy due to strong opposition from local farmers and numerous legal challenges. The project involves acquiring approximately 19,333 acres of land in the Ranga Reddy district, impacting farmers from around 20 villages.

The farmers' primary grievance revolves around compensation, with claims that the rates offered by the government are significantly lower than the prevailing market values. Allegations of procedural irregularities have also surfaced, with the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TSIIC) accused of violating Supreme Court rulings on compensation for assigned lands and lacking transparency in the acquisition process.

The legal challenges continue to escalate, with the Telangana High Court intervening multiple times. In a recent ruling, the court nullified a notification for acquiring land in Yacharam mandal, ordering the government to restart the acquisition process, further intensifying the dispute. The state government's appeal against this ruling adds another layer of complexity to the ongoing conflict over the Hyderabad Pharma City project.



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Harish Rao Accuses Congress Government of Shelving Free Electricity Scheme

TPN, **Telangana:** Senior BRS leader and former Finance Minister T Harish Rao has leveled serious allegations against the Congress-led Telangana government, accusing it of abandoning the promised 200 units of free electricity under the Gruha Jyothi scheme. Citing a media report, Rao claimed that the government is collecting pending electricity bills from the poor under the guise of "non-generation of zero bills," effectively shelving the scheme that was supposed to benefit low-income households.

Rao questioned the implementation of the six guarantees and 13 promises outlined in the Congress manifesto, suggesting that none of these have been fully realized so far. He criticized the government for its alleged failure to deliver on these key electoral promises.

In a separate issue, Harish Rao also accused the Congress government of canceling 34,511 projects in Telangana under the Special Development Fund (SDF), worth Rs 10,000 crore. He claimed that these cancellations are part of a broad-



conspiracy by the Congress to obstruct the state's development, particularly in rural and urban infrastructure, which

he says has resulted in job losses and economic stagnation.

Rao specifically targeted Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accusing him of prioritizing the interests of the Congress party over the development needs of Telangana. He argued that the government's actions are indicative of an "anti-development agenda" that is degrading the state and stalling crucial infrastructure projects.

Further criticizing the allocation of SDF funds, Rao alleged that the KCR government had canceled funds allocated to constituencies in the previous financial year but later approved Rs 10 crore each for constituencies with Congress MLAs in March. He accused the Congress of partisanship, claiming that the funds were deliberately withheld from constituencies where the Congress lost in the elections.

Rao's statements reflect growing tensions between the BRS and Congress as they continue to clash over governance and development in Telangana.

Political Parties Demand Reforms and Clear Guidelines from State Election Commissioner

TPN, **Telangana:** State Election Commissioner Partha Saradhi held a crucial meeting with representatives from various political parties on August 30 at the CPM office in Nandyal. The discussions centered on key electoral issues and the preparations needed for the upcoming local body elections in Telangana.

CPM Leader Narasimha Rao voiced strong concerns about the lack of clarity regarding BC (Backward Classes) reservations and caste enumeration. He highlighted that there had been no clear information from the government on reservations, which are under the purview of state authorities. Rao underscored that changes to caste enumeration would necessitate a parliamentary amendment, urging the state government to apply pressure on the central government to facilitate this process. He noted that proper procedures need to be followed to ensure fairness in the reservation system.

BRS Leaders Soma Bharat and Doodimetla Balraju also raised pressing issues, arguing that village panchayat elections should be postponed until BC caste enumeration is completed. They accused the Congress government of failing to address BC reservations adequately, which they claimed is a significant injustice to the BC community. Balraju criticized the government's handling of BC reservations, suggesting that the delay in addressing these concerns would result in unfair treatment of BC communities.

Former BJP MLA Ramachandra Reddy emphasized that the implementation of BC reservations should be a prerequisite for holding village panchayat elections. He also called for the immediate release of funds for village panchayats to ensure that the elections can be conducted smoothly and efficiently. Former CPI MLA Palla Venkata Reddy echoed these sentiments, bringing up issues from previous local body elections. He noted that candidates who lost in panchayat elections often won in municipal polls, indicating flaws in the current electoral process. Reddy urged for accurate ward delimitation and suggested that elections should only be held after the completion of BC caste enumeration to ensure fairness.

TPCC Vice President Niranjan Reddy reiterated the Congress party's commitment to implementing 42% reservations as promised. He criticized the previous government for not releasing data from comprehensive family surveys and stressed that caste enumeration is not solely the responsibility of the government but requires cooperation from all political parties. Reddy emphasized that without proper caste enumeration, the reservation system would remain flawed and ineffective.

Aam Aadmi Party Representative Hayat announced that their party would participate in the upcoming village panchayat elections and called for a transparent and fair electoral process, similar to the governance model in Delhi under Arvind Kejriwal. Hayat's comments highlighted the need for equitable and efficient election practices to ensure that all parties can compete on a level playing field.

During the meeting, the Election Commissioner reiterated the importance of aligning the electoral process with government decisions and ensuring that each public representative has only one vote. He stressed the need for a thorough and methodical voter registration process, which should be conducted on a ward-by-ward basis to avoid discrepancies.

KTR Condemns Mahbubnagar Demolitions Ordered by Revanth Government

TPN, **Telangana:** K T Rama Rao, the working president of Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), has strongly condemned the recent demolition of 75 houses in Mahbubnagar, carried out under the orders of the Revanth Reddy-led Telangana government. Taking to the social media platform X, Rama Rao criticized the government's decision to bulldoze homes belonging to poor families and individuals with disabilities at 3 AM, leaving many residents homeless.



Rama Rao shared images of the displaced families, highlighting the devastating impact of the government's actions. He expressed deep concern over the forced eviction of around 25 different-

abled persons who were among those removed from their homes as bulldozers razed the colony.

prioritize human dignity and social responsibility.

"These images starkly remind us of the consequences when a mindless regime believes bulldozers are a solution," Rama Rao stated in his post. He called for a more compassionate and thoughtful approach to governance, particularly when dealing with vulnerable communities whose lives and homes are at stake.

Rama Rao's criticism reflects growing concerns over the use of force in addressing issues related to housing and urban development, especially when it impacts marginalized groups. His remarks have sparked a broader discussion on the need for policies that

KA Paul Files PIL Against Defected MLAs in Telangana High Court

TPN, **Telangana:** On August 30, 2024, KA Paul, an evangelist and president of the Praja Shanthi Party, filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the Telangana High Court. The petition demands legal action against MLAs who have defected from the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) to the Congress party following the latter's rise to power in 2023.

The PIL, presented before a bench led by Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice J. Sreenivas Rao, raises concerns about the legality and ethics surrounding the defections. KA Paul contends that his petition addresses unique issues not covered by previous cases involving similar allegations.

During the court proceedings, the bench questioned the need for a new PIL, noting that there were already pending judgments related to similar defection cases. However, Paul asserted that his petition highlights specific aspects of the defections that warrant judicial scrutiny.

The bench has directed KA Paul to submit an affidavit detailing his claims. They have scheduled the next hearing for the following week to further review the issues presented in the PIL. The outcome of this case could have significant implications for political party dynamics and anti-defection laws in Telangana.

KCR to Unveil Plans to Support Farmers, Says Jagadish Reddy

TPN, **Telangana:** Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) president and Leader of Opposition K Chandrashekhar Rao (KCR) is set to announce a new plan of action aimed at addressing the growing concerns of farmers across Telangana, according to G Jagadish Reddy, BRS MLA and former Minister. Reddy made the announcement on Saturday, emphasizing the political significance of KCR's forthcoming program amid widespread discontent among the farming community.

Jagadish Reddy criticized the Congress-led Telangana government for its failure to implement the promises made to the public, particularly to the farmers. He highlighted that, despite lavish electoral promises, the Congress government had not delivered on any of them, leaving farmers frustrated and seeking support from the BRS leadership.

Reddy specifically pointed out the Congress government's failure to capitalize on the irrigation potential created by the previous BRS administration. Key projects such as Kaleshwaram and Devadula, which had sufficient inflows to support irrigation, have been neglected, with pumping units remaining idle. This neglect has led to significant protests from farmers struggling with inadequate irrigation and power supply since the Congress came to power.

The former Minister warned that if the Con-



gress government continues to neglect the water needs of farmers growing Vanakalam (Kharif) crops, the situation could become even more dire for the upcoming Yasangi (Rabi) season. Reddy cautioned that the Congress leadership could face severe backlash if they fail to address these critical issues.

Jagadish Reddy called on the government to take immediate action to resolve the farmers' concerns and ensure the proper utilization of irrigation projects to support agricultural activities in the state. He underscored the urgency of the situation, as the livelihood of countless farmers depends on timely intervention and effective governance.

Hydra Commissioner Ranganath's Visit to Patan Cheru and Surrounding Areas

TPN Hyderabad : HYDRA Commissioner Ranganath recently conducted a thorough inspection of Patan Cheru and its surrounding areas to address growing concerns over encroachments and illegal constructions. His visit focused on several key sites, including the Saki Cheru pond and the Idula Kunta pond, following numerous complaints from local residents.

During his visit to Saki Cheru in Patan Cheru, Commissioner Ranganath and his team closely examined the pond, which has been the subject of significant encroachment issues. Officials have already identified 18 illegal structures within the pond's Full Tank Level (FTL) area, which covers 135 acres. There are suspicions that encroachment may have extended to several additional acres of the pond. It has been reported that adjacent dams to the pond have been closed, allegedly allowing InCore, a company involved in local development, to construct an apartment complex on the encroached land.

Ranganath specifically inspected these multi-storied apartments built by InCore, which locals have claimed occupy the buffer zone of the Nakka River, which flows locally. The presence of these structures in the buffer zone has raised concerns among residents, leading to calls for immediate action.

In response to these concerns, Ranganath demanded explanations from the authorities regarding these structures and their impact on local water bodies. His visit underscored the need for prompt and effective measures to address encroachments and ensure that regulations are upheld to protect the environment and local resources.

Following his inspection of Patan Cheru, Commissioner Ranganath also visited Madapur Eidulakunta. Here, he addressed complaints from locals about encroachment issues affecting the Idula Kunta pond, located in Khanamet Survey No. 7 within Hi-Tech City. Residents had reported that unauthorized constructions were infringing on the pond's area, further exacerbating the issues of encroachment in the region.

Ranganath's visits and inspections reflect a proactive approach to tackling the ongoing problems of illegal encroachments and construction in sensitive areas. The HYDRA Commissioner's actions highlight the critical need for stringent enforcement of regulations and the protection of water bodies and buffer zones to maintain environmental balance and public interest.

IMD Hyderabad Issues Red Alert for Telangana as Heavy Rains Approach

TPN Hyderabad : The India Meteorological Department, Hyderabad (IMD H), has issued a red alert for Telangana due to heavy rainfall expected from August 31 to September 3. Hyderabad faced heavy rainfall on Saturday morning, prompting a yellow alert for the city.

On September 1, the IMD predicts extremely heavy rains in isolated areas of Telangana, including Karimnagar, Peddapalli, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Mulugu, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Khammam, and Nalgonda. Other districts such as Komaram Bheem Asifabad, Mancheril, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Jagtiyal, Rajanna Sircilla, and Nagarkurnool are also expected to experience significant rainfall. Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy, Medchal Malkajgiri, and Yadadri Bhuvanagiri are likely to receive heavy rains.

For September 2, extremely heavy rains are forecasted for Adilabad, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Kamareddy, Nagarkurnool, and Mahbubnagar. Very heavy rains are expected in Asifabad, Mancheril, Jagtiyal, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, Warangal, and Hanamkonda. Suryapet, Nalgonda, Siddipet, Mahabubabad, and Medak will also see heavy rains accompanied by strong winds. Similar conditions are anticipated across



Telangana on September 3.

During the current Southwest monsoon, Telangana has received an average of 627.6 mm of rainfall, surpassing the normal 558.6 mm by 12 percent. Hyderabad has recorded 511.5 mm of rainfall compared to the normal 450 mm,

reflecting a 14 percent deviation. The highest deviation within Hyderabad was in Nampally, with 592.6 mm of rainfall against the normal 445.5 mm, marking a 33 percent deviation. The IMD's warnings suggest that rainfall amounts could increase further due to the ongoing weather conditions.

Hyderabad Pharma City Land Acquisition Faces New Legal Hurdles

TPN Hyderabad : A recent ruling by a single judge has compelled the Telangana government to restart the land acquisition process for the Hyderabad Pharma City project in Ibrahimpatnam. The judge criticized the government for its failure to properly determine compensation for farmers since 2017, leading to the annulment of previous notifications and necessitating a fresh start.

Farmers have raised objections to the appeal, arguing that the state government failed to submit it within the required timeframe. The acquisition process, which began in 2016 under the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation, has faced substantial opposition and legal challenges from local farmers.

The Pharma City project, designed to establish a large pharmaceutical industrial park near Mucherla, involves acquiring approximately 19,333 acres in Ranga Reddy district. Farmers from about 20 villages have resisted the



acquisition, citing inadequate compensation rates that they claim are significantly below market values.

The acquisition process has been marred by allegations of procedural irregularities and violations of Supreme Court rulings

regarding compensation for assigned lands. The government has been accused of a lack of transparency, with many farmers filing Right to Information (RTI) requests to access details about acquisition notifications, which has impeded their ability to challenge environmental clearances effectively.

Protests have erupted, with farmers staging demonstrations and organizing a "maha padayatra" to express their discontent. They accuse the government of using coercive tactics, including threats and misinformation, to compel them to surrender their land. Environmental concerns and the potential displacement due to industrial operations further fuel their opposition.

Legal interventions by the Telangana High Court have led to the nullification of land acquisition notifications in some areas, intensifying the legal and procedural challenges facing the project.

Food Safety Inspections Reveal Violations at Sainikpuri Eateries

TPN Hyderabad : On Friday, the food safety wing conducted inspections at several eateries in Sainikpuri, uncovering multiple health and safety violations.

At The Joint Al Mandi, inspectors found several issues: the FSSAI license was not displayed, and food handlers lacked medical fitness certificates. The kitchen had broken tiles, unlabelled food items in the refrigerator, and handlers were not wearing gloves. Expired food items, including rice flour, masala powder, and synthetic vinegar, were removed from the premises. Additionally, synthetic food colors suspected of being used in non-vegetarian dishes were also discarded.

Reliance Restaurant and Bar was found to have significant hygiene issues. The establishment lacked pest control records and medical fitness certificates for its staff. Open

and stagnant drains, uncovered dust bins, and windows without insect-proof screens were noted. Synthetic food colors were also found and discarded. Furthermore, food handlers were observed without hair caps or aprons.

Rasa Foods was cited for several infractions, including the absence of a water analysis report for its RO water system, uncovered dust bins, and an unhygienic storeroom. Expired peeled baby corn was discovered and discarded.

The task force team has taken appropriate actions in response to these findings, addressing the violations and ensuring compliance with food safety standards. These inspections aim to improve hygiene and safety standards across local eateries, protecting public health and maintaining regulatory standards.



Heavy Rains : Hyderabad Collector to Declare Two-Day Holiday for Educational Institutions

TPN Hyderabad : In response to heavy rainfall forecasts and a red alert issued by the India Meteorological Department, the Hyderabad Collector has announced a two-day holiday for educational institutions starting tomorrow. The decision comes as the state braces for severe weather conditions, necessitating heightened caution and preparedness across various departments.

Officials have been instructed to remain vigilant and adhere to several critical directives. They are required to stay at their headquarters and avoid leaving without permission. This measure is essential to ensure that all

departments can respond swiftly and efficiently to any emergencies that may arise due to the adverse weather.

Specifically, officials from the water drainage department are prohibited from taking any leave during this period. The focus will be on continuous monitoring of reservoirs and ponds to manage water levels effectively and prevent potential overflow. Regular checks on gates and spillways are mandated to ensure that they are functioning correctly and can handle the increased water volume.

Additionally, inspections of dams, embankments, and canals will be

conducted to identify and address any vulnerabilities. Special attention will be given to areas prone to accidents or known for their susceptibility to flooding. Increased vigilance is also required for ponds affected by the railway infrastructure, ensuring that any issues are addressed promptly.

In case of emergencies, officials are advised to respond rapidly and coordinate with local authorities to manage disasters effectively. This comprehensive approach aims to mitigate the impact of the heavy rains and safeguard both infrastructure and public safety.

Hyderabad Metro to Upgrade Key Stations Along Corridor-1

TPN Hyderabad : Hyderabad Metro Rail Limited (HMRL) is embarking on a major repair and refurbishment project for several key metro stations along Corridor-1. The work will focus on significant repairs and upgrades to footpaths, planter boxes, and drainage systems.

At LB Nagar Metro Station, the project will involve removing and reinstalling existing railings, along with repairing footpaths and planter boxes. Nampally and New Market

Metro Stations will also see similar upgrades, with improvements planned for their footpaths and planter boxes.

According to the tender document, Miyapur Metro Station will receive repairs to its footpaths. Additional refurbishments are scheduled for the areas surrounding JNTU, KPHB, and Kukatpally Metro Stations, focusing on enhancing pedestrian walkways



and planter boxes.

Balagar, Moosapet, and Parade Grounds Metro Stations will undergo further refurbishment, where 80mm pavers on service roads and footpaths will be replaced.

The total estimated cost for these enhancements is projected to be in the several lakhs, with individual project costs ranging from Rs 6.65 lakh to Rs 13.30 lakh.



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.

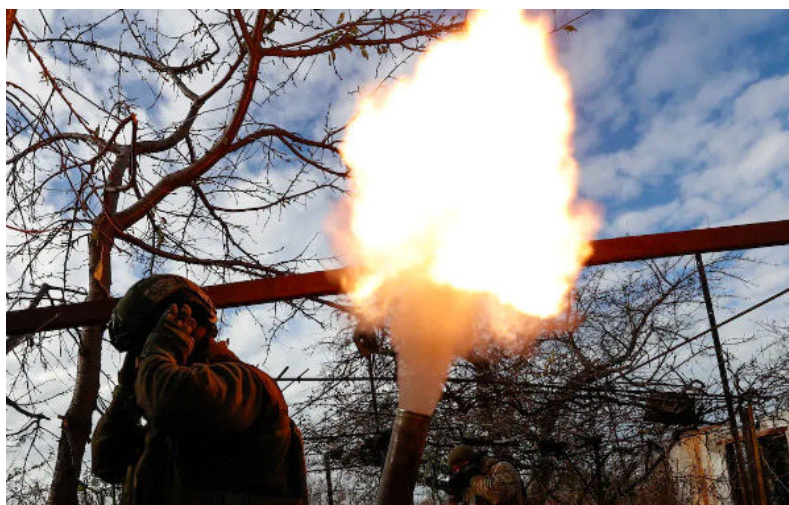
Mediazona Reports Over 66,000 Russian Military Deaths in Ukraine War

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.

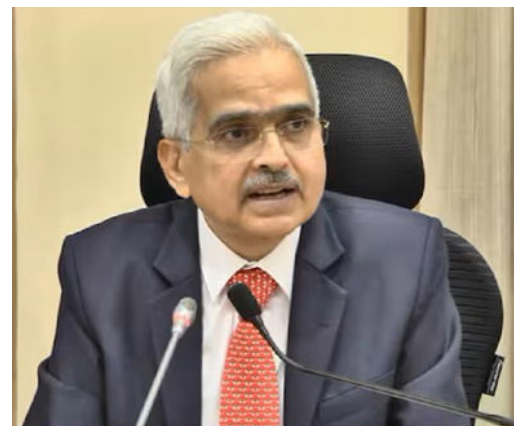
RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Addresses Q1 Growth Figures

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 Sannam, 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,

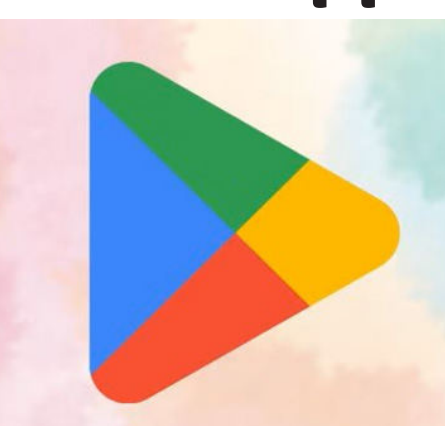
The partnership aims to equip 2 million young people with AI skills through the state's Naan Mudhalvan upskilling platform. Additionally, the collaboration will offer regional startups access to mentorship and networking opportunities, while MSMEs can leverage Google Cloud's AI tools via an open

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

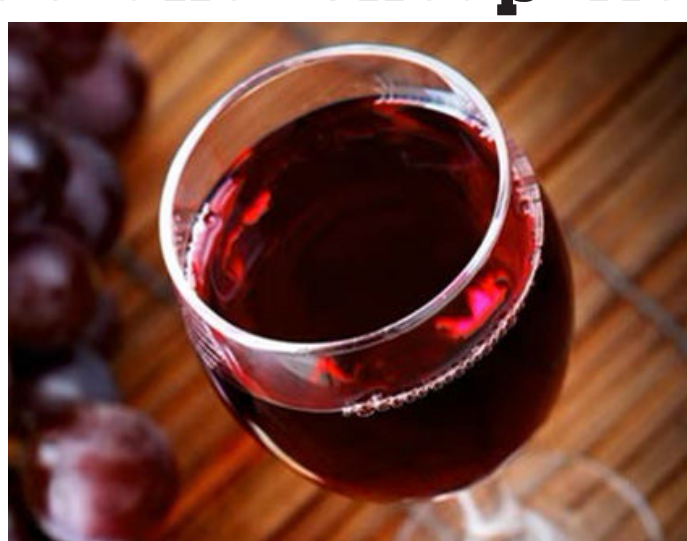
will allow users to select multiple apps for updating, thus reducing wait times and improving efficiency. This enhancement reflects Google's ongoing efforts to refine its app ecosystem despite external challenges and regulatory pressures.

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.

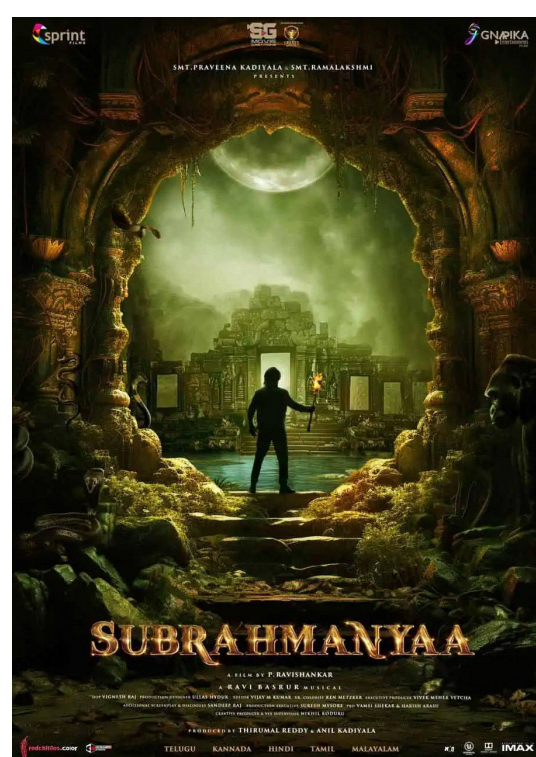
Saif Ali Khan Returns to Race Series with Race 4 After Being Replaced in Race 3

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."

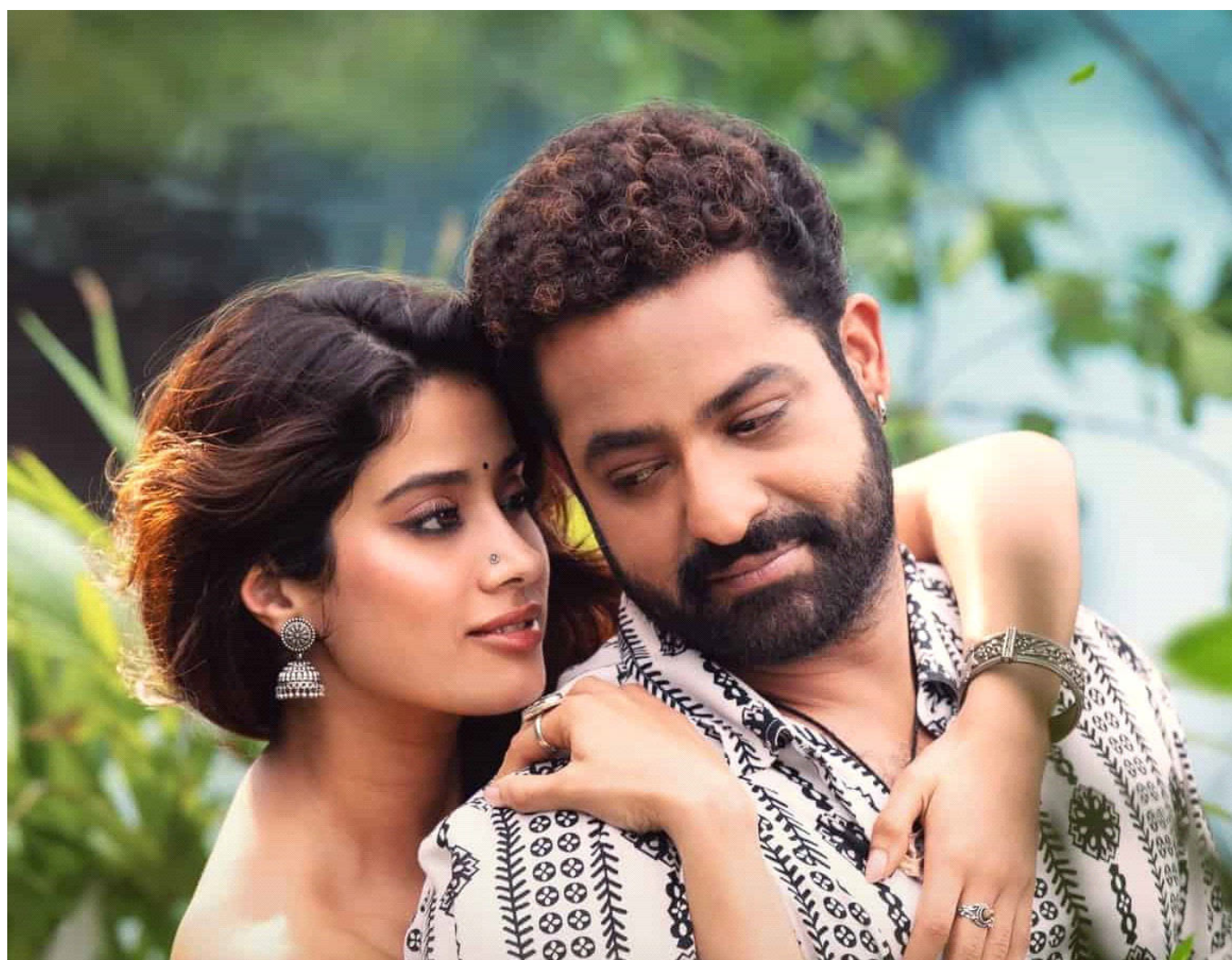
Samantha Ruth Prabhu Calls for Sexual Harassment Report in Telugu Film Industry

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.