



**Weather Forecast**

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
H 28°C L 23°C	H 31°C L 26°C	H 34°C L 27°C

# Telangana Unveils Plans for AI City on 200 Acres Near Hyderabad



**Telangana announces a 200-acre AI City near Hyderabad to boost AI innovation. The AI City will have advanced facilities, an AI University, and global partnerships. CM Revanth Reddy highlights Hyderabad's role as a global AI hub.**

**TPN, Hyderabad:** The Telangana government announced an ambitious project to establish an artificial intelligence (AI) city, spanning 200 acres near Hyderabad. Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy unveiled the AI City logo at the Global AI Summit 2024, marking a significant step towards making Hyderabad a global AI hub.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy emphasized Telangana's leadership in AI innovation, stating, "Hyderabad is not only ready for the future; we are creating it." He added that the AI City would play a pivotal role in shaping the future of AI, positioning Hyderabad as a leader in global AI development.

University and Experiential Centre, ensuring a continuous supply of trained professionals. The state government also entered into partnerships with various companies and institutions to support different components of the AI City project.

The AI City will serve as a vibrant center for the AI ecosystem, featuring an AI Advisory Council and supported by an AI research and collaboration network, including leading universities, global corporations, and innovative startups. The city will be equipped with cutting-edge data centers, high-performance computing facilities, and immersive educational programs designed to foster AI understanding and innovation.

Information Technology and Industry Minister D Sridhar Babu highlighted the state's commitment to AI, with plans to leverage AI to make Telangana a trillion-dollar economy in the near future. He also announced interim measures to allow AI-driven companies to begin operations at the World Trade Centre, Shamshabad, offering two lakh square feet of office space.

The Global AI Summit 2024, a first-of-its-kind event, attracted over 2,000 delegates, including corporate leaders, academia, startups, and government officials. The summit, themed "Making AI Work for Everyone," featured 150 speakers from around the world discussing innovation, responsible AI, and governance.

The AI City will also focus on creating an AI-skilled population through initiatives such as the AI Skilled

With this ambitious project, Telangana aims to cement its position as a global leader in AI technology and innovation.

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## Meta Partners with Telangana Government to Enhance E-Governance Using AI



**TPN, Hyderabad:** Meta, the global social media giant, has entered into a two-year collaboration with the Telangana government to enhance e-governance and public services through the integration of advanced artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. This strategic partnership is aimed at improving the efficiency and productivity of government departments and agencies, while also delivering better services to citizens.

source generative AI technologies, including the cutting-edge Llama 3.1 model. These technologies will be utilized to transform key aspects of public service delivery, making the government's e-governance initiatives more effective and streamlined. By leveraging AI, the collaboration aims to address unique local needs, boost digital infrastructure, and create social and economic opportunities for the state.

leadership and Meta's open approach to AI innovation. The state has been at the forefront of adopting digital technologies to improve governance, and this collaboration with Meta is expected to further accelerate those efforts.

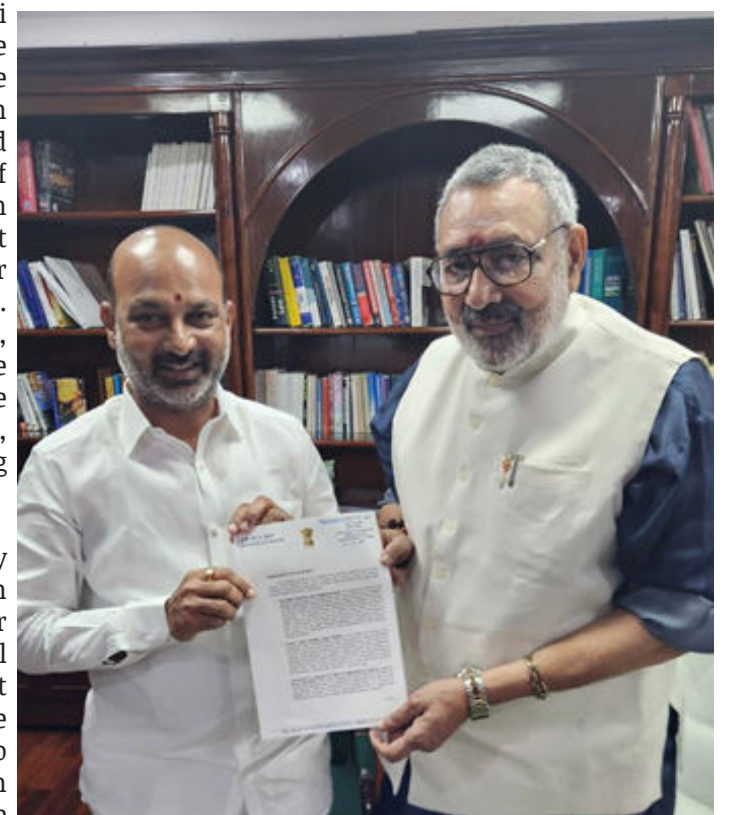
This collaboration marks a significant step toward fostering AI-driven solutions in governance, setting a precedent for future innovations in e-governance and public service delivery across the country.

Under the partnership, Meta will provide access to its open-

The partnership aligns with Telangana's vision of digital

## Bandi Sanjay Urges Union Textiles Minister for Powerloom Cluster in Sircilla

**TPN, New Delhi:** Bandi Sanjay Kumar, the Minister of State for Home Affairs and MP from Karimnagar, has appealed to Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh for the establishment of a powerloom cluster in Sircilla, Telangana. During a meeting in Delhi, Sanjay highlighted the challenges faced by the textile industry in Sircilla, particularly the rising cost of raw materials.



In his request, Sanjay Kumar urged the creation of a raw material depot for yarn under the National Handloom Development Corporation to help reduce costs for weavers. He also called for an increase in subsidies to 80% and the provision of zero-interest loans to support the struggling local weavers and boost the textile industry in the region.

Giriraj Singh reportedly responded positively to these requests and expressed his willingness to explore the feasibility of implementing the proposed subsidy and loan measures. Sanjay Kumar added

that the Union Textiles Minister showed a commitment to addressing the issues faced by the weavers in Sircilla, signaling potential relief for the local textile sector.

This move is expected to bring much-needed support to the weavers in Sircilla, who have been facing increasing challenges due to rising costs and limited resources.





**TPN, Telangana:** At the Global AI Summit 2024 in Hyderabad, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy met with Daniela Combe, IBM's Vice President for Emerging Tech Advocacy, to explore AI innovations and potential collaborations. The discussion highlighted Telangana's ambitious plans to position Hyderabad as a global technology hub, with a particular focus on the development of an AI City.

The AI City, a 200-acre project in Hyderabad's Future City, aims to attract global talent and companies for AI research and development. Revanth Reddy outlined his vision of creating an ecosystem that fosters innovation and economic growth, leveraging AI to improve public services, healthcare, agriculture, and urban planning. He emphasized that Telangana's goal is not just infrastructure development but also nurturing innovation for societal progress.

Daniela Combe expressed interest in IBM's potential role in the AI City project, praising the state's forward-thinking approach. IBM's expertise in AI could play a crucial part in transforming the AI City into a global innovation hub. The meeting, attended by key officials, including Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu, underscored the significance of the potential collaboration.

With IBM's interest and Telangana's ambitious AI agenda, Hyderabad is poised to attract international attention and investment, solidifying its position as a leader in AI innovation. The Global AI Summit further highlighted Telangana's evolving role in the global AI landscape.

## IBM Vice President Daniela Combe Meets CM Revanth Reddy



## Film Industry Stands in Solidarity with Flood Victims in Telugu States



**TPN, Telangana:** The Telugu film industry has once again come forward to assist those affected by the recent floods in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The floods have rendered many homeless, and the industry has stepped up to extend its support. In a show of solidarity, representatives from all departments of the film industry gathered for a press meet at the Film Chamber to announce their action plan to help the flood victims.

Damodar Prasad, Honorary Secretary of the Chamber, outlined the financial contributions that will be made to the flood-affected areas. "Many people are suffering due to floods in Vijayawada and Khammam. The Telugu film industry always steps forward in times of crisis, and this time is no different. We have discussed various forms of assistance. On behalf of the Film Chamber, we are announcing a donation of Rs. 25 lakhs each to Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Additionally, Telugu film producers will donate Rs. 10 lakhs each to both states, and Rs. 5 lakhs will be given to each state government from the Federation. We are also providing the CM Relief Fund account numbers of both states, as well as an account number from the Chamber for those who wish to donate," he explained.

Senior Producer Daggubati Suresh Babu emphasized the industry's commitment to helping the needy. "Our industry takes the lead whenever there is a crisis. This time, we will not only offer financial assistance but also provide essential items. Our family is contributing Rs. 1 crore, and we are ready to assist anyone in need. Collection centres for donations will be set up in all theatres," he said.

Director Raghavendra Rao highlighted the importance of supporting the people who have always backed the film industry. "We have reached this level because of people's support. Now that they are in trouble, it is our duty to stand by them. This press meet also serves to show our support for the governments that have always supported us," he said.

Producer Dil Raju added, "Everyone is aware of the floods in the Telugu states. Many heroes have already donated, and we, too, have decided to contribute from the Chamber. Our production company is donating hundreds of lakhs to both states. We urge the industry to donate through the Federation's account, and we will ensure the funds reach the governments."

Anil, President of the Film Industry Employees Federation, stated, "We are arranging a meeting with all unions tomorrow. We plan to contribute one day's salary, and we are ready to support the Telugu states in any way possible on behalf of our workers."

## Free Electricity for Educational Institutions in Telangana: Bhatti Vikramarka

**TPN, Telangana:** Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka announced that the state government will provide free electricity to all 27,862 government educational institutions. Speaking at a Teacher's Day event organized at Rabindra Bharati, Hyderabad, Bhatti Vikramarka emphasized the government's commitment to improving the education system and supporting teachers, whom he referred to as the cornerstone of societal progress.



The Deputy CM explained that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy could not attend the event due to the ongoing heavy rains and floods affecting various parts of Telangana. However, the government remains focused on enhancing the state's education infrastructure.

Bhatti Vikramarka acknowledged that the current education system does not fully meet the demands of modern industries. To address this gap, he announced the establishment of a new \*Skill University\*, aimed at providing advanced technical and vocational

training. He also highlighted plans to transform the state's IITs into advanced technology centers, enabling students to compete on an international level.

The Deputy CM praised the teachers of Telangana, describing them as exemplary and essential to the success of government initiatives. He recalled their significant contribution to the implementation of English medium education as a pilot project, underscoring the crucial role of educators in societal development.

Bhatti Vikramarka concluded by reaffirming that the government's focus on teachers and education will continue, as empowering teachers leads to a stronger and more prosperous society.

## Six Maoists Killed in Encounter in Telangana's Bhadradi Kothagudem District

**TPN, Telangana:** In a significant encounter, six Maoists were killed during an exchange of fire with police in the Bhadradi Kothagudem district of Telangana on Thursday. The operation was launched by police following specific intelligence about the presence of Maoists in the Karakagudem mandal area.

During the operation, a group of Maoists belonging to the Lachanna Dalam, an active faction in the region, engaged with the police. Six Maoists were killed in the ensuing firefight, while a Greyhounds constable sustained injuries.

The Lachanna Dalam is known for its movements across the borders of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana, frequently evading police operations. Following the encounter, police have intensified search operations to determine if any other Maoists were killed or escaped. Neighboring districts have been placed on high alert to prevent further Maoist activity in the area.

The police are continuing their search efforts, ensuring the area is secured and monitoring any movement across state borders.



## Eligible Youth Should Register as Voters: Telangana Chief Electoral Officer

**TPN, Hyderabad:** Telangana's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sudarshan Reddy has called on all eligible youth in the state to register as voters. He emphasized that individuals who have turned 18 by January 1, 2024, should ensure they are registered. The electoral roll revision process, which began on August 20, is ongoing, and a draft of the voter list will be released on October 29.

Reddy announced that objections to the draft electoral roll will be accepted until November 28, with the final list set to be published on January 6, 2024. He further revealed that Telangana currently has 3,33,27,304 registered voters. Since April 1, the state has received 8 lakh new voter applications, with 2.45 lakh applications still pending.

Training for Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs), and Booth Level Officers (BLOs) has already been completed. Additionally, approximately 60 percent of voter cards have been successfully linked with Aadhaar. The CEO urged all eligible citizens to complete the registration process and ensure they are part of the final electoral roll.

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## Govt tapping my phone says BRS MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy



**TPN, Telangana:** Huzurabad MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy has made serious allegations against the Telangana government, accusing it of tapping the phones of MLAs, MPs, and MLCs across the state. Speaking at a media conference in Karimnagar, Kaushik Reddy expressed anger, claiming that his phone, along with those of many other political leaders, was being monitored by the government.

In his remarks, Kaushik Reddy also criticized the government's failure to provide full loan waivers to farmers, stating that only 40 percent of farmers in Telangana have benefited from the scheme. He noted that the loan waivers were not implemented simultaneously, adding that those who lost in his constituency were still distributing cheques.

The MLA also called out Union Minister Bandi Sanjay, questioning why he did not respond

when it was alleged that the CP's phone was tapped in Parliament. Reddy demanded a CBI investigation into the matter, suggesting that the issue of phone tapping required a thorough inquiry.

Additionally, Kaushik Reddy revealed that he had prepared a "black book" targeting officials, warning that they would face difficult times once the BRS returns to power. He further criticized Congress leader Revanth Reddy, accusing him of failing to fulfill promises, such as increasing pensions, which were made before the elections.

Kaushik Reddy also raised concerns about the lack of protocol being followed in constituencies where BRS MLAs are present, particularly in the distribution of cheques. He warned that if protocols are not adhered to, he would take the matter to the High Court.

## BJP Mahila Morcha Appeals to NHRC for Probe into Sexual Assault Case

**TPN, Telangana:** The BJP Mahila Morcha has urged the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to investigate a recent case of alleged sexual assault and attempted murder of a tribal woman in Jainoor, Adilabad district. Shilpa Reddy, the State President of BJP Mahila Morcha, sent a letter to NHRC Chairperson Justice Arun Kumar Mishra requesting an independent probe into

the incident.

In her letter, Reddy expressed grave concern over the assault and urged the NHRC to conduct a thorough medical examination of the victim. She emphasized that this case is part of a troubling trend of violence in Asifabad, citing several similar incidents reported recently. Reddy criticized the local response and called

for immediate action to address the issue.

The BJP Mahila Morcha's appeal reflects ongoing efforts to highlight and address issues of violence and human rights violations in the region. By seeking intervention from the NHRC, Reddy aims to ensure that the victim receives justice and that the perpetrators are held accountable.

## KTR Reacts Strongly to Jainur Incident, Criticizes Law and Order Situation in Telangana

**TPN, Telangana:** BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has expressed strong disapproval over the recent incident in Jainur mandal of Komurambhim Asifabad district, where an auto driver named Sheikh Maqdoom allegedly attempted to sexually assault a tribal woman. KTR took to social media to voice his concerns, attributing the breakdown in law and order to the absence of a full-time Home Minister in Telangana.

KTR criticized the state government, stating that the lack of proper leadership in the Home Ministry is leading to incidents like the one

in Jainur. He expressed his anger over the state government's response to the incident, particularly the compensation of just one lakh rupees to the victim, calling it inadequate. KTR further pointed out that the government had advance information about the potential for violence in Jainur but failed to prevent it.

In his tweet on X (formerly Twitter), KTR expressed his dismay at the destruction of properties during the communal violence and emphasized the need for swift action. He demanded that the state government take immediate steps to re-

store peace in Jainur and provide better support to the victim. He also urged the government to ensure that the accused face strict punishment and that those who lost their homes and businesses receive the necessary aid.

KTR reiterated that the ongoing law and order problems in Telangana are a result of the state being run without a full-fledged Home Minister for the past nine months, and he called for the government to address this gap to prevent further incidents of this nature.

## Court Summons Issued to KCR and IAS Officer Smita Sabharwal

**TPN, Telangana:** The Jayashankar Bhupalapally District Court has issued summons to former Telangana Chief Minister and BRS chief K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) and IAS officer Smita Sabharwal, requiring them to appear for a hearing on October 17. The summons relates to a petition filed by Rajalingamoorthy from Bhupalapally, who claims that the collapse of the Medigadda barrage resulted in a significant loss of public funds.

Earlier, the court had sent notices to KCR and seven other individuals connected to the case. Among those who received notices, Lalita Reddy and Sukanya appeared on behalf of former minister Harish Rao, while Supreme Court Advocate Avadani and Shraavan Rao represented Mega Krishna Reddy, Rajat Kumar, and L&T MD Suresh Kumar. Chief Irrigation Engineers Hari Ram and Sridhar were represented by Warangal Advocate Narasimha Reddy.

However, KCR and Smita Sabharwal did not appear in court, prompting the issuance of fresh summons for the upcoming hearing in October.

In a related development, posters surfaced across Hyder-



abad with the slogan "KCR is not visible," criticizing KCR for his absence during the ongoing flood crisis in Telangana. Heavy rains have wreaked havoc in parts of the state, including the Khammam district, where lives have been lost, crops destroyed, and many residents displaced. The posters appear to highlight the opposition's dissatisfaction with KCR's inaction during the disaster.

Though KCR has yet to visit the flood-affected areas, Telangana Finance Minister Harish Rao and other BRS leaders have been active in visiting the victims and assessing the damage. The situation has led to mounting pressure on KCR to address the ongoing crisis.

## Formal Digital Director Dilip of BRS has been taken into custody by Cyber Police

**TPN, Telangana:** The former Director of Telangana Digital Media, Konatham Dileep, was arrested by the CCS police on charges of spreading provocative propaganda and inciting hatred on social media. Dileep is currently being interrogated by the police, sparking a wave of condemnation from BRS leaders, including BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), who criticized the arrest as an attempt to silence dissent.

BRS leaders have taken to social media, particularly on the BRSX platform, to condemn what they describe as the illegal detention of Dileep for merely questioning the Telangana government's actions. KTR, expressing his strong disapproval, questioned whether public governance is now being used to suppress those who ask questions.

KTR accused the government, led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, of stifling dissent and targeting those who criticize its inefficiency and incompetence. He pointed out that Dileep had previously been implicated in a false case, for which the High Court had reprimanded the government, but it seems no lessons were learned.

According to KTR, Dileep's arrest was carried out without providing



him with basic information about the charges, and no transparency was shown regarding the case under which he was detained. KTR warned the government that trying to rule through illegal arrests and suppressing free speech would only lead to greater opposition.

KTR further stated that regardless of how many arrests or cases are made, there will always be voices that continue to question the government. He called for the immediate release of Dileep, denouncing the arrest as a violation of freedom of speech in Telangana. KTR also alleged that for the past nine months, the state has been under autocratic rule, where dissent is being systematically suppressed.

## Tension remains in Jainoor after Tribal was sexually assaulted

**TPN, Asifabad:** Tension continues to grip Jainoor Mandal in Asifabad district, following communal violence that erupted on Wednesday. The unrest began after a tribal woman was sexually assaulted by an auto-rickshaw driver, identified as Maqdoom, sparking a mob attack that targeted shops and properties belonging to the Muslim community.

In response to the violence, approximately 2,000 police personnel, including the Rapid Action Force, have been deployed to maintain law and order. Senior police officials are overseeing the situation to prevent further escalation.

The unrest was triggered when tribal organizations called for a bandh on Wednesday to protest the alleged assault. The mob attacked homes in a colony predominantly housing Muslim residents, setting fire to properties and ransacking a mosque. Several people were injured during the violence.

The police have arrested Maqdoom and remanded him to judicial custody. Cases have also been registered concerning the mob violence, and a special investigation team (SIT) has been formed to probe the incidents and identify the culprits responsible for the at-

tacks.

On Thursday, no fresh incidents of violence were reported, though the atmosphere remains tense. Prohibitory orders have been enforced, preventing political leaders, including BJP members and Majlis Bachao Tehreek leader Amjedullah Khan, from entering the affected areas. Khan was stopped by the police at the town's border as part of efforts to prevent any further unrest.

The police continue to monitor the situation closely, ensuring that peace is maintained in the region.





**TPN Hyderabad** : Meta has announced a two-year partnership with the Telangana government to enhance e-governance and citizen services using artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. This strategic collaboration aims to empower public officials and citizens by integrating advanced AI tools into public service delivery.

Under the partnership, Meta will deploy its open-source generative AI technologies, including the latest 'Llama 3.1 model,' to improve various aspects of e-governance. The initiative is designed to enhance the efficiency and productivity of government departments and agencies by leveraging generative AI solutions.

The release highlights that this collaboration is part of Meta's commitment to open AI innovation and Telangana's leadership in digital transformation. The goal is to use AI to create social and economic opportunities in the state while

addressing specific local needs.

Meta's approach aligns with Telangana's vision of advancing digital governance and fostering innovation in public service. This partnership is expected to lead to significant improvements in how public services are delivered, making them more efficient and responsive to the needs of the citizens.

The deployment of AI technologies will focus on transforming public service delivery, enhancing government operations, and creating groundbreaking solutions to address local challenges. The partnership reflects a shared commitment to harnessing the potential of AI for the betterment of society and the economy.

As the collaboration progresses, it will be closely watched for its impact on e-governance and the broader application of AI in public sector innovation.

## Meta Partners with Telangana Government to Boost E-Governance with AI



## Hyderabad Gears Up for Ganesh Chaturthi with Eco-Friendly Celebrations



**TPN Hyderabad** : As Ganesh Chaturthi approaches this Saturday, Hyderabad is abuzz with festive preparations. The city is adorned with vibrant Ganesh idols, ranging from small clay figures to grand, 70-foot tall statues in Khairatabad, celebrating 70 years of festival tradition.

Markets are thriving with activity as vendors gear up for a bustling season. In response to growing environmental concerns, many households are opting for smaller, eco-friendly Ganesh idols made from clay and natural colors. This shift has led to a surge in demand for sustainable options, including idols crafted from cow dung.

Local artisans are embracing these green alternatives, with

several pandals featuring clay idols and using herbal paints to mitigate water pollution during the immersion process.

To support this eco-friendly initiative, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) is distributing 310,000 clay Ganeshes free of charge. Additionally, the Telangana Pollution Control Board and the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority are each providing 100,000 clay idols to further promote environmental sustainability.

As the festival nears, Hyderabad's commitment to blending tradition with ecological responsibility is evident, showcasing a vibrant and conscious celebration of Ganesh Chaturthi.

## IMD Hyderabad Forecasts Heavy Rains, Issues Orange Alert for Telangana



**TPN Hyderabad** : The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Hyderabad has issued an orange alert for Telangana as the state braces for four days of heavy rainfall. On Thursday, the forecast includes very heavy rains, thunderstorms, lightning, and squalls.

The weather department has issued an orange alert for today and a yellow alert for the following three days, indicating continued heavy rainfall through Sunday. In Hyderabad, residents can expect rains or thundershowers with gusty winds throughout the city

until the weekend.

During the current Southwest monsoon, Telangana has recorded 847.2 mm of rainfall, surpassing the average of 603.2 mm by 40 percent. Hyderabad has received 666.6 mm of rain, compared to the normal 486 mm, marking a 37 percent deviation. Within the city, Nampally has seen a 57 percent increase, with 756.7 mm of rainfall against the usual 480.8 mm.

The expected heavy rains over the next few days are likely to further increase the total rainfall recorded in the city this monsoon.

## Ex-Telangana Media Director Konatham Dileep Detained, Sparks Criticism

**TPN Hyderabad** : Former Telangana digital media director and social media activist Konatham Dileep was detained by Hyderabad Central Crime Station (CCS) police on Thursday, reportedly without informing his relatives of the reasons. Known for his outspoken criticism of the Congress government, Dileep's detention has drawn sharp condemnation from political figures.

KT Rama Rao, working president of the BRS, denounced the detention as a misuse of power by the Congress government. He accused the administration of employing law enforcement to suppress dissent, calling it "tyranny under the guise of democracy." Rao demanded Dileep's



immediate release, highlighting that the activist has faced ongoing harassment due to his social media activities.

Sources indicate that police officers who detained Dileep did not disclose the charges or provide a copy of the FIR. This action follows months of alleged harassment and previous attempts to frame him in illegal cases, which were thwarted after the Telangana High Court issued directives against his arrest.

The BRS has condemned the detention, viewing it as a violation of democratic principles. Many within the party have criticized the Revanth Reddy-led government for targeting political dissenters, accusing it of undermining democratic values.

## CM Revanth Reddy Pushes for Reliable Power Supply and Solar Energy Expansion



**TPN Hyderabad** : In a review meeting on September 4, 2024, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy underscored the critical need for uninterrupted power supply across all sectors to support the state's goal of becoming a major business hub. He emphasized that every effort must be made to avoid power shortages and instructed the Energy Department to work with the Information Technology and Industries departments to devise a comprehensive plan for future energy needs.

Reddy advocated for maximizing solar energy use and proposed several initiatives to meet rising energy demands. He suggested utilizing unused departmental lands for solar projects and providing solar-powered pump sets to farmers to promote clean energy solutions.

He also proposed adopting his native village, Kondareddyapalle, as a pilot project for solar initiatives, aiming to directly credit solar savings to farmers' accounts. Additionally, Reddy encouraged the use of solar cylinders as a replacement for LPG, particularly through women's self-help groups, and called for increased solar energy use in forest areas.

Reddy set a target for generating 40,000 MW of solar power annually while reducing financial waste and addressing issues like transformer overloads to ensure a stable power supply.

## Hyderabad Excise Officials Seize Rs 12 Lakh Worth of Non-Duty-Paid Liquor

**TPN Hyderabad** : In Hyderabad, excise officials have seized a substantial quantity of non-duty-paid liquor valued at Rs 12 lakh. The operation led to the confiscation of 415 bottles, totaling approximately 352.68 liters of alcohol.

The illicit shipment was intercepted at the airport while being transported from Goa to Hyderabad. The enforcement operation, led by Excise Enforcement Director Vibi Kamalasan Reddy, Deputy Commissioner Rangareddy Dasarath, and Assistant Commissioner K Rishan, resulted in the arrest of 12 individuals.

Officials highlighted that non-duty-paid liquor significantly impacts government finances by causing substantial revenue losses. Each bottle represents a considerable loss in potential state tax revenue. Despite strict enforcement, smugglers continue to devise ways to transport liquor illegally into Telangana.

The Excise Department is ramping up its efforts to combat such activities and deter smugglers exploiting various routes to bring non-duty-paid liquor into the state.







# Congress Eyes Haryana with Alliance Talks and No CM Face Strategy

As the Haryana assembly elections approach, scheduled for October 5 with results to be declared on October 8, the Congress party is refining its strategy. With a significant decision not to announce a chief ministerial candidate, the party is opting for a collective leadership model, aiming to curb internal factionalism while simultaneously appealing to a broad voter base.

The Congress has also resumed talks with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) about a potential alliance, which could prove crucial in the upcoming election. Though both parties contested the 2024 general elections together, initial reports suggested they might go their separate ways in the assembly polls. However, renewed discussions have sparked hopes for a united front to take on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Confident after matching the BJP in the 2024 general elections with five seats each, the Congress believes it has a strong chance in the state elections. During the general elections, the BJP led in 44 assembly segments, the Congress in 42, and AAP in four. In terms of vote share, the BJP secured 46%, the Congress 44%, and AAP 4%, indicating a close competition in the state.

After a meeting of the Congress Election Committee (CEC), Congress leader Ajay Singh Yadav confirmed that the party would not project a chief ministerial candidate for Haryana. The decision on leadership will be taken by the party's high command after the election results are in. This move is seen as a tactical decision to manage factionalism within the party and prevent infighting from derailing its electoral efforts.

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh has emphasized the priority of defeating the BJP, which he says should be the focus of the INDIA alliance. Singh stated that the party's National General Secretary, Sandeep Pathak, would lead discussions with Congress if an alliance proposal gained traction. A final decision will be made by AAP National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal. AAP's Haryana chief, Sushil Gupta, has also expressed concerns about limiting AAP's stake to just four or five seats, while leaving the ultimate decision to Kejriwal. There are reports of AAP MP Raghav Chadha engaging in back-channel talks with the Congress leadership to iron out the details of the potential alliance.

Former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupender Singh Hooda is currently spearheading Congress's campaign in the state. However, tensions exist within the party, as factions led by Kumari Selja and Randeep Surjewala reportedly remain dissatisfied with Hooda's dominant role. These internal divisions have previously threatened the party's unity. Kiran Choudhury, another key figure in the party, left for the BJP

after her daughter was denied a ticket in the Lok Sabha elections. The decision not to announce a chief ministerial candidate is seen as a way to temper these rivalries and appeal to a wider electorate. Congress hopes to avoid a contest framed around Jat versus non-Jat interests—a division that the BJP has leveraged successfully in past elections.

Hooda, perceived as a leader representing Jat interests, has faced challenges as the BJP used these dynamics to divide the electorate. Congress is now banking on a coalition of Jats, Dalits, and Muslims to secure votes. Dalits, who make up around 20% of the population, are a crucial demographic in this strategy. By not naming a CM candidate, the Congress aims to keep Kumari Selja, a Dalit leader, in play, maintaining the hope of Dalit representation in the leadership.

A post-election study by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) shows that the INDIA bloc, to which both Congress and AAP belong, secured 64% of the Jat vote and 68% of the Dalit vote in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The Congress hopes this decision will help retain these votes in the upcoming assembly polls.

Talks of an alliance between Congress and AAP are gathering momentum, given their relatively successful partnership in the general elections, where they jointly won five seats and secured a 48% vote share. AAP contested the Kurukshetra Lok Sabha seat and led in four assembly segments, earning a 4% vote share. However, if AAP runs independently, it could split the opposition vote, potentially aiding the BJP.

In the 2019 Haryana assembly elections, the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP), led by Dushyant Chautala, took 10 seats, mainly in Jat-dominated areas, which hurt the Congress's chances. The Congress is keen to avoid a similar split of the opposition vote this time around. Both Congress and AAP had initially planned solo campaigns for the upcoming elections, but high-level talks between the two parties have reignited alliance discussions. AAP is reportedly asking for 10 seats, while Congress is offering two to three seats.

In terms of demographics, the Bania community (4%), Aroras, Punjabis, Khatri (7%), and Sikhs (5%) are key voter groups. AAP has influence among these groups, particularly in urban pockets close to Delhi and Punjab, which could help Congress strengthen its position in traditionally weaker areas. In the 2024 general elections, the BJP led in 19 of 23 urban seats, while Congress dominated in 34 of the 60 rural seats. AAP's presence could help bridge Congress's urban-rural divide.

By allowing Congress to focus on its Jat-dominated strongholds while leveraging AAP's urban influence, the alliance could be a winning strategy for both parties in the Haryana assembly elections.



## India's Semiconductor Journey: From Setbacks to a Promising Future

On August 23, 2023, as Chandrayaan 3 successfully landed on the moon, engineers at the government-run Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL) in Mohali quietly celebrated a personal victory. The chips and semiconductors they had developed played a critical role in the mission, enabling communication and navigation. Despite this success, SCL, India's only known chip-making foundry, remains far behind global leaders like Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC).

While TSMC, founded in 1987, produces 90% of the world's advanced semiconductors, SCL has been left making legacy chips of 100 nm and above. TSMC's clients include giants like Apple and Nvidia, while SCL's primary customer remains ISRO. Once poised to be a major player, SCL's trajectory was dramatically altered by a mysterious fire in 1989, which destroyed much of its facilities. Though it eventually resumed operations, India's semiconductor ambitions were severely delayed, leaving the country decades behind in the race.

For years, India's semiconductor dreams were marked by failures, with several multinational companies abandoning plans for chip production in the country. However, there is finally hope on the horizon. In August 2022, Micron Technology laid the foundation for a cutting-edge semiconductor assembly, testing, and packaging facility in Gujarat. This \$2.75 billion project is expected to be operational soon and represents a significant milestone in India's semiconductor journey. Since then, other projects have been announced, including a fabrication unit by Taiwan's Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC) and Tata Electronics. If successful, this could be India's first private-sector fab unit, marking a critical step forward.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to position India as a leader in semiconductor manufacturing is ambitious but not unattainable. India has already made significant strides in becoming a hub for mobile phone manufacturing, and the government hopes to replicate this success in the semiconductor industry. While India currently lacks large-scale semiconductor fabrication facilities, it has established a robust ecosystem for chip design, with major global players like Intel, Qualcomm, and AMD having significant R&D centers in the country. Indian engineers are already playing a crucial role in designing advanced chips for cutting-edge technologies like 5G and artificial intelligence.

However, creating a full-fledged semiconductor ecosystem requires more than just design capabilities. India must develop infrastructure

for fabrication, research, testing, and packaging, as well as secure a stable supply of the materials and chemicals needed for chip production. Building a state-of-the-art semiconductor fabrication facility could take up to 10 years, with initial investments running between \$10 billion and \$40 billion. India has already committed \$15 billion to its semiconductor project, but it needs significantly more private investment to compete with countries like China and the US, which have poured billions into their semiconductor industries.

India also faces challenges in securing the necessary materials and creating a stable environment for the semiconductor industry. Manufacturing microchips requires over 150 types of chemicals and 30 types of gases, which are currently sourced from a handful of countries. Additionally, basic infrastructure like a stable power grid and consistent water availability must be addressed before large-scale chip production can begin.

Political will is another critical factor. The semiconductor industry is capital-intensive and time-consuming, requiring long-term commitment from both the government and private players. Successive Indian governments will need to stay the course if the country is to achieve its semiconductor ambitions by 2047, when PM Modi envisions India as a developed nation.

A skilled workforce is also essential to the success of India's semiconductor mission. While India has a large pool of engineers, it lacks the specific expertise needed in the semiconductor industry. Addressing the issue of brain drain could help accelerate India's progress. Many Indians currently occupy leadership roles in global semiconductor companies, but India will need to create the right conditions to attract them back. Taiwan and South Korea successfully kickstarted their semiconductor industries by luring talent back home, offering competitive salaries and better work conditions. India could follow a similar path, but it will require significant improvements in professional environments and compensation packages to stop its best talent from leaving.

As India prepares to launch new semiconductor projects, the success of the Micron factory will be crucial in determining the future of its semiconductor industry. Industry experts believe that India could become a global player in 10 to 20 years if it stays focused and committed. The journey will be long, but with the right strategy, India can finally reverse its semiconductor misfortune and establish itself as a major player in the global chip race.







## Trump Mentioned During Supreme Court Hearing on Arvind Kejriwal's Arrest

In a Supreme Court hearing today on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's petition challenging his arrest, former U.S. President Donald Trump found an unusual mention. Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, representing Mr. Kejriwal, humorously remarked that "Trump" has become a "dangerous word" nowadays. While presenting his argument, Singhvi emphasized that the prosecution's efforts to restart the case should be overridden by Article 21 of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to life and liberty. He quipped, "Article 21 of the Constitution will trump... Nowadays, Trump is a dangerous

word," referring to Trump's current bid for a second U.S. presidential term. The Supreme Court bench, led by Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan, is hearing Kejriwal's petition to challenge his arrest, which occurred on June 26 following a CBI investigation into the Delhi excise policy case. Kejriwal has spent over five months in jail and was previously denied bail by the Delhi High Court on August 5, which upheld his arrest as legal. Singhvi's comments came as the court deliberates on whether to grant Kejriwal bail. The Delhi High Court ruled that Kejriwal's arrest was justified, citing the possibility

that the AAP chief could influence witnesses in the ongoing investigation into alleged irregularities in the excise policy. The outcome of this Supreme Court hearing is critical for Kejriwal, who, despite receiving interim bail in a related Enforcement Directorate case, remains in prison. The excise policy at the center of the controversy was scrapped in 2022, following allegations of corruption and irregularities in its formulation and execution. Both the CBI and ED allege that undue favours were extended to license holders under the policy, leading to a wide-ranging investigation.

## Delhi High Court Issues Contempt Notice to Wikipedia Over ANI Defamation Case

The Delhi High Court on Thursday issued a contempt of court notice to Wikipedia for failing to comply with orders to disclose information about edits made to a page related to news agency ANI. The court warned Wikipedia to adhere to Indian laws, stating, "If you don't like India, please don't work in India... we will ask the government to block your site."

The case stems from ANI's defamation claim against Wikipedia after an edit described the news agency as a "propaganda tool" of the Indian government. ANI argued that Wikipedia allowed defamatory edits and failed to disclose details of three accounts responsible for the changes, despite a court order. ANI also pointed out that Wikipedia had not clarified whether the three individuals were official editors.

In its defence, Wikipedia explained that the delay in providing the requested information was due to the submission of certain documents, further complicated by the fact that Wikipedia is not based in India. However, Justice Navin Chawla expressed dissatisfaction, warning Wikipedia about potential consequences, including a government block on the website.

"It is not a question of the defendant not being an entity in India. We will close your business transactions here. We will ask the government to block Wikipedia... Earlier also you took this position," the judge stated.

The court has ordered a representative of Wikipedia to appear at the next hearing scheduled for October. The Wikimedia Foundation, which runs Wikipedia, released a statement earlier identifying itself as a "technology host" that does not control content, which is managed by a global community of volunteer editors.

## Rebellion Hits BJP After First List of Candidates for Haryana Assembly Polls

A day after the BJP released its first list of 67 candidates for the October 5 Haryana Assembly polls, the party is facing internal dissent. Energy and Jails Minister Ranjit Singh Chautala, 79, and MLA Lakshman Dass Napa quit the party after being denied tickets. Chautala, son of former deputy prime minister Devi Lal, announced his decision to contest the elections as an Independent after consulting his supporters. Napa, MLA from Ratia, also resigned and is set to join the Congress after meeting former chief minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda. Former minister Karan Dev Kamboj stepped down as state BJP's OBC Morcha chief after his candidacy was ignored, expressing disappointment over the party's treatment of loyal members.

The BJP's first list has sparked discontent among several sitting legislators, including Sanjay Singh and Sandeep Singh, who were not renominated. Kavita Jain, a senior BJP leader, was also upset after being passed over for the Sonipat seat, despite her years of service to the party.

With BJP aiming for a third consecutive win in Haryana, it now faces challenges from internal rebellion and a resurgent Congress looking to capitalize on anti-incumbency sentiment. The election results will be declared on October 8.



## Congress Prepares for Haryana Assembly Polls, Eyes Alliance with AAP

The Congress party is gearing up for the Haryana Assembly elections scheduled for October 5, 2024, with results expected on October 8. The party has decided not to project a chief ministerial candidate, instead opting for a combined leadership approach to curb internal factionalism and broaden its appeal. Former Haryana CM Bhopender Singh Hooda is leading the Congress campaign, although some factions within the party, including leaders like Kumari Selja and Randeep Surjewala, have expressed concerns about Hooda's consolidation of power.

The Congress is currently in talks with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) about a potential alliance. Although both parties contested the 2024 general elections together, early signs suggested they might go their separate ways in the assembly polls. AAP is reportedly demanding 10 seats, but Congress has offered only two to three, with further negotiations expected to be led by AAP National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal.

Congress is focusing on a coalition of Jats, Dalits, and Muslims to counter the BJP's traditional strength in non-Jat and urban areas. Dalits, who make up 20% of the population, are a key constituency, with Kumari Selja emerging as a significant figure in maintaining their support.

The Congress-AAP alliance proved successful in the general elections, securing a 48% vote share and matching the BJP's five seats. Both parties aim to avoid splitting the opposition vote, which could benefit the BJP in critical assembly segments. As Congress focuses on rural areas dominated by Jat voters, it hopes AAP can attract urban voters, particularly in regions bordering Delhi and Punjab, to maximise electoral gains.

## Uttarakhand Government Removes IFS Officer Rahul as Director of Rajaji Tiger Reserve

The Uttarakhand government has removed Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer Rahul from his position as Director of Rajaji Tiger Reserve, following directions from Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami. The Forest Department issued an official order on Tuesday, September 3, relieving Rahul of his duties, with the decision presented to the Supreme Court on Wednesday.

The government took this step after the Supreme Court raised concerns regarding Rahul's appointment due to his previous removal from Corbett Tiger Reserve over allegations of illegal tree cutting. His role as Director of Rajaji Tiger Reserve came under scrutiny as the court took exception to his posting.

According to a government statement, Rahul has been reassigned as Chief Forest Conservator, Monitoring, Evaluation, IT, and Modernisation, based in Dehradun. The decision, after "due consideration," was formalized on September 3. The Deputy Secretary of the Forest Department issued the official orders for his transfer, aligning with the instructions of Chief Minister Dhami.

During a hearing related to the case, the government informed the Supreme Court of the action, leading to the dismissal of a related petition.

Forest Minister Subodh Uniyal commented that the decision to appoint Rahul to Rajaji Tiger Reserve had been made unanimously by him and the Chief Minister. However, the recent transfer reflects the government's response to the concerns raised by the judiciary.

Rahul, a senior IFS officer, had previously been involved in multiple transfers within the state's forest department, including a tenure as Director of Corbett Tiger Reserve, before being moved to Rajaji. He will now oversee monitoring and modernisation initiatives in his new role.

## DPCC Bans Idol Immersion in Yamuna, Imposes ₹50,000 Fine Ahead of Festivals

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) has prohibited idol immersion in the Yamuna River and other water bodies, ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi and Durga Puja, imposing a fine of ₹50,000 on violators. In an order issued on Wednesday, the DPCC instructed local civic bodies to establish temporary immersion sites or artificial ponds near residential areas for eco-friendly idol immersion.

This decision aligns with directives from the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), which prohibited idol immersion in the Ganga and its tributaries in 2019 and 2021, specifying similar fines for violations. The DPCC has mandated the Delhi Police and municipal bodies to enforce the guidelines and take action against illegal idol-making operations, particularly those using toxic materials.

The order explicitly prohibits the use of Plaster of Paris (POP) idols, which contribute to significant water pollution. Toxic chemicals like mercury, lead, chromium, and cadmium used in idol-making leach into water bodies during immersions, causing harm to aquatic life and potentially posing health risks to humans.

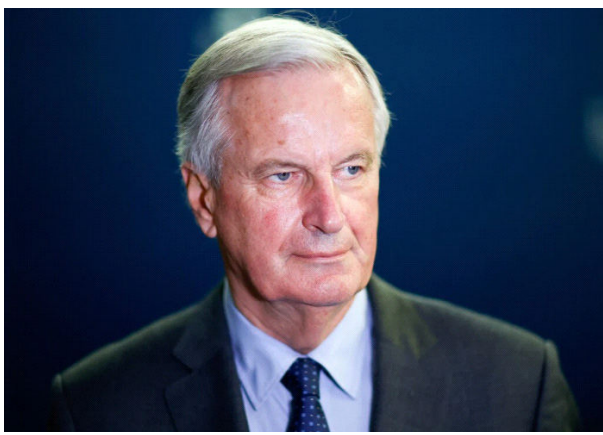
Vehicles transporting prohibited idols will be closely monitored, and violators of the guidelines face fines of up to ₹50,000. Continued non-compliance could result in additional penalties ranging from ₹10,000 to ₹15,00,000, the DPCC warned.

To mitigate pollution, the DPCC is promoting eco-friendly idol immersion practices. Residents are advised to use designated immersion sites or artificial ponds. Decanted water from these sites should be repurposed for gardening, while biodegradable materials from idols should be composted.

The DPCC has also announced plans for water quality assessments before, during, and after the immersion process to ensure environmental compliance. Awareness campaigns are being launched to educate the public on the importance of using eco-friendly idols and following the new guidelines.







## Macron Appoints Former EU Brexit Negotiator Michel Barnier as French Prime Minister

French President Emmanuel Macron has appointed Michel Barnier, the European Union's former chief Brexit negotiator, as his new prime minister following weeks of negotiations after an inconclusive snap election in July. Barnier, 73, a seasoned conservative politician, previously held key roles in French governments and as an EU Commissioner.

The appointment comes amid political deadlock, as no party secured a majority in the recent parliamentary elections. Macron's centrist coalition lost significant seats, and despite the left's New Popular Front alliance winning the most votes, Macron ruled out forming a government with them.

The far-right National Rally (RN), one of the largest parties in parliament, signaled cautious openness to Barnier's appointment, provided he addresses immigration and electoral reforms. However, RN lawmakers emphasized the demand for proportional representation and the dissolution of parliament by next July.

Political uncertainty remains, with doubts over whether Barnier's government will be able to pass reforms in a hung parliament.

## India Emerges as Top Emerging Market Pick for Morgan Stanley, Set to Overtake China in MSCI Index



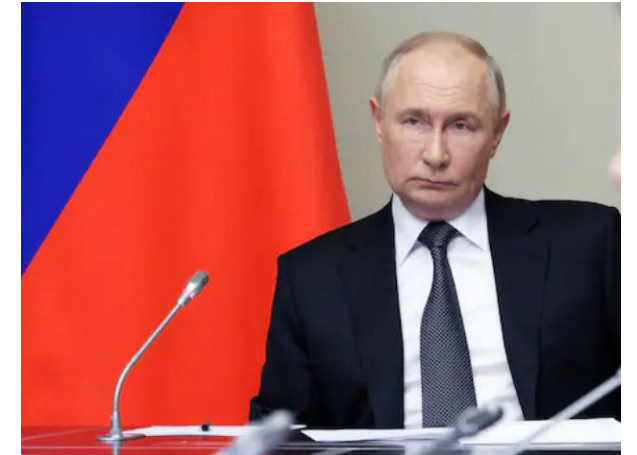
Morgan Stanley has reaffirmed India as its top pick among emerging markets, placing it as the second favorite behind Japan in the Indo-Pacific region. The investment bank noted that India is on the verge of surpassing China as the most influential country in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index, potentially attracting more foreign investment and boosting the ongoing stock market rally.

India's weightage in the MSCI Emerging Markets Index rose to 19.8% following a recent adjustment in August, narrowing the gap with China, whose weightage has fallen to 24.2% from 39.1% in December 2020. India's share has nearly doubled since 2020, driven

by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) who have poured in over ₹531.78 billion (\$6.33 billion) into Indian equities so far in 2024.

Morgan Stanley analysts, led by Ridham Desai, predict that India's stock market rally, with a 16% gain in the Nifty 50 this year, is only "past the halfway mark." They expect continued inflows, driven by policy stability, global interest rate cuts, and domestic institutional investors, to fuel the next phase of market growth.

Morgan Stanley remains bullish on India, favoring cyclical sectors and large-cap stocks, with an overweight stance on financials, technology, consumer discretionary, and industrials.



## Putin Acknowledges India's Role in Efforts to Resolve Ukraine Conflict

Russian President Vladimir Putin has named India as one of three countries he is in regular contact with regarding efforts to resolve the ongoing Ukraine conflict. During the plenary session of the Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) in Vladivostok, Putin highlighted the involvement of India, along with China and Brazil, in seeking peaceful solutions to the crisis, according to Russian state news agency TASS.

"If there is a desire from Ukraine to continue negotiations, I am open to that," Putin reportedly said. His comments come two weeks after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's historic visit to Ukraine, where Modi engaged in talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, urging Russia and Ukraine to resolve their differences diplomatically.

Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov also emphasized the "highly constructive" relationship between Modi and Putin, noting India's potential to mediate between the conflicting parties. Peskov stated that Modi's open communication with both Putin and Zelenskyy presents a valuable opportunity for India to influence the global dialogue on the conflict.

Although no specific plans for mediation are in place, Peskov acknowledged India's potential to help facilitate peace discussions. PM Modi's visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian prime minister, underscored India's commitment to peaceful resolution, with Modi offering India's assistance in ending the war.

Modi's nearly nine-hour stay in Kyiv on August 23 followed his summit talks with Putin six weeks prior, which sparked concern in some Western capitals. During his talks with Zelenskyy, Modi reiterated that India stands for peace and is willing to contribute actively to finding a resolution.

## ISB and IIM Ahmedabad Shine in LinkedIn's Top Global MBA Programmes

LinkedIn has unveiled its prestigious list of the top 20 MBA programmes worldwide, with two Indian institutions making a notable impact. The Indian School of Business (ISB) has been ranked 6th globally, while the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad holds the 19th position. This ranking highlights the growing recognition of Indian business schools on the global stage.

LinkedIn's rankings are aimed at guiding professionals in selecting the best MBA programmes to advance their careers. The list is based on a comprehensive analysis of career outcomes for MBA graduates from across the globe. Several factors are considered in this analysis, including job placement rates, promotion rates, network strength, leadership potential, and gender diversity.

Stanford University secured the top spot on the list, followed by INSEAD and Harvard University. The rankings also include prominent institutions like the University of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Northwestern University. ISB's placement in the 6th position globally, ahead of several top-tier US and European schools, is a remarkable achievement. IIM Ahmedabad, another highly respected institution in India, holds the 19th spot, further emphasizing the global competitiveness of Indian MBA programmes.

The methodology behind LinkedIn's rankings evaluates various dimensions of career success for MBA graduates. These include job placement, promotion rates, the strength of alumni networks, leadership potential, and gender diversity. Job placement looks at hiring rates and the percentage of graduates securing full-time roles within a year of graduation. Promotion rates focus on how quickly alumni advance to senior management positions. Network strength is



determined by the quality and growth of alumni networks, including connections with senior professionals. Leadership potential is gauged by the proportion of alumni who reach C-Suite or entrepreneurial roles post-MBA, while gender diversity assesses the balance between male and female graduates.

The recognition of ISB and IIM Ahmedabad underscores the growing global impact of Indian business schools in shaping successful careers. Their inclusion in the top 20 MBA programmes worldwide highlights the increasing importance of Indian institutions in global business education and career advancement.



## Jagmeet Singh Withdraws NDP Support from Trudeau's Liberal Govt

In a significant political shakeup, Jagmeet Singh, leader of Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP), has announced the withdrawal of his party's support for Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's minority Liberal government. This move comes ahead of next year's general election and signals the end of a confidence-and-supply agreement between the two parties. In a video message posted on social media, Singh criticized Trudeau for failing to combat corporate greed and warned that the Liberals are unfit to take on the opposition Conservatives, who are showing strong gains in recent polls.

"Justin Trudeau has proven again and again he will always cave to corporate greed. The Liberals have let people down. They don't deserve another chance from Canadians," Singh said. He further emphasized the upcoming challenge posed by the Conservatives under Pierre Poilievre, warning against potential cuts to social services and benefits for workers, retirees, and families.

The NDP-Liberal agreement, forged in 2022, was meant to keep Trudeau's government afloat until October 2025. However, NDP insiders suggest the decision to end the deal had been under discussion for two weeks before Singh's sudden announcement.



## Xi Pledges \$51 Billion in Support for Africa Amid Accusations of China's "Debt Diplomacy"

Chinese President Xi Jinping has pledged nearly \$51 billion in financial aid and investment for Africa, reinforcing China's role as the continent's largest bilateral lender. Speaking at the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Summit in Beijing, Xi committed to boosting infrastructure projects, creating 1 million jobs, and supporting economic development across the debt-distressed continent.

Xi's promises include 360 billion yuan (\$50.7 billion) in assistance, with 210 billion provided through credit lines and 70 billion in fresh investments by Chinese companies. The funding will be used for industrial, agricultural, and infrastructure projects, as well as the launch of 30 clean energy initiatives across Africa.

Although Xi did not address Africa's rising debt in his speech, the summit's Beijing Action Plan for 2024-2027 outlined terms for debt repayment postponements. The plan also proposed establishing an African rating agency to improve financial assessments.



## Muhammad Yunus Urges Sheikh Hasina to Remain Silent During Exile in India

Muhammad Yunus, head of Bangladesh's interim government, has expressed displeasure over former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's political remarks during her exile in India, calling it an "unfriendly gesture" that strains relations between the two nations. In an interview with PTI, Yunus emphasized that while Bangladesh values its strong ties with India, Hasina's public statements are causing discomfort.

Yunus, appointed Chief Advisor following Hasina's ouster after widespread anti-government protests, said her continued commentary from India complicates efforts to restore peace in Bangladesh. He asserted that Hasina must remain silent until Bangladesh officially requests her extradition.

"If India wants to keep her until Bangladesh needs her back, the condition should be that she has to keep quiet," Yunus said, adding that her speeches from abroad have been detrimental to both countries.

Hasina fled to India after resigning on August 5, following mass protests against her government. Her stay in India has fueled speculation, and Yunus hinted that her public remarks, including a recent demand for justice over violence in Bangladesh, have created unnecessary tensions.

Yunus also criticized the narrative that portrays Sheikh Hasina as the only leader capable of maintaining stability in Bangladesh, urging India to move beyond this perception. "India is captivated by the narrative that Bangladesh will turn into Afghanistan without Hasina. This needs to change," Yunus remarked. He dismissed concerns raised by India regarding attacks on Hindu minorities in Bangladesh as exaggerated, stating that such incidents are being used as a political excuse.





## Market Declines Amid Pressure from Reliance, Bharti Airtel

Pharma Hits Lifetime High, Titan and ITC Resist Losses

Stock market indices closed lower today as shares of Reliance and Bharti Airtel fell. After a stagnant start, the benchmark indices fluctuated within a narrow range before hitting intraday lows. Lack of support from European and international markets contributed to the decline. Titan and ITC managed to avoid losses, while the market breadth on the BSE favored buyers, with 2,260 stocks gaining and 1,667 losing. The rupee settled at 83.97 against the dollar.



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The BSE Sensex opened at 82,469, up from the previous close of 82,352, and touched an intraday low of 82,130. It reached a high of 82,617 before closing at 82,201, down by 151 points. The NSE Nifty opened at 25,250, dipped to a low of 25,127, and peaked at 25,275, eventually closing 53 points lower at 25,145. Nifty Bank gained 72 points to settle at 51,473.

Among the Nifty50, 17 companies gained while 33 lost. Titan, LTI Mindtree, Wipro, BPCL, and ITC were among the gainers, whereas Cipla, Dr. Reddy's, Coal India, Reliance, and Britannia were notable losers. Sector-wise, indices for Bank, Finance, IT, Media, Metal, PSU Bank, Private Bank, and Consumer Durables saw slight rises. Oil and gas, realty, pharma, FMCG, and auto indices also rose.

In corporate news, Reliance Industries approved a bonus share issue and an increase in authorized share capital. PTC Industries received orders from Israel Aerospace, and Ease My Trip will set up a new company for electric buses. Honeywell Automation began manufacturing battery storage systems, and Max Estates raised Rs.800 crore under the QIP scheme. MOIL shares surged as production hit record levels.

### Recommended Stocks:

#### 1. Titan Company Limited (TITAN)

Titan has been a consistent performer, driven by strong demand in the jewelry segment and robust expansion in its watches and eyewear businesses. The company avoided losses in today's weak market, reflecting its strength in consumer demand. Titan has been benefiting from festive season demand and its ability to maintain margins despite inflationary pressures. Titan is a good buy for short- to medium-term investors, given its strong fundamentals and positive consumer demand.



#### 2. Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)

IOC has been under pressure due to global crude oil price fluctuations. However, the com-



pany's refining and marketing operations remain solid. Any stabilization in oil prices could benefit IOC in the near term. The approval for bonus shares and authorized capital increase signals confidence from the management. These developments could attract more investor interest. IOC is a good buy on dips for long-term investors looking for exposure to the oil and gas sector, particularly after the bonus share announcement.

#### 3. Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company (CholaFin)

CholaFin has shown strong growth in its lending business, particularly in vehicle financing and SME loans. The financial sector has been performing well, and CholaFin is benefiting from increasing demand for consumer and vehicle loans. The company's strong financial results and expanding loan book indicate a positive future outlook. CholaFin is a strong buy for short-term traders and long-term investors, given its solid fundamentals and sector growth.



#### 4. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)

IRCTC remains a strong player in the railway services sector, benefiting from its monopoly in online ticketing and catering services. The stock has shown resilience, despite market volatility. With the return of travel demand post-pandemic, IRCTC has seen strong revenue growth from its ticketing and tourism services.



#### 5. Info Edge (Naukri)

Naukri has been benefiting from a strong job market, particularly in the tech and IT sectors. The company's recruitment services and job portals have seen increased demand. Info Edge's investments in various tech startups and its leadership in the job portal space make it a strong player in the tech-driven recruitment sector. Naukri is a solid buy for both short- and long-term investors.



## India's Digital Payments Surge: UPI Dominates Market

India's digital payments sector is experiencing remarkable growth, with transaction volumes increasing by 42% year-on-year (YoY) in FY 2023-24, as revealed in a new PwC report. The industry is projected to expand threefold, with transaction volumes expected to climb from 159 billion in FY 2023-24 to 481 billion by FY 2028-29.



The market value of transactions is also set to nearly double, growing from INR 265 trillion to ₹593 trillion over the same period. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) remains a key driver of this growth. UPI saw a substantial 57% YoY increase in transaction volume in FY 2023-24, surpassing 131 billion transactions.

By FY 2028-29, UPI transactions are an-

anticipated to reach 439 billion, representing an impressive 91% of India's retail digital payment transactions. In FY 2023 alone, UPI accounted for over 75% of the total transaction volume, underlining its central role in the digital payments ecosystem. This growth trend has continued into FY 2024, with UPI transactions valued at ₹199.9 trillion.

Additionally, the digital payment infrastructure is rapidly growing across India, including Tier 2, 3, and 4 cities. QR code usage has surged by over 30% in FY 2023-24, and innovations like soundboxes and new activation strategies are further driving the adoption of digital payments, particularly in smaller cities.

The PwC report forecasts that daily UPI transactions may hit 1 billion by FY 2027-28 and could soar to 1.4 billion by FY 2028-29, reflecting UPI's expanding market penetration and technological advancements. As UPI usage rises, debit card transactions are declining, with consumers increasingly favoring UPI for its convenience.

## Adani Group Seeks \$1.5 Billion in Dollar Bond Sales to Refinance Debt

Billionaire Gautam Adani's conglomerate is negotiating with global banks to raise at least \$1.5 billion through dollar bond sales, marking a significant move in its recovery from a short seller attack. The funds are intended to refinance existing project debt, with the Adani Group aiming to complete the bond sales in multiple tranches by the end of February, according to sources who requested anonymity.

The bonds will primarily be issued by Adani Green Energy Ltd. and Adani Energy Solutions Ltd., as well as through special purpose vehicles. The issuance plan includes both green and sustainability-linked bonds, with discussions ongoing with over ten banks across Japan, Europe, and the Middle East.



The Adani Group, however, did not immediately respond to requests for comment on these developments.

This move follows the conglomerate's return to the dollar bond market in March, its first since a report by short seller Hindenburg Research in early 2023. The report accused the Adani Group of fraud and stock manipulation, allegations which the group has consistently denied. India's market regulator SEBI has also cleared the group of wrongdoing.

Despite these developments, the performance of Adani's 18-year bonds, issued earlier this year, has been lackluster. The bonds have seen a steady decline in the secondary market, trading at approximately 96 cents on the dollar as of Thursday.

## Gold Prices Drop to Two-Week Low



Gold prices have continued their downward trend, falling for the fourth consecutive session as market sentiment weakens in anticipation of a potential rate cut by the US Federal Reserve. The precious metal dropped to its lowest level in two weeks, reflecting the impact of shifting expectations around the Fed's upcoming policy meeting.

Spot gold prices declined by 0.2%, trading at \$2,486 per ounce, while US gold futures also dipped by 0.2% to \$2,518.30 per ounce. In the domestic market, 10 grams of gold on the Multi Commodity Ex-

change (MCX) saw a decrease of ₹170, bringing the price to ₹71,200 per 10 grams. Similarly, gold on the Comex fell by \$9 per ounce, reaching \$2,483 per ounce.

The decline in gold prices comes amid growing speculation that the US Federal Reserve might implement a 0.50 basis point rate cut at its policy meeting scheduled for the 18th of this month. This potential cut has fueled uncertainty in the market, pushing investors to adopt a cautious approach, contributing to the continued weakening of gold prices.

## Indian Merchandise Exports Expected to Improve in H2 2024 Amid Global Trade Upturn



The World Trade Organization (WTO) has reported a potential boost for Indian merchandise exports in the latter half of 2024, following an uptick in global trade volume, as indicated by the WTO Goods Trade Barometer. Despite this positive outlook, uncertainties remain due to shifting monetary policies in advanced economies and ongoing weakness in export orders.

Indian goods exports have faced significant challenges recently, largely due to decreased demand from Western markets. For the financial year 2023-24 (FY24), India's merchandise exports experienced a decline of 3.1 percent. The drop has been more pronounced in labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, leather, and gems and

jewellery, which have struggled to maintain previous levels of output and demand.

The anticipated improvement in exports is contingent on several factors, including the stabilization of global trade conditions and resolution of the uncertainties surrounding monetary policies. The WTO's positive projection offers a glimmer of hope for Indian exporters, who are eagerly awaiting a rebound in global demand and more favorable trade conditions.

As the global trade environment continues to evolve, Indian exporters will be closely monitoring these developments to adapt and capitalize on potential growth opportunities in the second half of the year.





# The IC-814 Hijacking and Its Lasting Impact on India's Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The hijacking of Indian Airlines flight IC-814 in December 1999 is a chilling reminder of how vulnerable even large nations can be to acts of terrorism. The crisis, which unfolded over eight harrowing days, tested the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led Indian government in ways that would leave a lasting imprint on the country's counter-terrorism policies. The actions of the Pakistan-based terrorist group Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), their demands, and the subsequent release of three dangerous terrorists in exchange for the hostages left a bitter aftertaste that continues to shape India's response to such crises.

The hijacking began on December 24, 1999, when Indian Airlines flight IC-814 took off from Kathmandu for Delhi. What should have been a routine two-hour flight turned into an eight-day nightmare for the 176 passengers and crew aboard the Airbus A300. The hijackers—operatives of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen—commandeered the plane and took it on a journey that saw it touch down in Amritsar, Lahore, Dubai, and finally, Taliban-controlled Kandahar, Afghanistan. Once in Kandahar, the situation spiraled out of India's control, forcing the government into difficult negotiations.

## A Hostage Crisis with Far-Reaching Demands



The hijackers' initial demands were extreme, seeking the release of 36 terrorists, the body of militant commander Sajjad Afghani, and a \$200 million ransom. These demands were rejected as "un-Islamic" by the Taliban, leading to revised negotiations where Indian officials, including Ajit Doval, faced pressure to release Maulana Masood Azhar in exchange for 15 hostages. Though initially rejected, the escalating crisis and concern for the hostages led the Indian government to ultimately release three notorious terrorists—Masood Azhar, Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar, and Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh—who later played pivotal roles in global terror activities.

## The Terrorists Behind the Demands

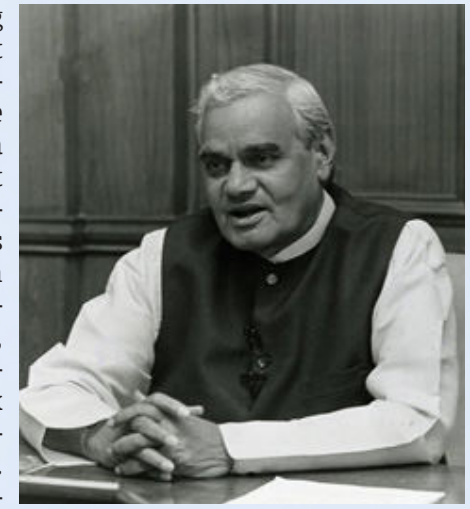


Hijackers of IC 814 - Ibrahim Athar, Sunny Gazi, Shahid Sayed, Mistri Zahoor & Shakir (Left to Right)

Sajjad Afghani, a commander of Harkat-ul-Ansar, was killed in 1999 during a failed jailbreak. His cellmate, Maulana Masood Azhar, later became a notorious terrorist, founding Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), responsible for major attacks like the 2001 Indian Parliament and 2019 Pulwama attacks. Azhar's release during the IC-814 hijacking had significant consequences, with his ties to Al-Qaeda and Pakistan's ISI strengthening his global terror influence. Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, also released during the hijacking, later gained infamy for the 2002 murder of journalist Daniel Pearl, further complicating the hijacking's legacy.

## Negotiating with Terrorists: A Double-Edged Sword

The IC-814 hijacking was not just a test of India's diplomatic and intelligence capabilities; it was a moral quandary that laid bare the difficult choices nations must make when faced with terrorism. On one hand, the Vajpayee government could not risk the lives of 176 passengers and crew. On the other, negotiating with terrorists—and worse, agreeing to their demands—was likely to embolden future terrorist activities. The release of Masood Azhar, Zargar, and Sheikh undoubtedly had lasting repercussions, with Azhar's Jaish-e-Mohammed becoming one of the most lethal terror groups targeting India.



Ajit Doval, who was part of the negotiating team, later admitted that the ISI's involvement played a crucial role in the outcome of the hijacking. Without the backing of Pakistan's intelligence agency, he suggested, the situation might have been resolved differently. Kandahar, where the negotiations took place, was not just a Taliban stronghold but also a base for Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network. The Taliban's control of the area, combined with the presence of global jihadist forces, created a perfect storm for India, one that left the government with few viable options.

## The Aftermath and Lessons Learned



The IC-814 hijacking forced India to reevaluate its counter-terrorism strategies and security protocols. It exposed the vulnerabilities in airport security, intelligence gathering, and crisis management. In the years since, India has made significant strides in improving its counter-terrorism capabilities. However, the specter of the Kandahar hijacking still looms large over the nation's approach to dealing with terrorism.

One of the biggest takeaways from the crisis was the need for a more coordinated global response to terrorism. The role of state actors like Pakistan in supporting terrorist activities has long been a point of contention between India and the international community. The hijacking underscored the importance of international cooperation in tackling terrorism, especially when state-sponsored groups are involved.

## Conclusion

The IC-814 hijacking remains one of the darkest chapters in India's modern history. It not only exposed the deep-rooted ties between terror groups and state actors but also highlighted the difficult choices governments face when negotiating with terrorists. The legacy of that incident continues to shape India's counter-terrorism strategies and serves as a stark reminder of the global nature of terrorism. While the lives of the hostages were saved, the long-term consequences of releasing Masood Azhar and others have left an indelible mark on India's fight against terror.







## EU to Review Google's Compliance Proposals on Fair Competition



European Union antitrust regulators are set to seek feedback next week on Google's latest proposals to comply with new tech regulations designed to foster fair competition, according to sources familiar with the matter. This review will determine whether Google faces formal charges for alleged antitrust violations.

In March, the European Commission initiated an investigation into Google to assess whether the tech giant favors its own vertical search engines—such as Google Shopping, Google Flights, and Google Hotels—over competing services. The inquiry also aims to determine if Google discriminates against third-party services in its search results.

This investigation was prompted by complaints from rivals, including comparison shopping sites, who allege that Google has not fully adhered to the EU's Digital Markets Act

(DMA). The DMA is intended to curb the dominance of major tech companies and ensure a fair competitive landscape for smaller businesses.

In response to the criticism, Google has put forward proposals to address these concerns. The company's plan includes creating a separate section in its search results for rival services, positioning it below its own product listing ads box. Additionally, Google has proposed to set up two adjacent boxes: one for intermediaries and another for direct suppliers such as airlines, hotels, and retailers.

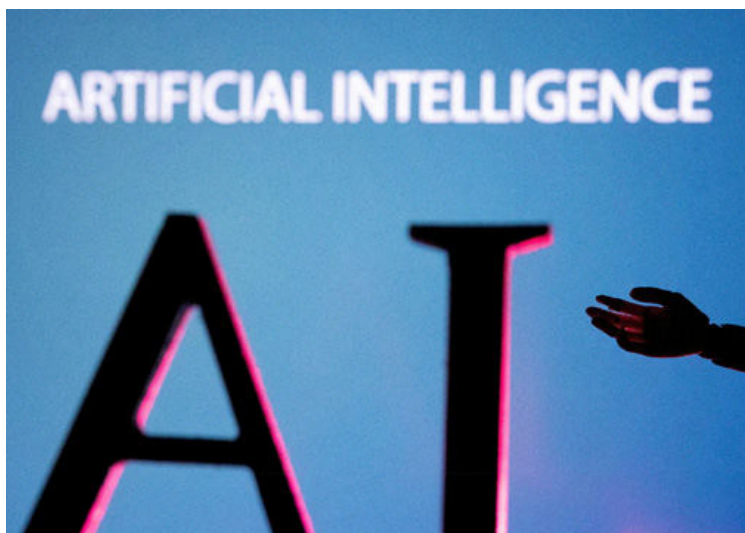
These measures aim to address the EU's concerns by providing more visibility and equal opportunity for competitors in search results. The effectiveness of these proposals will be evaluated through the upcoming feedback process, which will play a crucial role in shaping the regulatory outcome for Google.

## Australia to Introduce New AI Guidelines

Australia's centre-left government announced plans to introduce targeted artificial intelligence (AI) regulations aimed at ensuring human intervention and transparency amid the rapid adoption of AI technologies. Industry and Science Minister Ed Husic revealed 10 new voluntary AI guidelines and opened a month-long consultation to explore the possibility of making these guidelines mandatory in high-risk scenarios.

Husic emphasized that while AI offers significant benefits, there is a strong public demand for safeguards to prevent potential misuse. "Australians want stronger protections on AI; we've heard that, we've listened," Husic stated. The guidelines stress the importance of maintaining human control throughout an AI system's lifecycle to manage unintended consequences and ensure meaningful oversight. Companies will also be required to be transparent about AI's role in content creation.

Global concerns about misinformation and fake news fueled by AI tools have led to stringent regulations elsewhere. For instance, the European Union recently enacted comprehensive AI laws imposing strict transparency requirements on high-risk AI systems. In contrast, Australia's approach has been more flexible, relying on voluntary compliance until now.



The report also highlighted that current regulations are insufficient for managing high-risk AI scenarios. Husic noted that only a third of businesses using AI are adhering to responsible practices concerning safety, fairness, accountability, and transparency. With AI expected to create up to 200,000 jobs in Australia by 2030, Husic stressed the importance of equipping businesses to develop and utilize AI responsibly.

Australia has previously introduced eight voluntary principles for responsible AI use but has yet to implement specific AI laws. Husic's announcement indicates a shift towards more robust regulatory measures to address the evolving challenges posed by AI technologies.

## Why Just Drinking Water Isn't Enough

Whether you're enduring the blazing heat on your commute or waking up parched in the middle of the night, a tall glass of water can feel like a refreshing oasis. Water, being a fundamental need, plays a crucial role in our survival and health. Our bodies are approximately 70% water, which is lost through sweat and urine, making hydration essential. However, simply drinking water may not be sufficient to fully meet your body's needs.

Many people believe that adequate hydration is as simple as drinking enough water, but this belief can be misleading. According to insights from an Ayurvedic Health Coach, your water-drinking habits may need to be adjusted for optimal health benefits. For example, drinking water in large quantities at once or during meals might not be as beneficial as sipping throughout

the day or consuming it between meals.

In Ayurveda, the timing and manner of drinking water are considered important. Sipping warm water in the morning is often recommended to kickstart digestion, while drinking cold water during meals may be advised against, as it can impair digestive fire or Agni. Additionally, the quality of water is important; it should be clean and free of contaminants.

Understanding these nuances can help you refine your hydration habits. Drinking water is crucial, but integrating it with mindful practices and considering individual needs can enhance its benefits. For anyone seeking to optimize their hydration strategy, consulting with a health coach or following Ayurvedic principles might provide valuable guidance.



## Spanish Shoppers Use 'Upside Down' Pineapples in Supermarkets to Find Love

In Spain, a new dating trend has emerged as an alternative to monotonous dating apps: singles are flocking to popular grocery stores with exotic fruits in their shopping carts, hoping to spark romantic connections. This unconventional approach, popularized on TikTok, has seen varying degrees of success, reflecting a broader disillusionment with online dating.

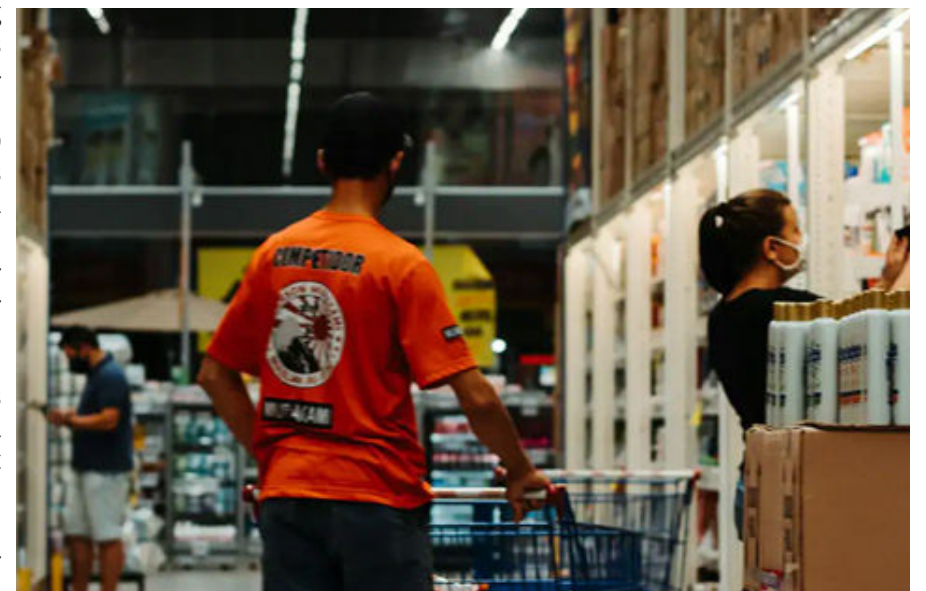
The trend gained attention when Spanish comedian Vivy Lin suggested that the 7 to 8 p.m. window at Mercadona stores is ideal for meeting potential partners. Gustavo Contreras, a 28-year-old waiter from Malaga, shared his experience of navigating his local Mercadona with an upside-down pineapple in search of romance. Despite encountering some curious glances, he didn't find a match, attributing a subsequent shortage of pineapples to the trend's rising popularity.

Fan, a resident of Barcelona, tried the pineapple method at a Mercadona near the Sagrada Familia but also failed to find a romantic connection. He observed that the method's appeal lies in its departure from the repetitive nature of dating apps. "People are bored with endless swiping and small talk," Fan said. "In-person

interactions offer a more genuine connection."

This trend highlights a growing frustration with dating apps, which many users find increasingly frustrating due to new pricing structures, complex algorithms, and concerns about interacting with real people versus AI chatbots. The dissatisfaction is exemplified by a recent class-action lawsuit against Match Group, the owner of Tinder and Hinge, which accused the company of designing apps to prolong user engagement rather than facilitating real-life connections.

As the pineapple method gains traction, it underscores a desire for more meaningful, face-to-face encounters over the impersonal nature of online dating platforms.



## iPhone 16 Pro Max Could Feature Up to 2TB Storage

With the anticipated launch of the iPhone 16 series just around the corner, excitement is building among Apple enthusiasts. Apple, known for its secrecy, has kept details about its new iPhones tightly under wraps, leading to a flood of speculations and leaks online. One intriguing rumor that has emerged is that the iPhone 16 Pro Max might be the largest iPhone ever produced, surpassing previous models in size.

A recent report has highlighted a significant

potential upgrade for the iPhone 16 Pro models: they may come with a maximum storage capacity of 2TB. If this rumor proves accurate, it would represent a substantial increase from the current 1TB maximum offered by previous iPhone Pro models. This upgrade could offer users significantly more space for apps, photos, videos, and other data, aligning with the growing demand for higher storage capacities in high-end smartphones.

As we count down the days to the official announcement, anticipation continues to build. The iPhone 16 series is expected to introduce several advancements and new features, but the possibility of a 2TB storage option stands out as a particularly noteworthy enhancement.

Stay tuned for more updates as the launch date approaches and additional details about the iPhone 16 series emerge.





## Historic Day for India at Paralympics: Harvinder Singh and Dharambir Shine

Harvinder Singh made history as the first Indian archer to win gold at the Paralympics, adding a remarkable achievement to India's already impressive performance at the Games. On the same day, Dharambir delivered a record-breaking throw in the club throw event, showcasing the prowess of Indian athletes.

Harvinder Singh, who previously secured a bronze medal in Tokyo, surpassed his earlier success with a commanding 6-0 victory over Poland's Lukasz Ciszek in the archery final. The 33-year-old from Haryana, who has overcome physical challenges from a young age, secured his place in Paralympic history with this gold medal. Dharambir also made headlines with an Asian record-breaking throw of 34.92 meters in the F51 club throw final, maintaining his lead throughout the competition. His performance was complemented by Pranav Soorma, who finished second with a throw of 34.59 meters. The F51 club throw event is designed for athletes with severe impairments, requiring them to generate power using only their shoulders and arms.



Adding to India's medal tally, world champion shot-putter Sachin Sarjerao Khilari won silver with a throw of 16.32 meters, setting a new Asian record and surpassing his previous best. Despite a strong challenge from Canada's Greg Stewart, who defended his gold, Khilari's performance was a significant highlight of the day.

India's overall medal haul now stands

at 24, including five gold, nine silver, and ten bronze medals, placing the nation 13th in the standings. This is India's best-ever performance at the Paralympics, with three days of competition still remaining.

In contrast, Indian shooters Nihal Singh and Rudransh Khandelwal did not advance to the finals in the mixed 50m pistol (SH1) event, with both finishing outside the top positions.

## Jos Buttler Out of England vs Australia T20Is; Phil Salt to Lead



England captain Jos Buttler has been ruled out of the T20I series against Australia due to a persistent right calf injury. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has also expressed concerns about his availability for the ODI series against Australia later this month. In Buttler's absence, Phil Salt, who recently captained the Manchester Originals in The Hundred, will lead the England side for the T20Is. All-rounder Jamie Overton has been added to the squad as well.

Jordan Cox, currently with the Test squad for the final match against Sri Lanka at The Oval, has been included in the ODI squad as cover. The three-match T20I series will commence on September 11 at the Rose Bowl in Southampton.

Following the T20Is, England will face Australia in a five-match ODI series starting September 19 at Trent Bridge. This series marks the beginning of a new chapter for

England cricket, with the team looking to rebound after failing to defend their ODI and T20 World Cup titles.

Marcus Trescothick will serve as interim coach for the series against Australia following the dismissal of Matthew Mott. Brendon McCullum is set to take over as head coach at the start of 2025.

**\*\*England T20I Squad\*\*:** Phil Salt (captain), Jofra Archer, Jacob Bethell, Brydon Carse, Jordan Cox, Sam Curran, Josh Hull, Will Jacks, Liam Livingstone, Saqib Mahmood, Dan Mousley, Adil Rashid, Jamie Overton, Reece Topley, John Turner.

**\*\*England ODI Squad\*\*:** Jos Buttler (captain), Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Brydon Carse, Ben Duckett, Josh Hull, Will Jacks, Matthew Potts, Adil Rashid, Phil Salt, Jamie Smith, Reece Topley, John Turner, Jordan Cox.

five months, starting with this series against Bangladesh, then moving on to three Tests against New Zealand at home in October-November, before a five-Test series against Australia for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Pant noted that teams like Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka excel in Asian conditions due to their familiarity with the wickets. "As the Indian cricket team,

we focus solely on our own standards and how we can improve. Regardless of the opposition, we strive to play with the same intensity and give our 100 percent every single day," he said.

He highlighted that no series can be taken lightly, given the narrow margins in international cricket. "The gap between international teams is very small, and you can't take any series lightly," Pant warned.

## Jannik Sinner Reaches First US Open Semi-Final with Win Over Daniil Medvedev

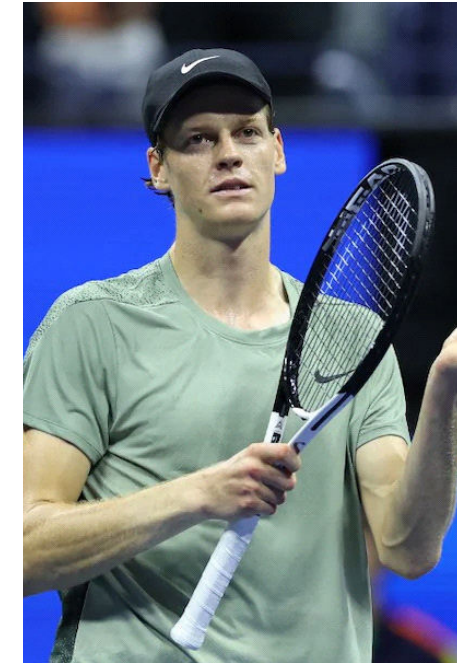
World number one Jannik Sinner secured his first US Open semi-final berth on Wednesday, overcoming 2021 champion and two-time runner-up Daniil Medvedev in a gripping four-set clash. Sinner, aiming for his second major title of the year after winning the Australian Open, triumphed 6-2, 1-6, 6-1, 6-4. He will next face Britain's 25th-ranked Jack Draper for a spot in the final.

At 23, Sinner is the sole top-10 player in the semi-finals. He will face number 12 Taylor Fritz or US compatriot Frances Tiafoe, ranked 20, in Friday's other semi-final. Sinner had previously defeated Medvedev from two sets down at the Australian Open, but the Russian avenged that loss in another five-set battle at Wimbledon.

Sinner commented on the match, "It was very tough, I knew it would be very physical. It was strange in the first two sets; whoever got the break seemed to gain momentum." He expressed anticipation for his match against Draper, noting their friendship off the court and Draper's impressive performance in the tournament so far.

In Wednesday's quarter-final, Sinner dominated the first set with two breaks, while Medvedev

committed 15 unforced errors to Sinner's six. Medvedev responded by breaking twice to win the second set. Sinner bounced back strongly, winning the third set in just 30 minutes. Despite Medvedev



saving two break points in the sixth game of the fourth set, Sinner secured a crucial break for a 4-3 lead and closed out the match.

Medvedev struggled with 57 unforced errors and had to save 10 of 15 break points, falling short of reaching his 10th Grand Slam semi-final.



## New Zealand Arrives in Greater Noida for One-Off Test Against Afghanistan

New Zealand's cricket team has arrived in Greater Noida ahead of their one-off Test match against Afghanistan, scheduled to start on September 9. This Test will mark the first-ever red-ball fixture between the two teams and will be played at the Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground.

The BlackCaps have assembled a strong squad for this Test, led by veteran pacer Tim Southee. The team features former captain Kane Williamson, who had earlier opted out of a central contract this year, as well as Devon Conway, Glenn Phillips, and Rachin Ravindra. Tom Latham remains the vice-captain.

New Zealand's squad includes five spin options: Michael Bracewell, Mitchell Santner, Ajaz Patel, and part-timers Phillips and Ravindra.

The team is set to hold their first practice session on Friday in preparation for the match.

This Test against Afghanistan is part of New Zealand's preparation for their upcoming two-match series against Sri Lanka, which will be crucial for the World Test Championship (WTC) standings. Following the series in Sri Lanka, New Zealand will return to India for a three-match Test series against the Indian team, led by Rohit Sharma. These matches, also part of the WTC calendar, will be played in Bengaluru, Pune, and Mumbai from October to November.

Currently, New Zealand holds the third position in the ICC WTC points table, trailing behind last edition's finalists, India and Australia.

## Pant Urges India to Stay Focused Ahead of Test Series Against Bangladesh

Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has urged the Indian cricket team to avoid underestimating Bangladesh in their upcoming two-Test series. Pant emphasized the need for India to continuously improve to maintain their edge over competitors. Bangladesh, fresh from a 2-0 series victory over Pakistan in Rawalpindi, will face India in the first Test in Chennai on September 19, followed by a match in Kanpur. India is set to play 10 Tests over the next







## Nani's HIT 3rd Case Glimpse Unveils Intense New Role



Following the blockbuster success of *\*Saripodhaa Sanivaaram\**, fans have been eagerly anticipating Nani's next project. Today, the much-anticipated announcement has arrived: Nani's forthcoming film is *\*HIT: The 3rd Case\**, directed by Sailesh Kolanu and produced by Prashanti Tipirneni under Wall Poster Cinema and Nani's Unanimous Productions.

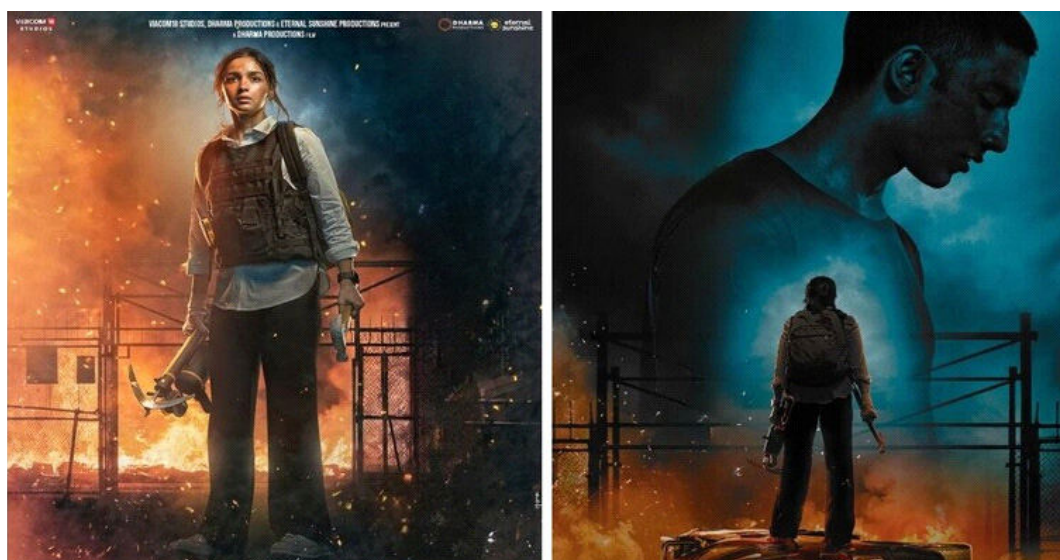
To build excitement, the makers released a teaser titled "Hunter's Command," offering a glimpse into Nani's character. The clip features a tense scene where two officers are in pursuit of a HIT officer, trying to rescue him from imminent danger. However, it turns out that the HIT officer, Arjun Sarkaar, is actually a threat himself.

Nani makes a striking and intense entrance, appearing with bloodied hands

and wielding an axe. His commanding presence is heightened by his signature smoking style, and he delivers a powerful line, "Get set and go," with a commanding voice that makes a lasting impact. This portrayal promises to be one of Nani's most fierce and compelling roles to date.

The teaser impresses with its technical prowess, showcasing exceptional camera work by Sanu John Varghese and an intense background score composed by Mickey J Meyer. The high-quality visuals and gripping music contribute to the film's anticipation.

With the release date set for May 1, 2025, the teaser has significantly heightened curiosity and excitement for *\*HIT: The 3rd Case\**. Fans and movie buffs alike are eagerly awaiting to see how Nani's new role unfolds on the big screen.



## Alia Bhatt Unveils New Posters for Jigra

Alia Bhatt has shared two striking new posters for her highly anticipated film *\*Jigra\**, which is set for release on October 11. The first poster features Bhatt prominently in the foreground, armed and determined, while Vedang Raina's silhouette looms in the background. The accompanying caption, "Tu mere protection mein hai. Jigra in cinemas 11th October," hints at a protective and intense storyline.

In the second poster, Bhatt's intense gaze directly engages the camera, conveying a sense of urgency and depth. The caption reads, "Kahaani bahut lambi hai aur bhai ke paas waqt bahut kam," which translates to "The story is very long but my brother has very little time." This caption adds an element of tension, suggesting a gripping narrative involving a race against time.

Bhatt's mother, veteran actress Soni Razdan, congratulated her daughter on the new posters, expressing support for the film. The film, directed by Vasana Bala, also features Jason Shah in a significant role.

*\*Jigra\** has generated considerable buzz, with Bhatt's dual poster reveal amplifying excitement among fans. The posters offer a glimpse into the film's high-stakes plot and Bhatt's dynamic role. The film's release date is eagerly anticipated, as it promises to deliver a compelling narrative and showcase Bhatt's impressive range as an actress.

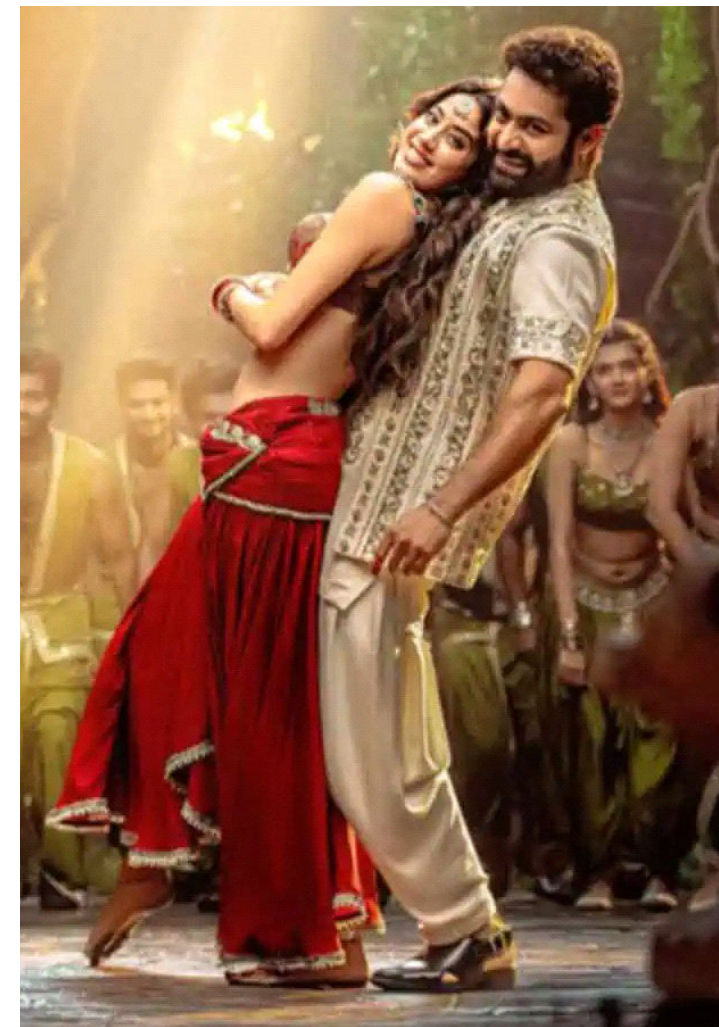
## Jr NTR and Janhvi Kapoor Set Screens Ablaze with New Single

The makers of the highly anticipated action drama *\*Devara: Part 1\** have just released their third single, "Daavudi," much to the excitement of fans. The song, unveiled on Wednesday, showcases a captivating dance number set against a dramatic water backdrop, featuring electrifying performances by Jr NTR and Janhvi Kapoor.

The video, which highlights the chemistry between the leads, sees Jr NTR and Janhvi Kapoor delivering energetic and dynamic dance moves that light up the screen. The stunning visuals and engaging choreography are set to make "Daavudi" a major highlight of the film's soundtrack.

Janhvi Kapoor shared the song on Instagram, expressing her enthusiasm and anticipation for the film's release. She captioned the post, "Here's the #Daavudi Video Song to keep you on track for the Blast on the Big Screens." Her post has generated significant buzz, drawing attention to the film and its vibrant new single.

With its impressive visuals and catchy beats, "Daavudi" is poised to be a hit among audiences and adds to the growing excitement surrounding *\*Devara: Part 1\**. Fans are eagerly awaiting more updates and the film's release, as the song further amplifies the anticipation for this high-octane action drama.



## Double Ismart Arrives On OTT

The debate over the theatrical window for Telugu films has intensified with the recent release of Ram Pothineni's *\*Double Ismart\**. The film, directed by Puri Jagannath, hit theaters on August 15, 2024, and has since made a swift transition to streaming on Amazon Prime. This rapid move from the big screen to digital platforms has caught the attention of both fans and critics.

*\*Double Ismart\** received a mixed response from audiences. While the film's intriguing blend of sci-fi elements with mass appeal was appreciated, it faced criticism for its lack of emotional depth and weak writing. Despite these drawbacks, Ram Pothineni's energetic performance and Puri Jagannath's attempt to recreate the magic of his previous successes offered some enjoyment to viewers.

The film's quick shift to OTT has sparked discussions about the changing landscape of film



releases. Originally, the plan was for *\*Double Ismart\** to be available on digital platforms 45 days after its theatrical release. However, the movie's early debut on Amazon Prime—taking less than half the anticipated time—has certainly thrilled fans eager to watch it from the comfort of their homes.

This shift highlights a broader

trend in the industry where the traditional theatrical window is shrinking, raising questions about the impact on both film profitability and viewer experience. As the debate continues, the rapid availability of films like *\*Double Ismart\** on OTT platforms signals a significant change in how audiences access and enjoy cinema.

## Prabhas, Rohit Shetty likely to work together for 1st time

Bollywood is abuzz with excitement as Tollywood stars make their mark in Bollywood films. Jr. NTR is set to star in "War 2," continuing the trend of Telugu actors crossing over to Hindi cinema.

Adding to the buzz, pan-Indian superstar Prabhas is rumored to have a special role in "Singham Again," directed by Rohit Shetty and starring Ajay Devgn. Although details about Prabhas's role remain under wraps, a recent poster featuring the theme music from his film "Kalki" has fueled speculation. If confirmed, Prabhas's inclusion would certainly heighten the film's appeal.

This wouldn't be Prabhas's first cameo in Bollywood. He

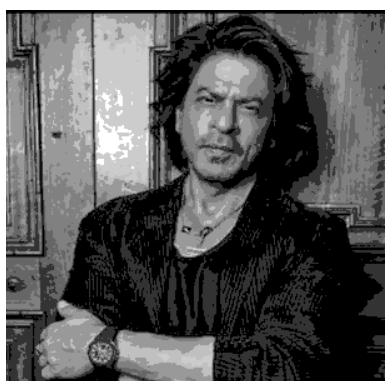


previously appeared in "Action Jackson," dancing alongside Ajay Devgn as a favor to director Prabhu Deva.

The excitement doesn't stop there. Rumors suggest that Tamil star Suriya, famous for his role in the original "Singham," might also make a guest appearance in this

new installment. This potential addition has further amplified fan enthusiasm.

"Singham Again," the third film in the popular Singham series, was originally slated for an August release but has been pushed to Diwali to accommodate additional production work.



## Shah Rukh Khan Tops List of Celebrity Taxpayers in 2024

According to Fortune India's latest report, Shah Rukh Khan has emerged as the highest taxpayer among Indian celebrities for the fiscal year 2024, paying an impressive Rs 92 crore. Tamil cinema's renowned star, Vijay, follows closely, having paid Rs 80 crore in taxes. Salman Khan, another prominent figure in Indian cinema, ranks third with a tax payment of Rs 75 crore. The list also includes other major celebrities from various fields. Legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan paid Rs 71 crore, while Ajay Devgn contributed Rs 42 crore. Ranbir Kapoor, Hrithik Roshan, Kapil Sharma, Kareena Kapoor, and Shahid Kapoor also made notable contributions, paying Rs 36 crore, Rs 28 crore, Rs 26 crore, Rs 20 crore, and Rs 14 crore respectively.