



**Weather Forecast**

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
TEMPERATURE	TEMPERATURE	TEMPERATURE
H 28° C L 22° C	H 29° C L 24° C	H 26° C L 24° C

# E-Car Race Controversy: Ponguleti Calls for Action

**Governor Greenlights ACB Investigation  
Ponguleti Questions BRS Leadership  
Law Will Take Its Course: Minister**

TPN , Hyderabad: The e-car race controversy in Telangana took a dramatic turn as senior leader Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy made explosive allegations and announced that the government's report on the issue will be sent to the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) through the Chief Secretary (CS) by tonight or tomorrow.

Addressing the media, Ponguleti claimed that the governor had granted permission for the investigation after consulting legal experts. He emphasized that the law would take its natural course in the matter, and those found guilty would face the consequences.

"The stage is set for K.T. Rama Rao's (KTR) arrest," Ponguleti said, pointing to alleged irregu-

larities and corruption in the organization of the e-car race. He criticized the ruling Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) MLAs, accusing them of behaving like "gangsters" in the Assembly and obstructing fair discussions on crucial bills.

Highlighting the importance of the cabinet meeting, Ponguleti revealed that the main discussion revolved around the e-car race issue. "We sought permission from the governor to proceed, and after thorough deliberation, the governor sent the report with his approval," he stated.

He also took a dig at political rivals, saying, "Those who go to jail and return engage in \*padaya-



tras\*, while some prefer \*knee yatras\*—that's their choice."

The report, once submitted to the ACB, is expected to spark a detailed investigation. Ponguleti reiterated his stance that the law would handle the issue impartially, ensuring justice is served. This controversy has added fuel to the ongoing political rivalry in Telangana, further intensifying the battle between Ponguleti and BRS leaders.



# Telangana Cabinet Approves Key Bills

**51 Gram Panchayats Merged with Municipalities  
Bhumata to Replace Dharani System  
Salary and Pension Hike Approved**

TPN , Hyderabad: The Telangana Cabinet, in a crucial meeting, approved several key bills, including the Panchayat Raj Amendment Act and the Revenue Records (ROR) Act. The meeting, which lasted over three hours, involved extensive discussions on significant legislative changes.

One of the major decisions included the merger of 51 gram panchayats located within the Outer Ring Road (ORR) area with nearby municipalities. This move is expected to streamline governance and enhance urban development in these regions.

The proposed amendments to the ROR Act also garnered attention, with the Cabinet approving significant changes to the existing Dharani land records portal. The new system, named \*Bhumata\*, is set to replace Dharani, promising improved efficiency and

transparency in land records management. Additionally, the Cabinet cleared bills related to Goods and Services Tax (GST), a salary and pension hike for government employees, and amendments to municipal corporations. These measures are aimed at addressing governance, fiscal, and administrative priorities.

The Cabinet extensively reviewed the legislative agenda, including bills to be tabled in the upcoming assembly session. Sources indicate that the approved measures will focus on enhancing public services and addressing developmental needs.

The decisions highlight the government's commitment to addressing administrative challenges and improving public welfare. The approved bills are set to be introduced in the Telangana Assembly tomorrow for further deliberation and enactment.

# BRS Issues Notice Against Finance Minister Over Debt Claims

**BRS Accuses Finance Minister of Misleading Assembly on Debts  
RBI Report Reveals Actual Debt Figures, Contradicting Minister's Claims  
BRS Serves Notice Against Minister for Violating Assembly Rules**

TPN , Hyderabad: BRS party leader Bhatti Vikramarka has issued a violation of rights notice against Telangana's Finance Minister, accusing him of misleading the Assembly regarding the state's debt figures. The BRS party claims that the Finance Minister's statement on the state's debts is inaccurate and has tarnished the reputation of the previous BRS government.



Bhatti Vikramarka stated that the Finance Minister, in his speech, incor-

rectly claimed that Telangana's debts had reached Rs 7 lakh crores. However, according to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report titled \*Handbook of Statistics on Indian States\*, Telangana's actual debts stand at Rs 3.89 lakh crores, as of March 2024. The RBI report reveals that in 2014-15, Telangana's total debts were Rs 72,658 crores, and by March 2024, this amount had risen to Rs 3.89 lakh crores.

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**'One Nation, One Election' Bill to be Tabled in Lok Sabha Today**

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# Deepadas Munshi Sparks Controversy

**Munshi Criticizes Weak Leadership in Hyderabad  
Anjan Yadav Questions Ministerial Exclusion  
Clashes Erupt Over Minority Leaders' Role**



TPN , Hyderabad: A meeting of Greater Hyderabad Congress workers at Gandhi Bhavan turned chaotic, with sharp exchanges and heated arguments dominating the session. The meeting was attended by AICC in-charge Deepadas Munshi and Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, where discussions on party strategies and ministerial aspirations led to significant disagreements.

Deepadas Munshi's remarks created ripples within the party. He stated, "Not a single Congress leader in Hyderabad has the guts to counter leaders like K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) and Harish Rao." He also criticized the

Congress's weak standing in Hyderabad, alleging that "public support in the city comes cheaply, with people attending meetings for Rs. 100 or 200." These statements were viewed as a direct critique of the local Congress leadership and the party's current dynamics in the region.

Adding to the tension, senior leader Anjan Kumar Yadav voiced dissatisfaction over being denied a ministerial post despite his contributions. "Shouldn't I be made a minister? My son Anil was given a Rajya Sabha seat—what more is expected?" he questioned, sparking a debate among party members.



The meeting saw further discord as activists clashed over leadership roles and minority leaders' contributions to the party. Comments from senior leader V. Hanumantha Rao (VH) accusing minority leaders of limited engagement beyond monetary incentives further fueled the arguments, prompting protests from minority representatives present.

The internal bickering forced Deepadas Munshi to leave the meeting midway, underscoring growing discontent and unresolved issues within the party. The incident highlights the Congress's challenges in maintaining unity and addressing internal grievances as it prepares for future electoral battles.

**SINGAM PRODUCTS DRY NUTS SPICES**

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**Senior citizens small scale Industry**

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## 'One Nation, One Election' Bill to be Tabled in Lok Sabha Today

**TPN Correspondent, New Delhi :** The long-awaited 'One Nation, One Election' bill is set to be tabled in the Lok Sabha today. Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal will move the bill, which aims to synchronize elections for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The proposed legislation will be sent to the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for further scrutiny.

Although the bill is a significant step toward electoral reforms, its implementation is not expected before 2034. Amendments related to the bill are anticipated to come into force in 2029, marking a gradual shift toward unified elections across the country.

## Historic Move: No Entry for Former MLAs, MPs, MLCs in Telangana Assembly



**TPN , Hyderabad:** In a historic development, the Telangana Assembly has imposed a ban on the entry of former MLAs, MPs, and MLCs into the inner lobbies for the first time. The decision has sparked outrage among former public representatives, who are voicing their dissatisfaction, claiming they have never encountered such restrictions before.

In addition to barring former lawmakers, the Assembly has also restricted media access within the premises, issuing orders preventing the taking of photos or videos of members of the Legislative Assembly and others. This move has raised concerns and anger, particularly from opposition members, who argue that it undermines transparency and accountability.

The new measures have drawn widespread criticism, with many accusing Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's government of fostering a culture of exclusion and harassment, even towards former public representatives. The decision has triggered debates about governance and the treatment of those who previously held public office.

## Reddy Alleges Ration Rice Smuggling to Kakinada Port



goods are distributed only to those who genuinely need them. He emphasized the need for a thorough investigation by Civil Supply officials to identify and remove ration cards from those who are ineligible. The Council Chairman further stated that the government was wasting valuable resources by issuing ration cards to non-poor individuals.

**TPN , Hyderabad:** Telangana Legislative Council Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy has made controversial remarks, alleging that ration rice is being smuggled from Telangana to Kakinada Port. Speaking to the media, Reddy claimed that there were discrepancies in the distribution of ration cards, with many ineligible individuals receiving them, while the real beneficiaries were being neglected.

Reddy demanded that the government take immediate action to ensure that ration

In response to Reddy's allegations, Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy confirmed that ration rice was indeed being smuggled, lending weight to the claims made by the Council Chairman. The controversy has raised concerns over the effectiveness of the ration distribution system in the state, with calls for greater accountability and transparency in the process. The state government is expected to take action to address these issues and ensure that the benefits of the public distribution system reach the deserving families.

# Telangana Govt Defends Delayed Panchayat Payments

**Seethakka Slams BRS for Lethargy in Clearing Bills Rs 450 Crore Released, but Pending Bills Still Mounting BRS MLA Criticizes Congress for Harassing Sarpanches Delay in Payments Hits Telangana's Local Governance**

**TPN , Hyderabad:** Telangana's Women and Child Welfare Minister Seethakka revealed in the Assembly on December 16 that Gram Panchayat bills worth Rs 690 crore are currently pending. The disclosure came in response to a query by former Telangana Minister and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader Harish Rao.

Seethakka clarified that while Rs 450 crore had already been released to Gram Panchayats, some bills remain pending. She attributed the delay to the elections held last year and emphasized that more time is needed to clear the pending dues.

The Minister pointed out that the backlog of bills had accumulated during the tenure of the previous BRS government. She

criticized the BRS for its lack of action, stating, "If the bills had been sanctioned earlier, they wouldn't be pending today." Seethakka further mocked the BRS, suggesting that the party should be renamed "Bakayala Rashtra Samithi" (Pending Rashtra Samithi) due to its lethargy in clearing bills.

In response, BRS MLA Harish Rao accused the Congress-led state government of harassing sarpanches (village heads) by failing to clear the pending bills. He highlighted that many sarpanches had been arrested for demanding the payments, claiming that the delay had caused severe distress.

Rao also compared the current situation to the previous BRS regime, asserting that



during their time in power, the state had released Rs 275 crore monthly for the Palle Pragathi and Rs 150 crore for Pattana Pragathi schemes. However, he criticized the Congress government for not releasing any funds since assuming power.

The former minister further alleged that the Telangana government had failed to release funds for the State Finance

Corporation and accused them of prioritizing large contractors over the gram panchayats. He also claimed that unpaid salaries to Mandal and Zonal Parishad members for nine months had worsened the situation. Rao concluded by stating that the non-payment of bills and salaries was negatively impacting the local community, as they are unable to pay off debts.

## Bhatti Vikramarka Defends Job Appointments

**TPN , Hyderabad:** Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, in a recent session of the Legislative Council, addressed concerns raised by members regarding job notifications and appointments. He clarified that merely issuing notifications does not equate to providing jobs, a policy he attributed to previous administrations. Responding to queries about job vacancies, Bhatti Vikramarka highlighted that under the current government, 55,172 jobs have been filled, with 54,573 appointment orders already issued. He stressed that the Telangana Public Service Commission had been overhauled after the new government took office, and a job calendar was released to ensure systematic job filling.

The Deputy CM emphasized that for the past ten years, youth had been left restless due to the lack of job appointments, a situation that had been a significant issue. "The youth brought Indiramma's government for jobs, and our aim is to ensure that unemployed youth are given the opportunity to settle in life with meaningful



employment," he said. Bhatti Vikramarka further pointed out that the previous government failed to conduct a single Group One examination during its tenure and left teacher positions unfilled.

In contrast, after coming to power, the current government initiated the Group One notification, merged old vacancies with new ones, and conducted exams for 563 posts. Additionally, the government con-

ducted DSC exams for 11,062 vacancies and issued appointment orders to 10,600 candidates. Regarding transparency, the Deputy CM assured that all recruitment processes were conducted with full transparency and no question paper leaks. He also addressed concerns about de-reservation for Urdu medium backlog posts, stating that there were no plans to make such changes. The government is committed to filling vacancies in phases as per the job calendar.

## New Ration Cards to Be Issued After Sankranti, Minister Uttam Announces

**TPN , Hyderabad:** Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy announced in the Legislative Council that new ration cards will be issued after Sankranti, with beneficiary selection based on the caste census survey. He instructed the collectors to fill vacant ration dealer positions immediately to ensure smooth distribution.

Minister Uttam expressed concern over the large-scale illegal trafficking of Public Distribution System (PDS) rice, stating that people are avoiding the low-quality 'Doddu'

rice, prompting a shift toward providing 'Sanna' rice. He assured that revolutionary changes would be implemented in the distribution and consumption of ration rice in the coming days.

Additionally, the Minister directed civil supply officials to conduct a thorough investigation to identify ineligible beneficiaries, with plans to remove ration cards from those who do not require them. The aim is to ensure that the ration system benefits only those in genuine need.



## Konda Surekha Details Wildlife and Relocation Efforts

**TPN , Hyderabad :** State Forest Minister Konda Surekha announced in the Legislative Council that the Kawal Tiger Reserve has been designated as a Conservation Reserve Forest. This decision is part of the government's ongoing efforts to address challenges faced by local wildlife and forest-dependent communities.

Minister Surekha highlighted that winter has led to increased wildlife activity in the reserve, creating challenges for the tribal and Chenchu communities living in the forest. To ensure the safety of both wildlife and local residents, villages within the

reserve are being relocated as part of a well-planned process.

To support the affected families, the government is providing essential facilities such as housing, water supply, and livelihood assistance. Awareness programs are also being organized to help communities understand the benefits of voluntary relocation, with an emphasis on offering substantial welfare and economic support.

The Minister also outlined plans to develop Kawal Tiger Reserve to match the standards of the Amrabad Ti-

ger Reserve, emphasizing the state's commitment to wildlife protection while also prioritizing the welfare of local communities.

Assuring that the relocation process is progressing smoothly, Minister Surekha said that forest officials are closely involved, and continuous engagement with the affected communities is a priority. The government is focused on achieving a balance between conservation efforts and the well-being of forest-dependent populations.





## BRS Demands Discussion on Lagacherla Atrocities

### Assembly Adjourned Amid Protests

**TPN , Hyderabad:** The Telangana Legislative Assembly was adjourned on Monday following intense protests by Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) members who raised slogans demanding a discussion on the atrocities against farmers in Lagacherla. Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar adjourned the session, scheduling it to reconvene at 10 am on Tuesday.

The session 'e'an after a week-long break, with Tourism Minister Jupally Krishna Rao attempting to address the Assembly regarding the new Tourism policy. However, the BRS MLAs, holding placards, began chanting "Nahi Chalega Nahi Chalega Tanashahi Nahi Chalega" (No

dictatorship will be allowed), disrupting the proceedings.

Despite repeated appeals from Speaker Prasad Kumar for BRS members to occupy their seats, the protests continued. The Speaker then ordered the marshals to remove the placards from the protesting members. As the marshals approached the BRS members, they moved toward the Speaker's podium. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy arrived shortly after, and within minutes, the Speaker adjourned the session, pushing discussions to the following day.

The BRS has been vocal about the alleged mis-



treatment of farmers in Lagacherla and is determined to bring the issue to the forefront of Assembly debates.



### Komatireddy Criticizes KCR, BRS Leadership

**TPN , Hyderabad:** Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy engaged in a candid conversation with the media in the Assembly lobbies, making several strong statements on various political issues. He criticized Chief Minister KCR for avoiding the Assembly, stating that KCR no longer believes in returning to power and therefore does not attend sessions. Reddy questioned why KCR, with 30 MLAs, could not participate in the Assembly, referring to the fact that Bhatti Vikramarka had attended with just five members.

Reddy further commented on the lack of sobriety in politics, specifically targeting KTR and Harish Rao, stating that they lack the necessary seriousness in their political roles. He also discussed upcoming political changes, including an expected increase in seats following delimitation—34 assembly seats and seven MP seats.

The minister expressed confidence that Srihari would receive a ministerial post from Palamuru, dismissing concerns about cabinet expansion by saying it was a decision for the party high command and CM to make. Reflecting on his own political journey, Reddy shared anecdotes of his victories despite opposition efforts, including a victory over Bura Narsaiah, who spent significant funds in his MP race.

Reddy also took a jibe at KCR's leadership, urging him to come to the Assembly and take on the role of opposition leader. He remarked that the lack of opposition leadership and meaningful debate in the Assembly under the BRS was notable.

## Jagadish Reddy Criticizes Speaker's Handling of Assembly



**TPN , Hyderabad:** Former Minister and BRS leader Jagadish Reddy expressed strong discontent with Speaker Gaddam Prasad for giving opportunities to members who he claimed were speaking obscenities in the Legislative Assembly. Addressing the media after the assembly sessions, Reddy alleged that while senior BRS leaders are denied speaking time, the Speaker allows time to those who make inappropriate remarks, even though they are not from the ruling party.

Reddy also criticized the Speaker for repeatedly adjourning the House whenever BRS members raised important questions. He advised the Speaker not to align himself with the government in such matters.

Further, Reddy emphasized that the BRS would continue its fight against incidents of violence in the state, including the Lagacherla, Dilawarpur, and Ramannapet incidents. He assured that the party would stand with the people in addressing all issues causing harm, even if it meant confronting violence. However, he made it clear that they would not allow the people to suffer.

## Kavitha Calls for Action on Sericulture Vacancies

**TPN , Hyderabad:** BRS MLC Kavitha called on the Telangana government to focus on promoting the silk industry and filling vacancies in the sericulture department during a Legislative Council meeting today. She emphasized the need to encourage farmers to take up mulberry cultivation and expressed regret that a research institute, despite an allocated budget of Rs. 16 crores, has yet to be established.

Kavitha specifically highlighted the need for a silkworm research center in Jagityala and urged immediate action to fill vacant positions in the sericulture department. She also raised concerns about the import of silk from

Bangalore, which she said added unnecessary financial strain on handloom weavers in the state.

Additionally, Kavitha discussed the potential of beekeeping to support farmers, benefit forests, and provide employment opportunities for tribals. She urged the government to give these issues the attention they deserve.

Kavitha also criticized the Congress for failing to establish any new BC Gurukulams, highlighting the significant strides made by the previous BRS government in improving BC welfare education in the state.



### BRS Issues Notice Against Finance Minister Over Debt Claims



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The BRS party has argued that the Finance Minister deliberately provided false information regarding the state's debts. As a result, the party has filed a notice under Rule 168(1) of the Telangana Legislative Assembly Rules, accusing the Finance Minister of breaching the rights of the Assembly and misleading the public.

The BRS has demanded accountability for what it claims are deliberate misstatements that have damaged the reputation of the previous government.

## MLA Accuses PCB of Neglecting Pharma Waste Problem

**TPN , Hyderabad:** In a surprising turn of events, Forest Minister Konda Surekha was taken aback by a strong criticism from her own party's MLA, Anirudh Reddy, during the Telangana Assembly session. The Jadcharla Congress MLA raised a serious concern about the Pollution Control Board (PCB) officials under the minister's control, accusing them of neglecting complaints regarding the illegal disposal of pharmaceutical waste in his constituency.

Anirudh Reddy informed the Speaker that despite multiple complaints, officials had failed to take action against pharma companies in his area that were dumping waste in large quantities. He expressed frustration over the inaction of the Pollution Control Board and criticized them for offering impractical solutions like installing CCTV cameras instead of addressing the core issue.

The Speaker drew the attention of Minister Konda Surekha to the matter, with the MLA urging immediate resolution to the ongoing environmental hazards affecting local farm-



ers. The allegations left Minister Surekha in an uncomfortable position, as her own party colleague called for swift intervention to safeguard the public and environment. The episode highlights tensions within the ruling party regarding governance and environmental management.

### Ponguleti Highlights Government Welfare Plans

**TPN , Hyderabad:** Minister Ponguleti made several key remarks during a casual conversation in the Legislative Assembly lobby, touching on various government initiatives and economic developments. He highlighted that the government plans to provide Rs. 12,000 to landless poor families, benefiting approximately 15 lakh households. Additionally, the government is preparing to release Rs. 1,000 crores for these initiatives and aims to distribute Aasara pensions before Sankranti.

Ponguleti also mentioned that the state's stamps and registration income has seen a rise over the past two to three years, reflecting growth in the real estate sector. Despite initial concerns following the formation of the new Andhra Pradesh government, he stated that Telangana's real estate sector has regained stability in recent months.

On the issue of farm welfare, the minister assured farmers that bonuses would be provided for thin paddy crops. He also addressed concerns about the sale of paddy in Telangana, stating that measures are being taken to prevent non-local traders from selling paddy for bonus.

Ponguleti criticized the opposition BRS, accusing them of defaming the government with unnecessary fuss and avoiding meaningful debate. He also expressed that the government's industrial policy focuses on benefiting Telangana, regardless of who invests, and emphasized that the state encourages the film industry, treating filmmakers, journalists, and the public equally.

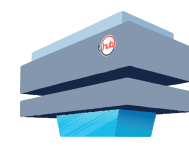


## BRS Leaders Visit Former Kodangal MLA in Cherlapalli Jail



**TPN , Hyderabad:** Former Minister Singireddy, along with former MLAs Ala Venkateswara Reddy and Rajender Reddy, visited former Kodangal MLA Patnam Narendra Reddy at Cherlapalli jail.

Reddy is currently in remand due to the Congress government's alleged illegal cases related to the Lagacherla incident. The BRS leaders expressed their support for Reddy, who has been accused in connection with the controversial case. The visit highlights the ongoing tensions and political implications of the legal proceedings surrounding the Lagacherla matter.



## Telangana Intermediate Exam Schedule Released for 2025



**TPN , Hyderabad:** The Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education has officially announced the schedule for the upcoming public exams. After extending the deadline for the payment of exam fees twice, the board has finalized the dates for the annual exams, which will be held in March 2025.

The Inter exams will take place from March 5 to March 25, with the first-year exams starting on March 5 and the second-year exams concluding on March 25. Additionally, practical exams will be conducted from February 3 to February 22.

In a separate development, the Ethics and Human Values exam is scheduled for January 29. The Telangana Intermediate Board aims to complete the entire examination process by the end of March 2025, ensuring a smooth and efficient evaluation for all students.

## Governor Dattatreya Condoles Zakir Hussain's Death



**TPN , Hyderabad:** Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya has expressed his condolences on the death of renowned Tabla player and Padma Vibhushan awardee Ustad Zakir Hussain. In a statement, Dattatreya described Hussain as a legendary classical musician who made an indelible mark on both Hindustani classical music and jazz fusion.

The late maestro, a recipient of prestigious awards such as the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and the Grammy Award, was honored by the Indian government with the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan for his outstanding contributions to music.

Governor Dattatreya praised Hussain's exceptional talent and expressed deep sorrow over his passing. He extended his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for the peace of his soul.

## Former BRS MLA to Face ED Investigation in Bhoodan Scam

**TPN , Hyderabad:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is continuing its investigation into the Bhoodan land scam in Telangana. In a key development, former Nagarkurnool MLA Marri Janardhan Reddy is set to be questioned by the ED on Monday. Along with Reddy, three other individuals, including Vamsi Ram Builders' Subba Reddy, have been issued notices

to attend the investigation. The case has seen significant developments, with the ED questioning IAS officer Amoy Kumar, who served as the collector in Medchal district during the time of the alleged scam. The ED has gathered crucial details from Kumar, the RDO, and the MRO. Victims of the scam have accused the authori-

ties of illegally allocating land worth crores at below-market prices during Kumar's tenure.

This investigation aims to uncover the details behind the controversial land deals and holds those responsible accountable. The ED is expected to continue its probe, questioning other individuals linked to the case in the coming days.



## Diesel Tanker Overtakes in Secunderabad, Sparks Panic and Traffic Jams



**TPN , Hyderabad:** Tension gripped Secunderabad on the morning of December 16 when a diesel tanker overturned at Mettuguda, causing panic among locals and motorists. The tanker, en route to the city from Ghatkesar, flipped over at Mettuguda, triggering fears of a potential explosion.

As panic spread, motorists sped away in fear. Swift action was taken by the traffic police, who cordoned off the area, while local police informed the fire department. Firefighters arrived promptly and began precautionary measures, including pouring large volumes of water to dilute the fuel and reduce the

risk of a fire.

The tanker was eventually moved with the help of a crane. However, the incident led to significant traffic jams on the Secunderabad to Tarnaka road. To manage the situation, additional traffic policemen were deployed by senior officials.

## Tension Builds as Progressive Groups Attempt to Siege Telangana Assembly

**TPN , Hyderabad:** The ongoing Telangana Assembly sessions have been marked by rising tension, as the BRS party moved an adjournment resolution to discuss the arrest and detention of Lagacharla farmers. However, Speaker Gaddam Prasad rejected the resolution, leading to protests by BRS MLAs who raised slogans and displayed placards inside the assembly.

Outside the Assembly, members of the Progressive Youth Association staged a siege demanding immediate filling of vacant posts in the state. This led to a tense standoff, with assembly and civil police stepping in to detain the agitators. The protesters were taken to Nampally Police Station in vehicles, further intensifying the situation both inside and outside the assembly premises.



## Allu Arjun Faces Legal Trouble Following Sandhya Theater Incident



**TPN , Hyderabad:** In a shocking twist to the Sandhya Theater incident case, the theater management sought police permission for the cast of \*Pushpa-2\*, including hero Allu Arjun and the heroines, to attend the premiere show. However, the police advised the management against it, citing the potential for a massive crowd due to the presence of the film's stars. The Chikkadapalli police even issued a written statement to the theater, advising them not to allow the film unit.

Despite the police's advice, Allu Arjun ignored the warning and not only arrived at the theater without permission but also led an unauthorized rally. As his fans rushed into the theater to see him, a chaotic situation ensued, during which actress Revathi lost her temper. In the commotion, her son Sri Tej was subjected to a PCR test by the police, and Revathi was rushed to a local hospital where she tragically passed away.

In response to Revathi's death, the police detained Allu Arjun. However, he was later granted interim bail by the High Court after the Nampally 9th Metropolitan Court initially granted him a 14-day judicial remand. The court also referenced the incident during the remand proceedings.



## High Court Orders Return of MLA Kaushik Reddy's Phone

**TPN , Hyderabad:** The Telangana High Court has ordered the police to return the phone of BRS MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy, which was seized during an investigation. The court ruled that the phone could not be confiscated without proper notice, in accordance with established legal procedures.

Kaushik Reddy had filed a petition alleging that his mobile phone was seized by the police without prior notice, in connection with a case where he was accused of obstructing the duties of the Banjara Hills Circle Inspector. In response, the government's lawyer argued that the phone would need to be sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) for further examination, and suggested that Kaushik Reddy was involved in a conspiracy against the government.

The High Court clarified that while the phone could be seized, it must be done according to the rules, which require notice to be provided beforehand. This decision marks a significant legal development in the ongoing case involving MLA Kaushik Reddy.

## Rachakonda CP Reacts to Mohan Babu's Family Dispute



**TPN , Hyderabad:** Rachakonda Commissioner of Police Sudheer Babu made a sensational statement regarding the ongoing family feud within Mohan Babu's family. He revealed that the actor has two guns in his possession—one a DBPL, and the other a Spanish Med gun. Sudheer Babu confirmed that three FIRs had been registered against the Manchu family, and an investigation is underway. He also warned that action would be taken based on the investigation's findings.

In a related development, Mohan Babu faced a setback when the police issued 41A notices to six individuals, including his PRO and bouncers. This comes after an attack on journalists who had gone to cover an event at Mohan Babu's university on December 9. The reporters, who were injured in the attack, filed a complaint, leading to the registration of a case. The 41A notices have been issued to those allegedly involved in the incident, signaling further police action.



# BRS to Fight for Lagacherla Farmers, Says KTR

**KTR Slams Congress Over Alleged Abuse of Lagacherla Farmers**

**BRS Vows to Fight Until All Charges Against Farmers Are Dropped**

**KTR Accuses CM's Brother of Overseeing Inhuman Treatment of Farmers**

**BRS Criticizes Congress for Preventing Debate on Farmers' Issues in Assembly**

TPN , Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao launched a scathing attack on the Congress government over its treatment of tribal farmers in Lagacherla. Speaking to the media at the Assembly on Monday, he declared that the BRS would continue to fight until all cases against the farmers were dropped, and Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy issued an unconditional apology to them.

ing farmers in Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's own Kodangal constituency. He highlighted that the farmers of Lagacherla had been jailed for the past 35 days and subjected to third-degree treatment. He specifically mentioned the case of Heerya Naik, a tribal farmer, who suffered a heart stroke and was transported to the hospital while still handcuffed, with the restraints remaining even in the hospital.

Minister's brother, was running the show in Kodangal, with police allegedly following his orders. Rama Rao claimed that Tirupati Reddy was watching the third-degree treatment of the farmers via video calls and taking inhuman pleasure from it.

Despite repeated attempts, the BRS accused the Congress government of preventing any debate on the issue in the Assembly, even as the government focused on tourism policies. Rama Rao



criticized the government's push for land acquisition in Lagacherla, where farmers have been vocally opposing the move.

He sarcastically referred to the Con-

gress regime as overseeing "jail tourism" and "Delhi tourism," pointing out the Chief Minister's frequent visits to Delhi without securing funds for the state.

Rama Rao accused the Congress government of assaulting and threaten-

The BRS working president also alleged that A Tirupati Reddy, the Chief

## Nearly 50% of TGPSC Group 2 Aspirants Skip Exam



TPN , Hyderabad: On December 15, nearly 50% of candidates for the Telangana Public Service Commission (TGPSC) Group 2 exam skipped the second paper of the examination. A total of 5,51,855 candidates had applied for the exam, with 74.96% downloading the hall tickets. Of these, 2,57,981 appeared for Paper 1 (General Studies and

General Abilities) held in the morning, while the number dropped to 2,55,490 for Paper 2 (History, Polity, and Society) in the afternoon.

The TGPSC notified 783 vacancies and conducted the exam at 1,368 centers across Telangana. Papers 3 and 4 will be held on Monday, December 16, in

two sessions, from 10 am to 12:30 pm and 3 pm to 5:30 pm. In a separate incident, a candidate was caught attempting to bring a phone into the exam hall in Vikarabad district. The candidate, identified by hall ticket number 2284419441, was acting suspiciously and was apprehended by the exam superintendent.

## Minister Ponnampalati Criticizes BC Welfare Spending



TPN , Hyderabad: Minister Ponnampalati raised concerns over the allocation and expenditure of funds for Backward Classes (BCs) during the ongoing Legislative Council session. Speaking on BC welfare, the minister revealed that while Rs. 8,000 crores had been allocated for BC welfare in the last ten years, only Rs. 800 crores were actually spent.

Minister Ponnampalati challenged the Legislative Council, offering to discuss the matter with anyone willing to engage. He criticized the previous

government for neglecting the BC community, alleging insufficient fund allocation for their welfare. In contrast, he emphasized his government's commitment to BC welfare, stating that substantial funds are now being spent to support the community's development and empowerment.

The minister's statement has sparked debate, drawing attention to the gap between allocated and spent funds in the BC welfare sector over the past decade.

## 'Chalo Raj Bhavan' Protest Against Modi's Stance

TPN , Hyderabad: The Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) has announced an "Chalo Raj Bhavan" protest to raise concerns over the Adani financial irregularities and the ongoing situation in Manipur. TPCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud, along with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, AICC in-charge Deepadas Munshi, and other Congress leaders, will participate in the protest.

The rally, organized by the TPCC, will begin at the Indira Gandhi statue on Necklace Road and proceed to Raj Bhavan on the 18th at 11 am. The pro-

test targets Prime Minister Narendra Modi's handling of the Gautam Adani issue and his failure to visit Manipur amidst ongoing riots. The AICC has called for the protest to demand accountability and action on these critical national issues.



## Konda Surekha Unveils Poster for Vaikuntha Ekadashi Festival

TPN , Bhadrachalam: The authorities of the Sri Seetharamandraswamy temple in Bhadrachalam have invited Minister Konda Surekha to attend the Sri Vaikuntha Ekadashi Adyanatsavam, which will be held from December 31, 2024, to January 20, 2025. On this occasion, the temple's Executive Officer, Ramadevi, and priests met with Minister Surekha at the Ministers Quarters in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, where she was bestowed with Vedic blessings and Lord's offerings.

Minister Surekha, accompanied by Principal Secretary Shailaja Ramayyar, Commissioner Sridhar, and Additional Commissioner Jyothi, unveiled the poster for the festival. The EO provided details of the upcoming events, including Dashavatara decorative services, Theppotsavam on January 9, and Uttara Dwara Darshanam on January 10.

Minister Surekha emphasized the importance of ensuring sufficient facilities for devotees, as a large number are expected to attend the festivities. She also reviewed the ongoing development programs for the Bhadrachalam temple.



## Deputy CM Pledges Fee Reimbursement for Colleges

TPN , Hyderabad: Representatives from the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar State Secretariat Private Inter, Degree, and PG College Owners Union met with Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka to discuss the issue of pending fee reimbursement arrears. The union representatives demanded the release of fee reimbursement dues, which have been pending for the last two years.

Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka assured the union that the process to begin paying the pending fee reimbursement bills would commence after the assembly meetings. He emphasized that the government is committed to clearing the dues as soon as possible, recognizing the crit-

ical role of fee reimbursement for the survival of non-professional private colleges.

Vikramarka highlighted the financial challenges faced by the government due to debts incurred by the previous BRS administration, noting that the Congress government has already paid Rs. 66,000 crores to banks and Rs. 21,000 crores for farmer loan waivers. He stressed that despite these challenges, the government remains dedicated to settling the arrears.

Union leaders, including Gauri Satish, Suryanarayana Reddy, and others, participated in the meeting.





# Arab Spring's Aftermath: A Revolution Turned Into an Islamic Winter

On December 17, 2010, Mohammed Bouazizi, a Tunisian fruit vendor, set himself on fire to protest against local officials having confiscated his stall. His act ignited the flames of a pan-Arab anti-establishment mass uprising that came to be called the 'Arab Spring'. On the eve of the 14th anniversary of that incident and in the backdrop of last fortnight's coup in Syria—the Arab Spring's longest-running and bloodiest manifestation—an analysis of this rare phenomenon is called for.

## Tunisia To Egypt To Libya, The All-Encompassing Revolution

In the past 14 years, the Arab Spring has jolted several Arab countries, although its net impact remains contentious. Bouazizi's self-immolation spurred mass demonstrations in Tunisia, toppling, within a month, the autocratic President in power for 23 years. Egypt followed shortly thereafter: the mass demonstrations centred on Cairo's Tahrir Square forced President Mubarak to leave after 18 days despite having tried all sorts of deflections to stay in power. He was in power for 32 years and was replaced by the Supreme Military Council, which eventually gave way to the country's first democratically held elections. The Muslim Brotherhood government lasted only a few months and was overthrown by the Army, which continues to wield power even now.

Col Muammar Qadhafi, President for 42 years of oil-rich Libya, also faced anti-government protests from mid-February 2011, which soon morphed into an armed insurrection based in the eastern coastal city of Benghazi. A UN Security Council Resolution authorising "all necessary measures" to protect civilians was weaponised by 27 Western and Middle Eastern powers to launch intensive airstrikes against the pro-Qadhafi forces. This tilted the balance against the government forces and eventually led to President Qadhafi being killed in combat on October 20. Even after massive bloodletting since, the civil war has continued and the country is still split, with a government each in Tripoli and Benghazi. Libya was the first case of foreign interests being strongly involved in influencing the outcome of the Arab Spring; it was not to be the last.



The protests in Bahrain that began in February 2011 were partly spurred by a Shia majority population chafing under a Sunni monarchy. These were initially aimed at achieving greater political freedom and respect for human rights, but the repression by authorities pushed them in that direction. The fellow monarchies of the Gulf Cooperation Council were alarmed by the perceived involvement of Iran and Hezbollah in disrupting the smallest Gulf state and intervened militarily to quell the protests. Saudi Arabia and the UAE sought to nip similar protests and reform movements in the bud with strongarm tactics.

## Civil Wars In Syria And Yemen

Arab Spring protests in Syria and Yemen, two ethnically diverse and politically frozen republics under dynastic rules, unlocked long-suppressed popular sub-national aspirations. The confrontation did not remain peaceful for long, each morphing into a bitter civil war that brought in neighbouring and global powers resulting in counterproductive outcomes. In Syria, a country of 23 million, 13 years of civil war caused the deaths of nearly half a

million people, displacement of nearly 15 million both internally and externally, and destruction put at half a trillion dollars. Yemen continued to be split into the al-Houthi-run north and the UN-recognised coalition in the south—both joined at the hip by disease and malnutrition.

## A New Genre Of Dissent

It is important not to over-contextualise the Arab Spring. Even before 2011, the Arab world had similar protest movements, most prominent among these being the bread riots in Egypt and Algeria as well as the Palestinian Intefadah from the mid-1980s onwards. However, two decades later, the Arab Spring was a new dissent genre—being wild-fired by the spread of satellite television and social media leap-frogging over the state controls. Secondly, such protests also took place in other non-Arab but Islamic countries such as Iran (Hijab Protests), Pakistan (Imran Khan detention) and recently in Bangladesh (Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ouster), with mixed results. Even Israel, a regional exception, has had recurring mass protests against government attempts to curb judicial powers and to bring Israeli hostages home from Hamas captivity.

# India's Strategic Shift: Reviving Its North Korean Mission



India has decided to revive its embassy in Pyongyang, North Korea, after a three-year hiatus. The decision to resume operations at the embassy follows the closure of the mission on July 2, 2021, when Ambassador Atul Malhari Gotsurve and the Indian diplomatic staff left Pyongyang for New Delhi via Russia. While the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) did not officially announce the embassy's closure, the absence of Indian staff effectively rendered the mission inactive. Gotsurve was later reassigned to Mongolia as India's Ambassador.

Now, a technical team and quasi-diplomatic personnel have been dispatched to Pyongyang to restore the embassy's operations. Their initial task is to secure the building and address potential security concerns, as North Korea is known for its sophisticated surveillance methods and hostile intelligence tactics against foreign missions. It could take several months before a new ambassador is assigned, given the bureaucratic delays in Pyongyang and the opaque nature of North Korean diplomacy.

This renewed engagement reflects a broader shift in India's foreign policy priorities, particularly concerning the Korean Peninsula. Developments in North Korea have gained greater strategic importance for India in recent years. As India seeks to enhance its global standing and deepen its relationships in East Asia, the reactivation of the embassy signifies a commitment to maintaining diplomatic ties with one of the most secretive and isolated regimes in the world.

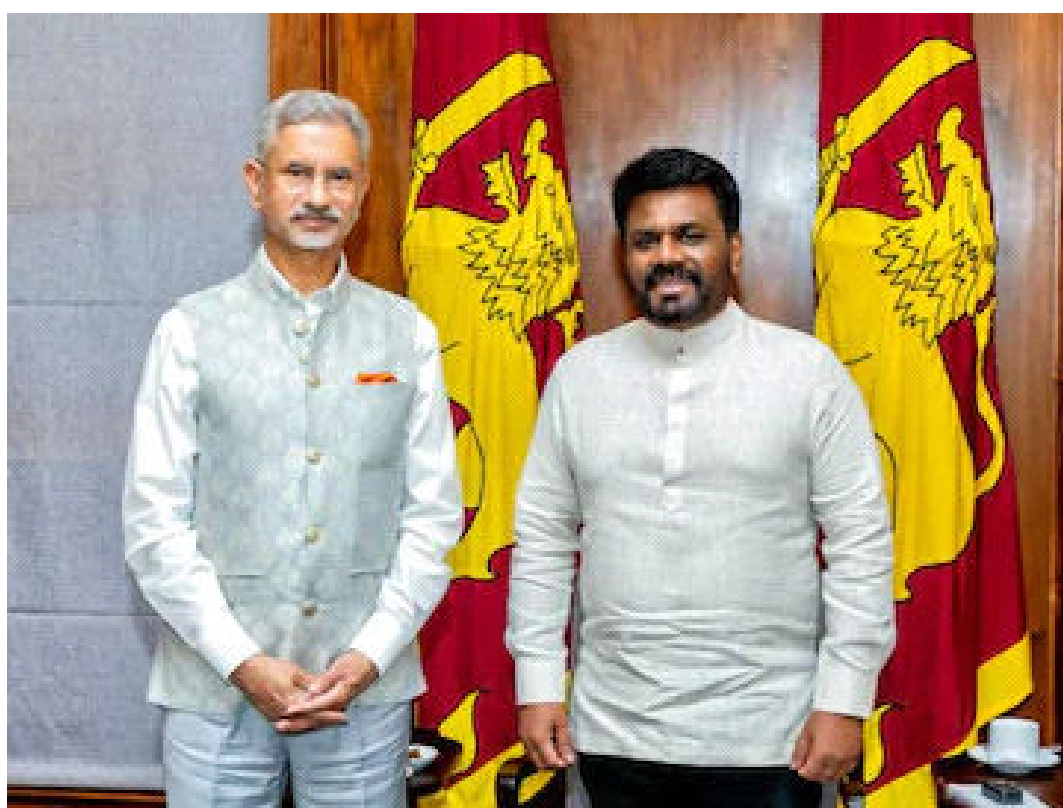
Meanwhile, South Korea has also pursued an innovative approach to strengthening its relationship with India. In a break from tradition, South Korea celebrated its National Day in 2023 at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi, inviting thousands of young Indians to participate in the festivities. This bold move contrasts with the usual diplomatic practice of hosting exclusive events for the elite. The celebration featured K-pop and modern youth culture, resonating with India's young population. This engagement strategy harkens back to a 1955 initiative by Soviet leaders Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Bulganin, who reached out to the Indian masses to foster goodwill. South Korea's attempt to engage with India's youth mirrors past efforts to use public diplomacy for forging stronger ties.

# Sri Lanka's Shift Away from China Marks Strategic Win for India

Sri Lanka's recent pivot away from China and its renewed engagement with India is a significant development in the region's geopolitics. President Anura Kumara Disanayake's first overseas visit to India as head of state is emblematic of this shift, underscoring India's growing influence despite China's attempts to expand its footprint in the Indian Ocean region.

Sri Lanka's pivot towards India follows a difficult lesson learned during its severe economic crisis in 2021-2022. While China, despite being Sri Lanka's largest external creditor, offered little substantial aid during the crisis, India came to the rescue with over \$4 billion in assistance—surpassing even the International Monetary Fund's bailout package. India also extended military cooperation, with several Indian naval ships visiting Sri Lankan ports throughout 2023. This timely support not only eased Sri Lanka's economic burden but also solidified India's position as the island nation's true ally.

In a notable decision, Sri Lanka recently scrapped a tender won by China for a power generation project and instead awarded it to India. The project involves building solar and wind hybrid power facilities near Jaffna, which is strategically located close to India's southern coast. India had previously raised concerns about China's involvement in the project, and Sri Lanka's decision to favor an Indian company reflects a shift in Colombo's approach to its foreign relations.



In another significant move, Sri Lanka denied a Chinese research vessel permission to dock at its ports or operate in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) for one year. This decision effectively blocked the Chinese vessel Xiang Yang Hong 3 from conducting deep-water exploration in the South Indian Ocean, a clear message to China regarding Sri Lanka's recalibrated foreign policy.

India's growing influence in the region extends beyond Sri Lanka. To counter China's "String of Pearls" strategy, India has been proactive in offering financial and developmental support to its neighbors. India has extended 308 lines of credit worth \$32 billion to countries across Asia and Africa, supporting over 600 development projects. This has not only helped India build stronger ties in the region but also countered China's growing presence.

# Economic Metrics: Why Per Capita Household Wealth Matters More for India Than Per Capita Income

In India, a rapidly growing economy with an expanding middle class, the fixation on per capita income (PCI) as the key economic indicator seems misplaced. While India stands as the world's fifth-largest economy, its per capita income remains relatively low, which often sparks debate about the country's economic progress. However, this focus on PCI may be short-sighted. Instead, per capita household wealth (PCHW) should be the metric that reflects the true economic health of the nation.



India's PCHW is significantly higher than its PCI suggests, standing at a solid \$15,000, with total household wealth estimated at a massive \$20 trillion. This indicates a much better economic outlook than what per capita income figures alone might imply. PCI, which measures the average income per person, doesn't account for the vast wealth accumulated by households or the growing financial assets of India's burgeoning middle class. As a result, it paints a picture that is less reflective of the actual economic empowerment of Indian citizens.

A comparison with the United States, often touted as an economic powerhouse, offers further perspective. While the US has a significantly higher PCI, it also carries an enormous debt burden. Each US household is encumbered with an average debt of \$247,000, and every American citizen is burdened with approximately \$107,000 of debt. The total national debt of the United States has

ballooned to \$38 trillion and continues to grow, reflecting a critical imbalance between wealth and liabilities. In contrast, India's household wealth, despite its relatively modest PCI, indicates that Indian households are comparatively less burdened by debt, which can be a key indicator of long-term economic stability.

India's growing household wealth underscores the importance of shifting the conversation from per capita income to more comprehensive metrics such as PCHW. The focus on income alone overlooks the wealth-building potential of the population, which is crucial for understanding economic progress. As India continues its economic ascent, it will be essential to recognize that household wealth, rather than income alone, is a better reflection of the prosperity and financial security of its people.



## Won't Permit Sri Lankan Territory To Be Used Against India: President Dissanayaka To PM Modi

TPN CORRESPONDENT DELHI  
DECEMBER.17

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayaka, during his three-day visit to India, reassured Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday that Sri Lanka's soil would not be used against India's interests. This assurance came at a time when concerns in New Delhi are growing over China's increasing influence over Colombo.

In a series of wide-ranging talks, Dissanayaka and Modi discussed several crucial aspects of bilateral relations, including defence cooperation, energy ties, and economic recovery. One of the key outcomes of their discussions was the agreement to conclude a defence cooperation pact soon. The leaders also agreed to boost energy collaboration by establishing electricity grid connectivity and multi-product petroleum pipelines between the two nations.

Prime Minister Modi, in his media statement, emphasized that he and President Dissanayaka were in "full agreement" on the fact that the security interests of both nations are interlinked. They expressed the need for expeditious finalization of a security cooperation agreement to strengthen



their strategic ties further.

During the meeting, Modi reiterated India's unwavering support to Sri Lanka in its ongoing efforts toward economic recovery and stability. In the wake of the severe economic crisis that Sri Lanka faced two years ago, India extended financial assistance amounting to USD 4 billion to help stabilize the nation.

Additionally, both leaders instructed their respective officials to expedite discussions

on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on debt restructuring. This step is expected to play a crucial role in Sri Lanka's long-term financial recovery.

The talks between the two leaders underscore the growing bilateral cooperation between India and Sri Lanka, particularly in the areas of security, energy, and economic recovery. As Sri Lanka navigates its recovery process, India's continued support remains vital for the island nation's stability.

## "Some Agencies Giving Manipulative Info To Centre": Manipur Chief Minister



TPN CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI  
DECEMBER.17

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh today accused certain "agencies" of sending "manipulative" and "politicized" information about the ongoing violence in the state to the central government. Speaking at an event in Imphal, he said the Centre had now realized the issue and was gathering accurate information from the grassroots level. "Misinformation, manipulative, and politicized information were sent by some agencies to New Delhi. Now, the Centre has realized it and is collecting information from the grassroots. They have found the correct information and are dealing with it," he stated. However, the Chief Minister refrained from naming the agencies involved in providing this alleged misinformation.

In a related development, seven insurgents from the Kangleipak Communist Party (People's War Group), or KCP(PWG), were arrested in connection with the murder of two migrant laborers from Bihar. The KCP is one of the eight Meitei insurgent groups that have been banned by the Ministry of Home Affairs. According to state intelligence sources, the arrested individuals are currently being interrogated.

Initial investigations suggest that the KCP(PWG) may have been hired to carry out terror activities in the valley, including attacking civilians and extorting money. The intelligence agencies, however, have not revealed who may have hired these insurgents, as the investigation is still in its early stages. The authorities are working to unravel the details behind this new wave of violence and its potential links to broader insurgent activities in the region.



## Indian Constitution has stood test of time: FM Nirmala in Rajya Sabha

TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
DECEMBER.17

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday lauded the resilience and enduring relevance of India's Constitution, emphasizing that it has successfully withstood the test of time over the past 75 years. She made these remarks while initiating the debate on the "Glorious Journey of 75 Years of the Constitution of India" in the Rajya Sabha.

Sitharaman pointed out that while over 50 countries drafted their Constitutions around the same time as India, most of them have had to rewrite or amend significant portions of their constitutions. In contrast, India's Constitution has remained largely intact, proving its robustness and adaptability. She acknowledged the remarkable achievement of the Constituent Assembly, especially the 389 members, including 15 women, who undertook the monumental task of creating a document that would lay the foundation for the world's largest democracy.

As India marks the 75th year of its Constitution, Sitharaman stressed the importance of reaffirming the commitment to building an India that lives up to the spirit enshrined in the Constitution. She highlighted how the document has provided a framework for India's progress, saying, "Today we are extremely proud of the way India's democracy is growing."

In her speech, Sitharaman also made a broader comparison, noting that many nations, following the Second World War, gained independence and drafted their constitutions, but India's Constitution stands in a league of its own. She asserted that the country's ability to uphold the principles of justice, equality, and democracy as envisaged by the founding fathers of the nation is a testament to the foresight and wisdom embedded in the document. Sitharaman's address served as both a tribute to the framers of the Constitution and a reaffirmation of India's commitment to its democratic values and the continued evolution of its governance structure.

## Govt Should Raise Its Voice Against Atrocities On Minorities In Bangladesh: Priyanka Gandhi



TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
DECEMBER.17

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday called on the Indian government to raise the issue of atrocities against minorities, particularly Hindus and Christians, in Bangladesh with its neighboring country. Speaking during the Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha, Gandhi emphasized the need for India to address the growing concerns about the mistreatment of religious minorities in Bangladesh.

Gandhi stated, "The government should raise the issue of atrocities on minorities, both Hindus and Christians, in Bangladesh. This matter should be discussed with the Bangladesh government, and India should offer support to those suffering due to these attacks." She stressed that the Indian government has a responsibility to stand with those who are facing persecution and help bring attention to their plight.

The Congress leader's comments come amid rising reports of violence and discrimination against religious minorities in Bangladesh, with several incidents of attacks on temples, homes, and businesses of Hindus and Christians in recent months. These attacks have drawn widespread concern among rights groups and neighboring countries, including India, which shares strong cultural and historical ties with Bangladesh's minority communities.

Gandhi's call for action highlights the importance of diplomatic engagement on human rights issues between India and Bangladesh. She urged the Indian government to use diplomatic channels to address the concerns of persecuted minorities in Bangladesh, while also extending support to those affected by the violence.

The issue of minority rights in Bangladesh has been a sensitive topic for years, with both domestic and international voices calling for stronger protection of religious freedoms. Priyanka Gandhi's remarks in Parliament reflect growing political and public attention to the matter, as well as the need for both governments to work together to ensure the safety and well-being of all religious communities.

## RG Kar Case: Doctors To Hold 10-Day Protest As Two Accused Get Bail



TPN CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA  
DECEMBER.17

The West Bengal Joint Platform of Doctors (WBJPD) has announced plans to begin a sit-in demonstration in Kolkata starting Tuesday, protesting the CBI's investigation into the RG Kar hospital rape and murder case. The case, which has sparked widespread outrage, involves the tragic death of an on-duty female doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in August.

The sit-in demonstration will take place at the Doreena Crossing in central Kolkata, and will continue until December 26. The WBJPD, an umbrella group of five medical associations, is demanding the immediate submission of a supplementary charge sheet by the CBI. Doctor Punyabrata Gun, a joint convener of WBJPD, emphasized the need for a timely and thorough investigation into the case.

"We have also written to Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj Verma, requesting permission for this 10-day protest. We as-

sured them that the demonstration will be peaceful and follow all necessary legal and safety protocols," said Gun. The WBJPD has asked the police to ensure the safety of all participants and to allow the demonstration to proceed without disrupting traffic.

The issue gained further attention when the Sealdah court granted bail on Friday to two key suspects in the case—Sandip Ghosh, the former principal of RG Kar Medical College, and Abhijit Mondal, the former officer-in-charge of the Tala police station. The bail was granted after the CBI failed to file a charge sheet within the mandatory 90-day period, which led to widespread criticism and protests.

On Saturday, the WBJPD organized a march to the CBI office in Salt Lake, demanding urgent action. The tragic incident has fueled protests across the country, with calls for justice intensifying as the case progresses.

The protest in Kolkata reflects growing concern among medical professionals and the public over the handling of the case and the perceived delays in delivering justice.

## Tamil Nadu CM Stalin Urges Unity Against Simultaneous Polls Legislation

TPN CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI  
DECEMBER.17

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin called for a united stand from all democratic forces to oppose the simultaneous elections legislation, which he described as being "imposed under the guise of electoral reform." Speaking out on Monday, Stalin stressed that this legislation posed a significant threat to the diversity and integrity of India and undermined the nation's Constitution. Stalin's remarks came in response

to the BJP-led government's push for legislation that would implement simultaneous elections across the country. He argued that the proposal aimed to alter India's political landscape permanently, concentrating power in a way that could endanger the nation's federal structure and the autonomy of states. The Tamil Nadu CM contended that the BJP government at the Centre lacked the necessary majority to pass this critical legislation and warned against its passage, calling it a dangerous step for the country's future.



# Israel Approves Plan to Double Golan Heights Population Amid Syria's Instability

**JERUSALEM:** Israel's government has approved a controversial plan to double the population in the Golan Heights following the fall of President Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu explained that the move was essential in response to the opening of a "new front" along Israel's border with Syria, where an Islamist-led rebel alliance has seized power.

"Strengthening the Golan is strengthening the State of Israel, and it is especially important at this time. We will continue to hold onto it, cause it to blossom, and settle in it," Netanyahu said in a statement.

The Golan Heights, a strategically vital area of 1,800 square kilometers on the Israel-Syria border, has been a source of contention for decades. Israel captured most of the region during the 1967 Six-Day War and annexed it in 1981, though its sovereignty is not recognized by most of the international community. Syria has long demanded the return of the Golan, citing its territorial integrity, but Israel maintains control over the most strategic points, emphasizing the security concerns that justify its hold on the area.



Approximately 24,000 Druze, an Arab minority that practices an offshoot of Islam, live in the Golan Heights and largely identify as Syrian, according to Avraham Levine of the Alma Research and Education Center. Alongside the Druze, about 31,000 Israelis have settled in the area over the years.

In 2019, U.S. President Donald Trump officially recognized Israel's sovereignty over the Golan, a move that has been rejected by many nations. Israel's continued oc-

cupation and settlement of the area are seen as exacerbating the long-standing Israeli-Syrian conflict, with peace efforts in the region repeatedly failing.

Following the instability in Syria and the ousting of Assad, Israeli forces have moved into a buffer zone separating Syria from the Golan Heights. Israel cited the collapse of ceasefire arrangements in the region, signaling a potential shift in its security strategy in the wake of Syria's changing political landscape.

# Kyrgyz President Dismisses PM Akyzbek Japarov, Assigns New Interim Leader



**KYRGYZ:** Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov has dismissed Prime Minister Akyzbek Japarov, citing a transfer to another position, according to a statement released by the presidential administration on Monday. Akyzbek Japarov had served as the prime minister of Kyrgyzstan since 2021.

In response to the dismissal, the president has appointed Adylbek Kasymaliyev, the First Deputy Prime Minister, to take on the duties of the prime minister on an interim basis. This shift in leadership marks another change in a country that has experienced considerable political instability since gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

Kyrgyzstan, located in Central Asia, remains politically volatile, with frequent changes in leadership and governance. The country's economy is significantly dependent on remittances from its migrant laborers working in Russia. These remittances account for approximately 20% of the country's GDP, as per United Nations estimates, making it vulnerable to external economic shifts.

The dismissal of the prime minister adds to the already uncertain political environment, raising questions about the stability of the current government. As the country navigates its political turbulence, the role of the new acting prime minister, Adylbek Kasymaliyev, will be pivotal in ensuring continued governance and addressing the country's ongoing economic challenges.

This recent political shake-up in Kyrgyzstan highlights the country's ongoing struggle to establish consistent political leadership and maintain stability amid social and economic challenges. As the interim prime minister steps in, the international community will be watching closely for any developments regarding the leadership transition and its potential impact on the country's political landscape.



# Biden and Harris Thank Donors, Urge Continued Engagement After Election Loss

**WASHINGTON:** President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris on Sunday expressed gratitude to major Democratic donors who contributed significant sums during last month's election. Despite a tough loss to President-elect Donald Trump, Biden and Harris urged these key supporters to remain politically engaged as the Democratic Party works to regroup.

Speaking at the Democratic National Committee's holiday reception, both Biden and Harris sought to motivate donors who had invested heavily in the campaign. Their remarks came after Republicans secured a decisive victory, claiming the White House, Senate, and retaining control of the House of Representatives. In an election where donors from all sides spent approximately \$4.7 billion, Biden emphasized the importance of perseverance.

"We all get knocked down. My dad would say when you get knocked down, you just got to get up," Biden said, stressing the resilience needed in the aftermath of the defeat. "The measure of a person or a party is how fast they get back up."

Harris, who had stepped in as the party's presidential nominee after Biden ended his campaign in July, also praised the commitment of Democratic donors, highlighting their efforts both financially and through personal outreach. She noted that Democrats raised nearly \$2.9 billion, surpassing the Republicans' \$1.8 billion. The Democratic National Committee's finance committee hosted over 700 events, raising \$700 million alone.

"You rallied, you opened your homes, you reached out to your friends and family," Harris said, acknowledging the personal efforts of the donors who advocated for their cause.

While acknowledging the disappointment over the election loss, Biden reminded attendees of the administration's major accomplishments, such as the \$1 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill, the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act, all of which were made possible by their support.



# Hundreds feared dead in cyclone in France's Mayotte

**PARIS:** Cyclone Chido has left a devastating trail of destruction in the French archipelago of Mayotte, located in the Indian Ocean, with local officials fearing that hundreds, possibly thousands, of lives have been lost. In an interview on local media channel Mayotte La 1ere, Francois-Xavier Bieuville, the top French official in the region, stated that the death toll could reach into the thousands. "I think there will certainly be several hundreds, maybe even thousands," Bieuville said, highlighting the gravity of the situation.

The cyclone, described by some survivors as the "worst storm of the century," struck with such intensity that it has left communities in complete ruin. Immigrants from the region compared the devastation to the aftermath of a nuclear war, with widespread destruction and severe damage to infrastructure. Videos emerging from Mayotte show horrific scenes of destruction, further compounding the fears of massive casualties.

Rescue teams, including French military aid, have started to arrive in the affected areas, though the full extent of the damage is still being assessed. The region's vulnerability, due to its geographical isolation and limited resources, has made immediate relief efforts even more critical.

Local authorities and international aid organizations are now mobilizing to provide assistance and search for survivors. However, the challenge of reaching remote areas severely impacted by the cyclone, where communication lines are down, complicates rescue operations. As the community comes to grips with the disaster, the focus is on providing emergency aid and ensuring that the survivors have access to basic needs such as food, water, and medical care. The full toll of Cyclone Chido's destruction will likely continue to unfold in the coming days as rescue operations intensify and recovery efforts begin.

# Canada's Deputy PM Chrystia Freeland Resigns Over Differences With Trudeau



**CANADA:** Canada's Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland unexpectedly resigned on Monday, citing disagreements with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau over the country's future direction. Freeland, who also held the position of Finance Minister and was one of Trudeau's most trusted allies in the Cabinet, made the announcement just hours before she was scheduled to present the fall economic update to Parliament.

Freeland's resignation comes at a critical moment for the Canadian government, as the fall update was expected to show a significantly higher budget deficit for the fiscal year 2023/24 than initially anticipated. The decision to step down highlights the growing rift between Freeland and Trudeau, with political analysts speculating that internal tensions within the Liberal Party may have contributed to the move.

As Finance Minister, Freeland had played a key role in managing Canada's economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic and had been instrumental in shaping the country's financial policies in recent years. Her departure from the government marks the end of a significant chapter in Trudeau's leadership, as Freeland had long been seen as a pivotal figure in his Cabinet.

In her resignation statement, Freeland did not go into detail about the specific issues that led to her decision. However, sources close to the situation suggested that differences over economic policy, leadership style, and Canada's political direction had become increasingly difficult to reconcile.

Freeland's exit from the government leaves a leadership void in the finance portfolio, which will likely be filled by another senior figure within the Liberal Party. Her resignation is sure to have far-reaching implications for the party and the country's political landscape, as both Freeland and Trudeau had been seen as central to Canada's political future. This surprising turn of events marks a significant shift in Canada's political scene, and the fallout from Freeland's resignation is likely to unfold in the coming days.

# Bangladesh To Hold Parliamentary Elections By 2025 or Early 2026: Muhammad Yunus

**BANGLADESH:** Bangladesh is set to hold its parliamentary elections either in late 2025 or the first half of 2026, according to the country's interim leader, Muhammad Yunus. Speaking in a televised address on Monday, Yunus outlined the government's roadmap for the upcoming elections, emphasizing that the timeline will largely depend on the recommendations made by the Electoral Reform Commission.

Yunus highlighted the importance of giving the Election Commission sufficient time to implement the necessary reforms to improve the electoral pro-

cess. The interim leader's statement comes amid ongoing discussions about ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections, especially in light of past concerns over the integrity of the electoral system.

The government has tasked the Electoral Reform Commission with evaluating the existing electoral framework and suggesting measures to address potential weaknesses. Yunus stressed that it is essential to make these changes before proceeding with the elections to ensure they meet international standards of fairness and transparency.



# Stock Markets Close Lower Amid Uncertainty Ahead of US Fed Meeting

Domestic stock markets ended in losses on Monday, continuing their downward trend. The cautious approach of investors, awaiting the outcome of the US Federal Reserve meeting, led to a subdued trading session. Mixed signals from international markets further added to the uncertainty. IT and metal stocks led the Nifty's decline, though gains in media, pharma, and PSU bank shares helped limit the losses.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 82,133 in the previous session, started at 82,000 and reached an intra-day low of 81,551. After touching a high of 82,116, it closed at 81,742, down 384 points. Similarly, the NSE Nifty opened at 24,753, hit a low of 24,601, and closed at 24,668, down 100 points. The Bank Nifty saw a marginal decline, settling at 53,581.

Among the Nifty50 stocks, 9 gained and 40 lost. Dr. Reddy's, IndusInd Bank, HDFC Life, Power Grid, and Bajaj Finance were the top gainers, while Titan, Hindalco, Adani Ports, TCS, and Tech Mahindra were the biggest losers. Sectors such as media, pharma, PSU banks, realty, and consumer durables showed positive movement, while FMCG, IT, metal, and oil and gas sectors posted losses.

Market breadth on the NSE was slightly in favor of buyers, with 1534 advancing and 1327 declining stocks. Notably, 128 companies hit 52-week highs, while 15 reached 52-week lows. Best Agrolife saw a significant rise after receiving a 20-year patent for its pesticidal composition.

The Indian rupee weakened by 8 paise to settle at 84.87 against the US dollar. The trade deficit widened to \$37.84 billion compared to \$21.31 billion last year. LTI gave a sell rating to Mindtree with a target price of Rs 5710, while Goldman Sachs initiated a buy rating for Aurobindo Pharma with a target price of Rs 1525. Tech Mahindra received a sell rating from Citi, and Paytm shares crossed the Rs 1000 mark. NBCC secured



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orders worth Rs 490 crore, while LIC's unclaimed claims increased by 85% in the past five years. Jindal Worldwide announced it would offer bonus shares on January 7.

## Recommended Stocks:

### Torrent Power

Torrent Power, a prominent player in India's power sector, focuses on the generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity. The company's diverse energy portfolio includes thermal, solar, and wind power plants.



### Trent

Trent, a leading retail company in India, is a part of the Tata Group. It operates prominent brands like Westside, which offers a wide range of clothing, home goods, and accessories.



### CG Power

CG Power and Industrial Solutions, a major manufacturer in the electrical

sector, specializes in power transformers, motors, and switchgear. The company caters to both domestic and international markets with a strong presence.



### Zomato



Zomato, a major food delivery and restaurant discovery platform, provides services across India and internationally. The company connects consumers to restaurants, offering food delivery, online ordering, and restaurant reviews.

### PolicyBazaar



PolicyBazaar, an online insurance aggregator, provides a comprehensive platform for buying and comparing insurance products. The company offers a range of policies, including health, life, and motor insurance, to Indian consumers.

# WPI Inflation Drops to 3-Month Low of 1.89% in November



India's Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation eased to 1.89% in November 2024, marking a three-month low compared to 2.36% in October, according to the latest data from the Ministry of Commerce & Industry. The decline was largely driven by lower food prices, particularly vegetables, which saw a significant reduction in inflation during the month.

The WPI inflation had stood at 0.39% in November 2023, and the latest figures show a notable easing in food item inflation. It dropped to 8.63% in November, down from 13.54% in October. The reduction was mainly attributed to a sharp fall in vegetable prices, with vegetable inflation plummeting to 28.57% from 63.04% in October. However, potato inflation remained elevated at 82.79%, while onion inflation saw a significant drop to 2.85%.

The fuel and power sector also experienced a deflation of 5.83% in November, slightly worse than the deflation of 5.79% in October. In the manufactured goods category, inflation rose to 2% in November, up from 1.5% in October.

Senior economist Rahul Agrawal from ICRA Limited explained that the easing of WPI inflation was primarily driven by a favorable base effect, with primary food articles, especially vegetables, contributing significantly to the decline. Despite the moderation in food prices, other categories, such as manufactured goods, saw an uptick in inflation readings.

Core inflation (non-food manufacturing) inched up to 0.5% in November from 0.3% in October, continuing its subdued trend below 1.0% for the fourth consecutive month. This has helped mitigate the rise in headline WPI inflation, despite persistent food inflation.

Looking ahead, ICRA expects WPI inflation to rise to around 2.5-3.0% in December 2024, driven by increased food prices and slight changes in global commodity and crude oil prices. However, the robust outlook for the rabi crop and favorable seasonal trends in food inflation offer hope for continued moderation.

# India's Exports Contract 4.85% to \$32.11 Billion in November; Imports Up 27%



India's merchandise exports saw a decline of 4.85% in November 2024, totaling \$32.11 billion, compared to \$33.75 billion during the same month last year. This contraction in exports comes despite efforts to boost overseas trade. However, imports surged by 27% to \$69.95 billion in November, up from \$55.06 billion in the previous year, leading to a widening trade deficit.

The significant rise in imports was largely driven by the country's demand for gold, with gold imports hitting a record high of \$14.8 billion in November, marking a notable increase. This rise in gold imports contributed heavily to the overall surge in total imports. Additionally, the increase in oil and other essential commodities further fueled the rise in overall imports for the month.

The widening trade deficit for No-

vember stood at \$37.84 billion, which represents a significant gap between imports and exports, highlighting the ongoing challenges facing the Indian trade sector.

Looking at the fiscal year from April to November 2024, India's total exports grew by 2.17% to \$284.31 billion, while imports increased by 8.35% to \$486.73 billion. The higher import growth rate compared to exports has been a consistent trend, contributing to an expanded trade deficit over the past months.

This trend reflects both global economic challenges and domestic demand patterns, particularly the increasing consumption of gold and energy resources. With a continued focus on exports, it will be critical for the government and businesses to address the trade imbalance and enhance export performance in the coming months.

# Rupee Hits New Record Low, Falls 9 Paise to 84.89 Against US Dollar

The Indian rupee hit a fresh all-time low on Monday, declining by 9 paise to close at 84.89 against the US dollar, continuing its downward trend. The rupee's fall came amid weak domestic market conditions and rising US bond yields. On the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 84.83 and touched a low of 84.89 during the day's trade.

The decline in the rupee was attributed to several factors, including a weak tone in the domestic markets and higher US bond yields, which increased the demand for the dollar. However, traders noted that a softer US dollar helped cushion the downside. On Friday, the rupee had rebounded slightly, gaining 8 paise to close at 84.80.

The Indian rupee's previous record low was reached on December 12, when it ended at 84.88 against the dollar. Analysts suggest that the rupee may continue to trade with a negative bias due to rising expectations of a rate cut by the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), coupled with the weak domestic economic sentiment. Additionally, elevated crude oil prices may put further pressure on the rupee.



Despite these challenges, the inflow of foreign institutional investment (FII) and the cooling off of inflation may offer some support for the rupee. On the domestic economic front, wholesale price-based inflation dropped to 1.89% in November, a three-month low, mainly due to cheaper food items. Retail inflation also eased to 5.48%, coming within the Reserve Bank of India's comfort zone, providing room for a possible rate cut in the upcoming meeting.

Looking ahead, traders are focused on data from the US, including the PMI and the Empire State Manu-

facturing Index, and the upcoming FOMC meeting. The USD-INR spot price is expected to trade between 84.65 and 85.05 in the near term. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six major currencies, was down 0.14% at 106.85. Brent crude prices also dropped slightly by 0.78% to \$73.91 per barrel.

In the domestic equity markets, the Sensex fell by 384.55 points (0.47%) to close at 81,748.57, while the Nifty lost 100.05 points (0.4%) to settle at 24,668.25.



## Flesh-Eating Human Parasite Resurfaces, Raises New Concerns



U.S. officials have issued warnings following the resurgence of the New World screwworm (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*), a flesh-eating parasite that primarily affects livestock but can also infect humans. Once thought to be nearly eradicated from the U.S. and Central America through sterilization programs in the mid-20th century, recent reports of detections in Mexico and an uptick in cases across Central America since 2023 have raised concerns about a troubling comeback.

### Impact on Livestock and Humans

The screwworm's lifecycle begins when female flies lay eggs in open wounds or bodily orifices of warm-blooded animals. The hatched larvae then burrow into the host's flesh, feeding on the tissue and causing painful, enlarging wounds. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that a single female can lay up to 300 eggs, and the parasite's lifecycle allows for multiple egg-laying cycles. There are no approved medical treatments for these infestations, and the only method of dealing with them is the physical removal of the larvae.

Panama has been particularly affected, with cases skyrocketing from 25 annually before 2023 to more than 22,600 confirmed instances by December 2024. Costa Rica has also reported an increase in human cases, including a fatality earlier this year, according to the U.S. Embassy in Costa Rica.

### Preventative Measures and Monitoring

In response to the threat, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has imposed restrictions on livestock imports from Mexico to prevent the parasite's spread into the U.S. Additionally, a barrier zone between the U.S. and Panama, established in 2006, is being closely monitored. Authorities are urging residents in affected areas to protect open wounds, use insect repellents, and report any signs of screwworm infestations in animals.

The resurgence of the screwworm parasite serves as a stark reminder of the importance of vigilance in controlling this dangerous pest, which threatens both animal and human health.

## Those Who Give Money To Beggars In Indore Will Now Face Police Case



Indore, known as India's cleanest city, has set its sights on becoming beggar-free by implementing an extreme measure to curb begging on its streets. Starting from January 1, 2025, the district administration will register FIRs against individuals who give money to beggars, aiming to eliminate the practice and discourage donations.

District Collector Ashish Singh emphasized the seriousness of the initiative, stating that an official order banning begging has already been issued. "Our awareness campaign against begging will continue until the end of this month. From January 1, anyone found giving alms will face legal action," Singh said. He further urged residents to refrain from aiding beggars, calling the act "a sin" that perpetuates the issue.

The drive to make Indore beggar-free is part of a pilot project by the central government to rehabilitate beggars across 10 major cities, including Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Indore, Lucknow, Mumbai, Nagpur, Patna, and Ahmedabad. The project focuses on rehabilitation and social reintegration, aiming to provide a long-term solution rather than

just addressing the visible problem.

The administration's anti-begging campaign has uncovered some surprising facts. Project officer Dinesh Mishra revealed that some beggars possess homes and even receive substantial sums of money. In one case, a beggar was found to have ₹29,000 in their possession, while another was involved in loaning money for interest. Mishra also reported that certain begging rings, including those involving children, were found to be organized in hotels. These discoveries have prompted the city administration to take a firmer stance on the issue.

In support of the initiative, Madhya Pradesh's Social Welfare Minister Narayan Singh Kushwaha announced that an Indore-based organization will assist in rehabilitating beggars. The organization will provide shelter and support for six months, helping them find employment and integrate into society.

Indore's ambitious plan, with its focus on legal action and rehabilitation, aims to end begging while offering solutions to improve the lives of those affected.

## Apple Set to Revamp Magic Mouse with New Design and Charging Port Update

Apple is reportedly working on an updated version of its Magic Mouse, the wireless accessory designed to complement Mac computers. The current model, which was last updated in 2015, could soon receive a significant redesign, according to Bloomberg's Mark Gurman in his latest Power On newsletter. The most notable change in the upcoming version of the Magic Mouse will be a new location for the charging port, addressing one of the most common complaints from users.



Sources have informed Gurman that Apple is developing prototypes for the new Magic Mouse, with the goal of overhauling its design. The redesigned model is expected to address several longstanding issues with the current version, particularly the charging port's placement. Since Apple switched to built-in rechargeable batteries in 2015, the Lightning charging port has been located at the bottom of the mouse, making it unusable while charging. This design flaw has been widely criticized by users, as it forces them to wait for the mouse to charge before using it again.

If the claims are accurate, Apple could launch the third-generation Magic Mouse within the next few years. The first-generation Magic Mouse debuted in 2009, followed by the second generation in 2015. The second-generation model featured the Lightning port at the bottom, which many users found inconvenient.

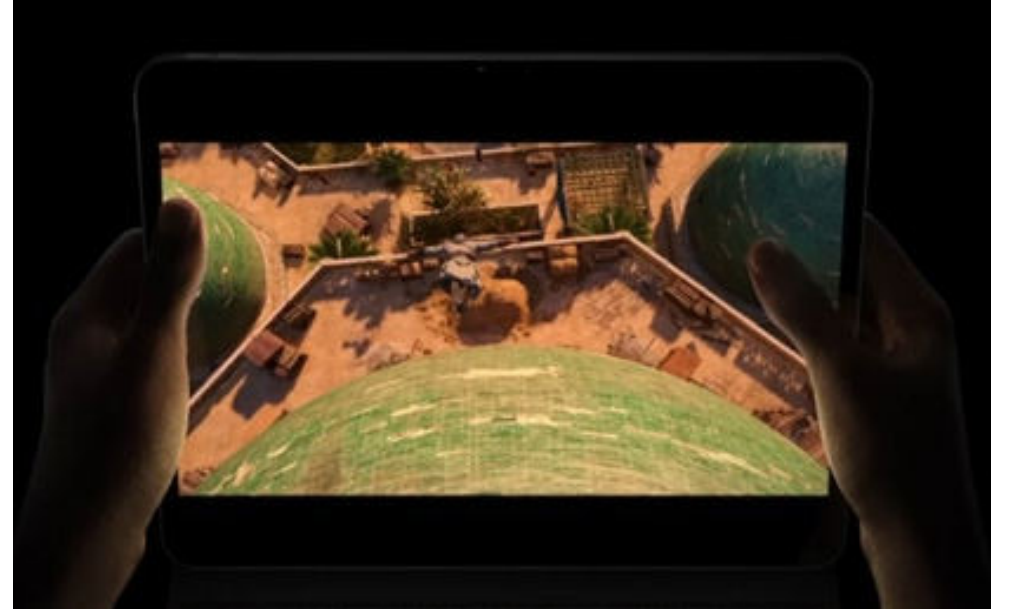
In compliance with European Union regulations, Apple has already transitioned the Magic Mouse to use a USB Type-C port, but the location of the port remains a point of frustration.

Alongside the charging port relocation, the updated Magic Mouse is expected to have a more modern approach in terms of ergonomics, addressing criticisms that the current model isn't as comfortable as similarly priced alternatives from companies like Logitech.

Though Apple has not officially confirmed the release date of the updated Magic Mouse, Gurman suggests that it won't launch within the next 12 to 18 months. The product is still in development, with software and hardware work expected to take several more months or even years before its official release.

## Apple's First Foldable iPad, Larger Than MacBook Pro

Apple is reportedly developing its first foldable device, a groundbreaking iPad that will feature an impressive 18.8-inch display when fully opened, according to a Bloomberg report published on Sunday. This would make the device larger than even the biggest MacBook Pro, surpassing the current 13-inch iPad Pro M4. The foldable iPad is expected to transform into a screen size equivalent to two iPads placed side by side.



This bold move marks Apple's entry into the foldable market, which has been dominated by brands like Samsung and Huawei. The report also suggests that Apple has successfully addressed one of the biggest challenges faced by foldable devices: the crease. Traditionally, foldable phones and tablets suffer from visible creases along their folding lines, but Apple is said to have found a solution that makes the crease nearly invisible, offering a smoother experience for users.

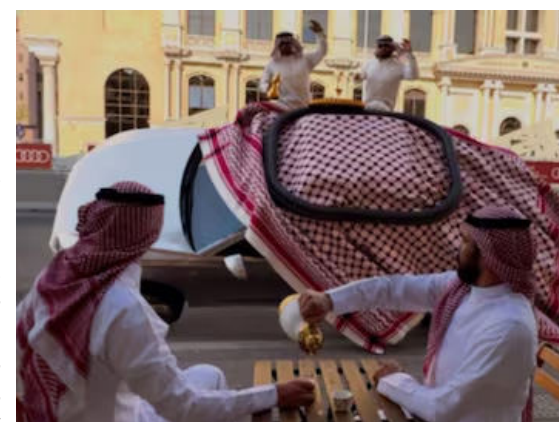
In addition to the foldable iPad, Apple is reportedly working on a foldable iPhone with a flip-style design, but this device may not be released until at least 2026. This further strengthens the idea that Apple is slowly but steadily entering the foldable market, taking its time to refine the technology before launching new devices.

With this new foldable iPad, Apple appears to be pushing the boundaries of tablet design, combining larger screen sizes with foldable flexibility. If successful, this could revolutionize how users interact with tablets and open up new possibilities for productivity and entertainment.

Apple's focus on fixing the foldable design issues that have plagued competitors could provide them with a significant edge in the growing foldable device market. Fans and tech enthusiasts are eagerly awaiting more details on this ambitious project, which is expected to shake up the tech industry in the coming years.

## Viral Video Shows Dubai Sheikhs Sipping Tea On Two-Wheeled Luxury Car

A viral video from Dubai is captivating the internet, offering a rare glimpse into the extravagant lifestyle of the city's royal Sheikhs. The footage, which has taken social media by storm, shows two Sheikhs casually sipping tea from an ornate golden vessel, perched on a unique two-wheeled luxury vehicle. This unusual sight has sparked widespread curiosity and admiration for the opulence that defines the lifestyle of Dubai's elite.



In the video, the two Sheikhs are seen enjoying their tea beside a sleek, two-wheeled luxury vehicle, offering a striking contrast to the typical four-wheeled cars seen in the region. Their golden tea vessels add to the scene's luxurious aura, with another pair of Sheikhs in a nearby luxury car performing the same tea ritual, further emphasizing the grandeur on display.

Dubai has long been a symbol of lavish wealth, with its Sheikhs often making headlines for their extravagant tastes and ostentatious displays of luxury. From extravagant celebrations to jaw-dropping architectural feats like the Burj Khalifa – the world's tallest skyscraper – the city is renowned for its grandeur. However, this new viral video offers a fresh perspective on the Sheikhs' love for the finer things in life, showcasing an unexpected yet stylish form of transport.

While the sight of two-wheeled luxury cars might seem unusual to many, it perfectly reflects the penchant for the extraordinary that Dubai's royals are known for. Whether it's the latest in high-end automobiles or unique modes of transportation, the Sheikhs' indulgence in life's finest experiences continues to fascinate and inspire admiration from around the world. This video is just another example of how the rulers of Dubai push the boundaries of luxury and redefine what it means to live in extravagance.



## Hasan's Final Over Secures Bangladesh's Seven-Run Win Over West Indies in First T20I



Hasan Mahmud delivered a sensational final over as Bangladesh clinched a thrilling seven-run victory over the West Indies in the first T20 International at Arnos Vale Stadium in St. Vincent on Sunday. Defending a modest total of 146 for seven, Bangladesh looked set to fall victim to the explosive batting of West Indies captain Rovman Powell, who had brought his side back into contention with a blistering 60 off 35 balls, featuring five fours and four sixes.

At one point, West Indies were in dire straits at 61 for seven in the 12th over, but Powell's remarkable partnership with all-rounder Romario Shepherd (22) turned the tide. Together, they put on 68 runs off 38 balls, giving their team a real shot at victory. Despite Shepherd's dismissal in the 19th over, Powell remained at the crease with Alzarri Joseph, and with just nine runs needed for victory, the match was finely poised as Mahmud began the final over.

Rising to the occasion, Mahmud struck twice in the over. First, he had Powell

caught behind by Bangladesh captain Litton Das off the third ball, then, just two balls later, he bowled Joseph to uproot his middle stump, leaving Obed McCoy stranded at the other end. McCoy had earlier made an impact with the ball, taking two wickets for 30 runs and claiming his 50th T20I wicket on his return to the West Indies team.

Earlier in the match, Bangladesh's batting was anchored by Soumya Sarkar, who top-scored with 43. Despite a strong spell from left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein, who took 2 for 13 off four overs, Bangladesh managed to push their total to 146, thanks to contributions from Jaker Ali, Shamim Hosein, and Mahedi Hasan.

Hasan, who had earlier contributed an unbeaten 26 with the bat, was named "Man of the Match" for his brilliant bowling effort of 4 for 13, which ultimately derailed the West Indies' late fightback. Despite Powell and Shepherd's valiant efforts, Bangladesh held on to secure the win.

## AC Milan and Fiorentina Slip in Serie A with Disappointing Loss

AC Milan's 125th anniversary celebration was soured by a frustrating goalless draw with Genoa on Sunday, leaving the seven-time European champions far behind Serie A's top teams. Despite the occasion drawing over 70,000 fans, including club legends, the performance was underwhelming. Milan's attacking efforts were disjointed, and although Alvaro Morata came close with a shot that hit the crossbar late in the game, the match ended without a goal. The disappointing result left Milan in eighth place with just 23 points, eight behind the Champions League spots and 14 adrift of leaders Atalanta.

Milan coach Paulo Fonseca tried to remain positive, stating, "The players played with desire... the only thing that was missing was the goal." He noted that his team was aggressive, won the ball back high up the pitch, and had plenty of shots but couldn't convert them. However, the fans were not as forgiving, chanting "we're not Americans" at the club's US owners, Redbird, and displaying a banner that read, "We honour our heroes, symbols of a Milan



which no longer exists." The disappointment was palpable, given the pre-match ceremony celebrating Milan's rich history.

The anniversary match also saw Milan's vintage kit and a parade of club icons, including Ruud Gullit, Marco van Basten, Frank Rijkaard, and Andrea Pirlo, who played in some of Milan's greatest teams. Unfortunately, the contrast between the legends and the current squad was stark, with an injury crisis and Fonseca's dissatisfaction with his players contributing to the lackluster display.

Meanwhile, Fiorentina's title hopes took a hit as they lost 1-0 at Bologna, their first league defeat in three months. Bologna's victory moved them into seventh place, three points behind Juventus. Fiorentina's setback left them six points behind Atalanta, with a game in hand.

In other Serie A action, Como secured a surprise 2-0 win over Roma, with two stoppage-time goals, while Roma's struggles continued under coach Claudio Ranieri, leaving them just two points above the relegation zone.

## India Struggles at 51/4 on Rain-Affected Day Three of 3rd Test Against Australia



India's top-order woes continued as they ended day three of the third Test against Australia in a precarious position at 51 for 4, following a challenging day of cricket marred by rain. The Indian batters struggled once again against the relentless Australian pace attack, with only KL Rahul showing some resistance at the crease, remaining unbeaten on 33 at stumps.

Earlier, India bowled Australia out for 445 in their first innings. The hosts managed to add 40 more runs to their overnight total, with Alex Carey playing a key role in the morning session. Carey struck a quickfire 70 off 88 balls, contributing to Australia's already substantial lead. His knock followed solid centuries by Steve Smith and Travis Head on day two, which had put Australia in a commanding position.

The Indian bowling attack, led by the ever-reliable Jasprit Bumrah, worked hard in the face of challenging conditions. Bumrah finished

with impressive figures of 6 for 76, continuing his excellent form with the ball. His efforts helped India restrict Australia from amassing a larger total, but the early dismissals in their batting innings left the team struggling to make any headway.

With the rain interruptions making it a stop-start affair, the Indian top-order failed to stand up to the pressure. Apart from Rahul, none of the other Indian batters showed the resilience needed to face the Australian bowlers. Rahul's knock, though promising, was not enough to steady the ship as India found themselves on the back foot once again.

The conditions, particularly the difficulty of playing against the red Kookaburra ball, which has become notoriously challenging since the 2020 ball change, only added to India's struggles. With a day and a half left in the match, India faces a daunting task to turn things around and avoid another collapse.

## Southampton Sack Manager Russell Martin After 5-0 Defeat to Tottenham

Southampton have parted ways with manager Russell Martin following a humiliating 5-0 home defeat to Tottenham on Sunday. The club, currently sitting at the bottom of the Premier League table with just one win in 16 matches, made the decision after the dismal performance left them nine points from safety.



In a statement, Southampton confirmed the move, acknowledging the challenges they faced in adjusting to life in the top flight after promotion last season. "We all knew the challenges that we would face this year as we readjusted to life in the top flight, competing in the best and most competitive league in the world," the club said. Despite these difficulties, the club expressed their disappointment with the results, emphasizing the urgent need for improvement. The board had backed Martin and his staff, but after repeated poor performances, the decision was made to make a change.

Martin's tenure came to an end after the team conceded five goals in the first half against Tottenham, a performance that left fans and club officials frustrated. Speaking after the match, Martin reflected on his team's struggles. "I was hurt in the first

half," he said. "We did not respond very well to the setbacks as a group. We have seen that all too often this season. After the first goal, our response was very poor."

Despite the heavy loss, Martin remained determined and vowed to continue working hard. "We have no choice but to keep working and fighting," he said, adding that he would continue to do so until told otherwise.

Simon Rusk, the current Under-21s coach, will take over as interim manager as the club searches for a permanent replacement for Martin.

## Indian Football In 2024: A Disastrous Year Of Heartbreaks And Controversies

For the Indian men's football team, 2024 was arguably the worst year in its history, marked by disappointing results and internal controversies. The year began with high hopes for a strong AFC Asian Cup campaign, but the team's performance quickly turned into a nightmare. With just four goals scored and 15 conceded across eleven matches, India's year ended without a single victory.

The AFC Asian Cup proved to be a harsh reality check, as India failed to score in all three group-stage matches, suffering losses to Australia, Syria, and Uzbekistan. The team's offensive struggles were evident, as they managed only five shots on target throughout the competition. These results sealed their exit from the tournament in the group stages.

The misery continued with a 1-2 loss to Afghanistan in a FIFA World

Cup qualifier, a match where Sunil Chhetri scored but India's missed chances proved costly. A subsequent draw against Kuwait gave a glimmer of hope for qualification, but a controversial 1-2 defeat against Qatar ended any dreams of advancing, following a glaring refereeing error.

In the aftermath of the Qatar defeat, coach Igor Stimac was dismissed by the All India Football Federation (AIFF), sparking a public feud between him and AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey. The termination of Stimac's contract, along with a \$400,000 compensation, only added to the turmoil.

Manolo Marquez was appointed as the new head coach, inheriting a team low on confidence and reeling from the loss of their talismanic striker, Chhetri, who bid an emotional farewell. Despite

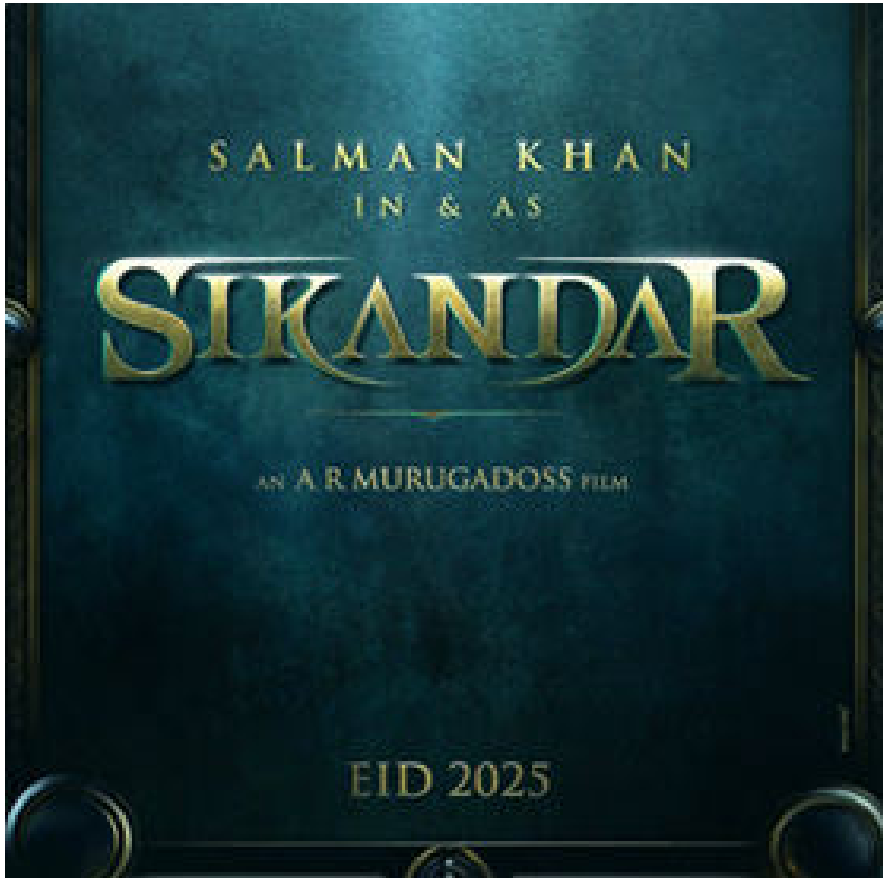


focusing on attacking play and set-pieces, Marquez's tenure saw little improvement in terms of results. India drew three of their four matches under him, including two 1-1 draws against Vietnam and Malaysia, but the team struggled to find the back of the net.

As the year ended, India faced a daunting challenge in 2025: securing their first win in over a year and solving the striker crisis. While the team's future under Marquez holds some promise, it remains clear that the road ahead is long and uncertain.



## Salman Khan's Sikandar Teaser Release Date Announced: A Treat for Fans



Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is all set to take the lead in the much-anticipated film *\*Sikandar\**, directed by Kollywood maestro AR Murugadoss. The film is gearing up for a grand theatrical release worldwide during Eid 2025, although the exact release date is yet to be revealed. Movie buffs and fans of Salman Khan have been eagerly awaiting updates, and exciting news has finally arrived.

The makers of *\*Sikandar\** have officially announced the teaser release date: December 27, 2024, coinciding with Salman Khan's birthday. This announcement has sparked immense excitement among the actor's fanbase, who will now get a glimpse of the high-octane action and gripping storyline. But the celebration doesn't stop there—fans are in for a double treat, as the teaser release is coupled with Salman's birthday festivities.

In *\*Sikandar\**, Salman Khan plays the titular role of a man battling corruption and crime in society, showcasing both intense emotions and action-packed sequences.

His character is expected to resonate deeply with audiences, with a narrative that promises to highlight the fight against societal injustice. The film also promises thrilling action sequences, set to give viewers a goosebumps-worthy experience.

Joining Salman Khan in this highly awaited project are talented co-stars like Rashmika Mandanna, who plays the female lead, and Kajal Aggarwal, who portrays a pivotal role. Renowned actor Sathyaraj also plays a key character, adding to the star power of the film. The movie is produced by Sajid Nadiadwala under the Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment banner, and with AR Murugadoss at the helm, *\*Sikandar\** is set to be a major cinematic event.

With all these exciting elements coming together, *\*Sikandar\** is poised to captivate audiences with its action, emotion, and star-studded cast. Fans are eagerly awaiting December 27 for their first look at the teaser, marking the beginning of what is sure to be an epic cinematic journey.

## Mohan Lal's First Look as Kirat in Kannappa Unveiled

The eagerly awaited film *\*Kannappa\**, a grand project from the Manchu family, has just released the first look of Malayalam superstar Mohan Lal in the role of Kirat. This prestigious venture, which carries a budget of around ₹100 crores, is being produced by the renowned actor and producer Manchu Mohan Babu. The film stars Manchu Vishnu in the lead role, and is one of the most ambitious projects in recent times.

*\*Kannappa\** is set in a historical and mythological backdrop, promising a rich narrative filled with intense drama and larger-than-life characters. Directed by Mukesh Kumar Singh, who is best known for his work on the *\*Mahabharata\** serial, the film boasts a stellar ensemble cast, including top actors from both Bollywood and Kollywood. With its grand scale and intriguing story, *\*Kannappa\** has been the talk of the town since its announcement.

Recently, the film team shared the first look of Mohan Lal, known fondly as Laletan, as Kirat, a character that is expected to have a powerful presence in the film. His inclusion in the project has generated immense excitement among fans, as his role is pivotal to the plot. The first look image has further elevated the anticipation surrounding the film, as Mohan Lal's intense persona as Kirat hints at the film's high-stakes drama.

Amidst some family struggles and conflicts within the Manchu family, the film is moving forward as a dream project for them. With the combined star power of Mohan Lal, Manchu Vishnu, and other top stars, *\*Kannappa\** is shaping up to be a major historical epic that promises to captivate audiences. Fans are eagerly awaiting its release, as the team continues to tease more exciting updates.



## Dacoit Poster Sparks Speculation, Mrunal Thakur Likely to Join Adivi Sesh

The much-awaited film *Dacoit*, starring Adivi Sesh and directed by Shaniel Deo, has caused a stir among fans with the release of a new poster featuring a mysterious female lead. The poster, unveiled recently, shows a new heroine alongside Adivi Sesh, reigniting speculation about the identity of the actress.

It has already been confirmed that Shruti Haasan, who was initially part of the project, exited the film earlier. While the makers have not provided specific details on her departure, this development created a void that the production team now appears to have filled with a new leading lady. The filmmakers have announced that the identity of the new heroine will be officially revealed tomorrow at 11:30 AM, adding to the intrigue surrounding the project.

Fans and social media users have



been quick to jump to conclusions, with many speculating that Sita Ramam star Mrunal Thakur might be the new female lead in *Dacoit*. The excitement surrounding this theory has reached a fever pitch, as Mrunal's name has been widely mentioned across fan forums and platforms. However, whether these speculations hold true will be confirmed when the official announcement is made tomorrow.

The film is jointly produced by Supriya Yarlagadda and Suniel Narang, and features music by Bheems Ceciroleo. With Adivi Sesh in the lead role and a fresh face joining him in the female lead, *\*Dacoit\** promises to deliver a thrilling and engaging cinematic experience. The film's release is eagerly anticipated, and fans are keen to learn more about the plot and the rest of the cast as the mystery surrounding the heroine is finally resolved.

## Ram Charan Announces Overseas Bookings for Game Changer Ahead of Release

Actor Ram Charan has officially announced that overseas bookings for his highly anticipated pan-India political drama, *\*Game Changer\**, are now open. The film, directed by Shankar, is set to hit theaters on January 10, 2025, as a special Sankranti festive release, and the excitement surrounding it is palpable. Known for his power-packed performances, Ram Charan's collaboration with the renowned director has only added to the hype, ensuring that the movie will open with a grand reception.

Taking to social media on Sunday evening, Ram Charan shared the exciting news with his fans, writing, "A massive global storm has begun! #GameChanger overseas bookings are now open! Experience it in cinemas worldwide from 10-01-2025!" The announcement was met with enthusiasm, and bookings have already begun in key international markets such as the UK and North America. The film's advance bookings are reportedly receiving an overwhelming response, reflecting the high anticipation from fans worldwide.

*\*Game Changer\** promises to be an action-packed political thriller, with Ram Charan playing a dual role as both father and son, adding an intriguing dynamic to the narrative. The film also stars Bollywood actress Kiara Advani, who plays the female lead, alongside a strong supporting cast including SJ Suryah, Anjali, Srikanth, Naveen Chandra, and Sunil in crucial roles.

Produced by Dil Raju, *\*Game Changer\** is set to captivate audiences with its powerful storyline, high-intensity action sequences, and a memorable soundtrack composed by Thaman. As the release date



draws closer, fans are eagerly awaiting to see Ram Charan's dual performance on the big screen, making this movie a must-watch for fans of both Telugu cinema and beyond.

With bookings now open for international audiences, *\*Game Changer\** is set to make a significant impact worldwide when it releases on January 10, 2025.

## Vishwaksen to Dazzle as 'Laila' in Upcoming Film VS12

Tollywood actor Vishwaksen, known for his mass roles, is set to surprise audiences in his upcoming film *\*VS12\**, titled *\*Laila\**. Directed by debutant Ram Narayan, this film marks a unique shift for Vishwaksen as he will be seen in a lady's get-up, adding an intriguing twist to his acting repertoire. The film's first look has already generated significant buzz, sparking curiosity among fans and film enthusiasts alike.

In *\*Laila\**, Vishwaksen is seen sporting a trendy dual pants look paired with stylish goggles, hinting at an entertaining and unconventional character. The fresh look, which has raised expectations, is expected to bring a new dimension to Vishwaksen's performances, breaking away from his usual action-packed roles. His transformation for this film has intrigued many, and fans are eager to see how he adapts to this new role.

The movie, which also stars Akanksha Sharma in a key role, will have music composed by Tanishq Bagchi, adding to the excitement. The film's release date has been confirmed for February 14, 2025, coinciding with Valentine's Day. *\*Laila\** is expected to bring a refreshing mix of drama and entertainment to the big screen,



promising an enjoyable cinematic experience for audiences.

Additionally, the makers have planned to unveil *\*Laila\**'s first rose on New Year 2025, marking the beginning of a fresh promotional campaign. This Valentine's Day release is anticipated to be a massive hit, with fans eagerly awaiting Vishwaksen's new avatar and the dynamic performances of the cast.

As *\*Laila\** nears its release, anticipation continues to build around the film's intriguing premise, Vishwaksen's unconventional role, and the catchy music that is sure to add to its charm.