



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

ACB Files Case Against KTR in E-Car Racing Scandal



TPN , Hyderabad: Allegedly paid Rs. 55 crore without permission IAS officer Arvind Kumar as A2 in the case KTR may be given notice and summoned for questioning The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has registered a case against BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) in connection with the Formula E-car racing scandal. KTR has been listed as Accused No. 1 (A1), with IAS officer Arvind Kumar named as Accused No. 2 (A2) and HMDA Chief Engineer BLN Reddy as Accused No. 3 (A3).

out obtaining cabinet approval or finance clearance. The ACB has filed charges under non-bailable sections, including 13 (1) A, 13 (2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, and sections 409 and 120B of the Indian Penal Code.

The controversy gained momentum last month when the state government wrote to Governor Jishnu Dev Varma, seeking permission to file a case against KTR. Sources indicate that the Governor granted permission four days ago. Following this, Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari directed the ACB to proceed with the case, attaching the Governor's approval in her correspon-

dence. The FIR outlines serious allegations, stating that public funds were disbursed without proper authorization.

With the case now officially registered, there is growing speculation within political circles about KTR's possible arrest. Reports suggest that KTR could be served with a notice in the next two to three days and may be summoned for questioning.

The development has created unease within the BRS leadership, raising concerns about the potential political fallout of the case. The party has yet to issue an official statement on the matter.

The case stems from allegations of an unauthorized payment of Rs. 55 crore to a foreign company, reportedly made with-

Rahul Gandhi Booked for Attempted Murder After Scuffle in Parliament

BJP Files Complaint Against Rahul Gandhi Scuffle at Parliament Leaves Leaders Injured Rahul Gandhi Denies Allegations, Alleges Threats Congress Demands Amit Shah's Resignation



TPN , New Delhi: Senior Congress leader and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has been booked for attempted murder following a scuffle between Opposition and National Democratic Alliance (NDA) MPs at the Parliament complex on Thursday, December 19. BJP leaders, including MPs Anurag Thakur and Bansuri Swaraj, filed a complaint at the Parliament Street Police Station, accusing Gandhi of "physical assault and incitement."

In the complaint, BJP alleged that Gandhi pushed a senior BJP member during the altercation, a claim denied by the Congress leader.

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Telangana CM Orders SIT Probe into 30-Year ORR Toll Lease Controversy

Controversial ORR Toll Lease Under Scrutiny Assembly Debate Sparks SIT Announcement Harish Rao and Bhatti Vikramarka Lock Horns Mandatory Inquiry Before Contract Cancellation, Says Revenue Minister



TPN , Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has directed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the controversial 30-year lease of Outer Ring Road (ORR) toll collection to IRB Infrastructure Developers Ltd. The lease, valued at ₹7,800 crore, was finalized during the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government just before the 2023 Assembly elections. The announcement came during a heated Assembly discussion on Thursday, December 19, regarding the state's

debt. The debate intensified as Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka and Siddipet MLA T. Harish Rao clashed over land allocations.

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Telangana High Court Denies Interim Relief to Mohan Babu

TPN , Hyderabad: The Telangana High Court has denied actor Mohan Babu interim relief in the attempted murder case against him. Mohan Babu sought a bail petition to prevent his arrest until Monday, but the court refused to grant interim orders. The court directed Mohan Babu to file an affidavit confirming his presence before any further decisions are made. The next hearing has been scheduled for Monday. Mohan Babu addressed the incident at his residence in Jalpalli, clarifying that he did not intentionally harm the journalist.



2nd page

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Private Banking by IDFC FIRST Bank

BONDADA GROUP

142 RANK INDIA

8 RANK Telugu States

India's Top 200 Self-made Entrepreneurs of the Millennium 2024

Rk	Founder(s)	Company	Estimated Company Value (INR crore)	Main Industry	Founded Year	Company
141	Madhusudan R, Prabhu Rangarajan, Muthukumar Ayyakkannu	M2P Fintech	6,600.0	Financial Services	2,014	Chennai
142	Raghavendra Rao Bondada	Bondada Engineering	6,400.0	Telecommunication	2,012	Hyderabad
143	Nishanth S., Prateek Dixit, Rohan Nayak	Pocket FM	6,300.0	Media & Entertainment	2,018	Bengaluru
144	Jahangir Mohammed, Maluk Mohamed	Twin Health	6,200.0	Healthcare	2,018	Chennai
144	Arun Mn	Casagrand	6,200.0	Real Estate	2,004	Chennai
144	Kirti Mehta, Nirav Mehta, Ankur Mehta	Corona Remedies	6,200.0	Healthcare	2,004	Ahmedabad



ORR Toll Lease Controversy

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Harish Rao highlighted a past Congress decision to transfer 400 acres of Raidurgam land, valued at ₹75 crore per acre, to the Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIC). In response, Bhatti Vikramarka accused the previous BRS government of favoring private entities by leasing ORR toll collection for 30 years.

Amid the exchanges, CM Revanth Reddy intervened, announcing the SIT probe in response to Harish Rao's suggestion to cancel the contract. Harish Rao, however, accused the CM of misleading the Assembly, claiming he had only advised contract cancellation, not an investigation. Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy defended the CM, stating that an inquiry is mandatory before cancelling a government contract.

Earlier this year, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) had initiated its own inquiry into the tender process under the then joint commissioner Amrapali. The SIT's findings are expected to shed light on the controversial deal.

Relief to Mohan Babu

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Expressing regret, he apologized to journalists and the victim's family. Last week, Mohan Babu, accompanied by his son Manchu Vishnu, visited the injured journalist at Yashoda Hospital in Somajiguda and offered apologies to his family.

Amid ongoing family disputes, Mohan Babu voluntarily surrendered his licensed double-barrel gun to Chandragiri police through his PRO. Both Mohan Babu and his son Manoj had earlier approached the police over the family tensions. As a precaution, the authorities ordered them to surrender their firearms. The case has drawn significant public attention, with the court's decision on Monday expected to have major implications for the actor.

Parliament

continued from P-1

The complaint includes charges under multiple sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including 109 (abetment), 115 (abetment of offense punishable with death), 117 (abetment of offense involving a large number of persons), 125 (endangering personal safety), 131 (assault or criminal force), and 351 (criminal intimidation). Police have confirmed receipt of the complaint and are investigating.

The altercation reportedly occurred at the Parliament entrance, Makar Dwar, during protests by both sides over alleged insults to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Former Union minister Pratap Chandra Sarangi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge were injured in the melee. Sarangi sustained a forehead injury and was hospitalized, while Kharge, who had previously undergone knee surgery, complained of pain after falling.

Rahul Gandhi defended himself, alleging that BJP MPs pushed and threatened him as he tried to enter Parliament. "It is our right to enter Parliament," Gandhi told reporters.

Congress Accuses BJP of Diverting Attention

At a press conference at the AICC headquarters, Congress leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi, accused the BJP of attempting to distract from Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks allegedly insulting Ambedkar. The Congress demanded Shah's resignation and an apology.

Kharge stated that Congress leaders were peacefully protesting when BJP MPs blocked their entry into Parliament. "They pushed me, causing me to lose balance," Kharge said, condemning Shah's remarks and reaffirming their resolve to continue nationwide protests. The incident has escalated tensions between the ruling NDA and the Opposition, further polarizing parliamentary proceedings.

KTR Responds to ACB Case, Challenges Debate in Assembly

TPN , Hyderabad : The political landscape in Telangana has heated up following the registration of a case by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) against K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), BRS Working President, in connection with the Formula E-car racing project. KTR has been named as A1 in the case, which includes non-bailable sections.

KTR was attending the Legislative Assembly session when the case was registered. Addressing the issue in the Assembly, he dismissed the allegations as part of a larger conspiracy and called for

a full debate on the matter. "If there is sincerity and courage, we should discuss the Formula E-car racing issue openly in the Assembly. I am ready to give answers," KTR asserted.

The case has sparked a significant political debate in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, with KTR challenging his opponents to bring the issue to the floor of the Assembly. He emphasized that the people deserve to know the facts surrounding the project. The response has added fuel to the ongoing political tensions in the state.



Debt Debate Sparks Turmoil in Telangana Assembly

Bhatti Vikramarka Accuses BRS of Financial Mismanagement
Harish Rao Refutes Allegations, Challenges Congress Claims
Discrepancies in Debt Figures Fuel Heated Exchanges
Debate Highlights Telangana's Fiscal Challenges

TPN , Hyderabad : Heated exchanges erupted in the Telangana Assembly as Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Bhatti Vikramarka clashed with MLA Harish Rao over the state's mounting debt. Bhatti alleged that the Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) government incurred debts of Rs. 7 lakh crore during its tenure, criticizing them for leaving the state in financial disarray. He further accused the previous government of handing over a debt-laden administration.

Harish Rao fiercely refuted Bhatti's claims, accusing Congress of spreading lies. "Congress's nature is to repeat lies and avoid truth. Even if woken up in our sleep, we will always state the truth," Harish declared. He contended that BRS borrowed Rs. 4.17 lakh crore, dismissing allegations



of Rs. 7 lakh crore as fabricated.

Bhatti highlighted that BRS borrowed Rs. 1.25 lakh crore in its first year, predicting it would surpass Congress's decade-long debt record in just five years. "We inherited Rs. 6.71 lakh crore in debt from the previous regime, of which Rs. 26,000 crore

went to interest payments and Rs. 12,000 crore cleared pending bills," Bhatti explained, emphasizing Congress's commitment to financial discipline. Harish countered, attributing reduced state revenue to the COVID-19 pandemic and central policies, asserting that BRS improved revenue from Rs. 35,000 crore to Rs. 1.5 lakh crore annually. "We handed over a surplus budget to the Congress, but they mismanaged it," he claimed.

The debate intensified as Bhatti accused Harish of misleading the House, citing discrepancies in debt figures, particularly for projects like Kaleshwaram. Harish retorted, challenging Bhatti to resign if proven wrong. The session ended with unresolved tensions, leaving the debt debate a contentious issue in Telangana politics.

Telangana Class 10th Exam Schedule Announced

TPN , Telangana: The Telangana School Education Department has released the schedule for Class 10th exams, which will be conducted from March 21 to April 4, 2024. The exams will take place daily from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Schools have been directed to complete pre-final exams and syllabus,

allowing students ample time for revision.

Exam Schedule

March 21: First Language
March 22: Second Language
March 24: English (Third Language)
March 26: Mathematics
March 28: Physical Science
March 29: Biological Science

April 2: Social Studies

April 3: OSSC Language Paper 1

April 4: OSSC Language Paper 2

Holidays have been provided between certain exams, including English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Physical Science, allowing students additional preparation time.

However, there are no breaks between the Second Language and Biological Science exams, as they are scheduled consecutively.

Students are advised to utilize the time effectively for revisions and ensure they are well-prepared for the examinations.

Kaleshwaram Commission Intensifies Scrutiny of Somesh Kumar and Smita Sabharwal



TPN , Hyderabad : The Kaleshwaram Commission inquiry, now into its second day, has intensified its questioning of former Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar. Today, both Somesh Kumar and Smita Sabharwal, former IAS officer who worked in the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), appeared before the commission for further examination.

The Commission Chairman, PC Ghosh, expressed frustration at Somesh Kumar's delayed arrival to the inquiry hall after being called. The Chairman became notably serious with the former CS when he failed to provide direct answers to questions, particularly concerning the construction of three barrages under the Kaleshwaram project. When asked if any illegal agreements had been made regarding the barrages, Somesh Kumar explained that during his tenure as Irrigation Secretary, he acted according to the Cabinet's decisions. However, when pressed further about potential rule violations in the construction of the barrages, he struggled to provide clear answers, leading Ghosh to warn him to answer directly.

Somesh Kumar's response to inquiries about wrongdoing during his tenure as CS was vague, claiming memory lapses due to the passage of time. Ghosh responded sharply, emphasizing that the commission expected straightforward answers, not evasive remarks.

Meanwhile, Smita Sabharwal, questioned about her role in the barrages' construction, stated that her responsibilities were limited to coordinating information between the CMO and district officials. She denied knowledge of any GOs being issued without Cabinet approval, stating that her primary role was to provide information to the Chief Minister.

The commission's two-day inquiry has included questioning two key officials. More officials are expected to appear tomorrow, and the commission is anticipated to issue further notices to individuals involved in the project.

ACB Registers Case Against KTR and Officials in HMDA Fund Misuse Allegation

TPN , Telangana: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has registered a First Information Report (FIR No. 12/RCO-CIU-ACB/2024) against Telangana Minister K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), IAS officer Arvind Kumar, and HMDA Chief Engineer BLN Reddy over alleged financial irregularities in the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA).

The FIR, lodged under sections 13(1)(A) and 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act and sections 409 and 120B of the IPC, stems from a complaint filed by Principal Secretary of MAUD, Dana Kishore, on behalf of the government.

According to the FIR, the accused facilitated illegal transfers of ₹54.88 crore to UK-based FEO Formula E Operations Limited in two installments: ₹22.69 crore on October 3, 2023, and ₹23.01 crore on October 11, 2023, from the Himayat Nagar Indian Overseas Bank. The payments were reportedly made without necessary government approvals, incurring an additional tax burden of ₹8.06 crore on HMDA.

The funds were allegedly disbursed due to a lack of sponsors for Season 10 Formula E Racing. The investigation highlights procedural lapses, including bypassing mandatory financial approval for transactions exceeding ₹10 crore. Further inquiries are ongoing.



Two Arrested for Stealing Mobile Phones from Hostels in Hyderabad



TPN , Hyderabad: Two individuals were arrested for allegedly stealing mobile phones from hostels across Hyderabad and Cyberabad. The duo, identified as Govind Bandari (24) and Hikmat Rawal (23), both from Nepal, were involved in over 12 theft cases. Police recovered 51 stolen mobile phones valued at Rs 10.2 lakh from them.

The accused, who have been living in Hyderabad for the past six years, targeted hostels and bachelor accommodations in the early hours. Bandari would sneak into rooms while the occupants slept and steal their mobile phones. Rawal assisted by selling the stolen devices, which were eventually planned to be sent to Nepal. The pair was arrested near Hitech City railway station after police noticed their suspicious behavior. A case has been filed, and further investigations are underway.

In a related incident, a thief who stole mobile phones and laptops from a girls' hostel in Hanamkonda district fell into a well while trying to escape. After stealing 14 mobile phones and six laptops in three days, the thief spent the night in the well before being rescued by police. Students criticized hostel management for failing to take adequate security measures.

Komatireddy Highlights Key Irrigation Issues in Nalgonda



TPN , Telangana: During the Assembly's Question Hour, Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy brought to light the challenges faced by Nalgonda district due to incomplete irrigation projects and water contamination issues. He emphasized the importance of the Pillayipalli Dharmareddy Canal, which benefits both Nalgonda and Bhongir.

"Started in 2004 with just Rs. 1.60 lakh, we later secured Rs. 26 crore for the project. However, subsequent governments ignored it. While we completed alignments from Kondapochamma to Baswapur and Chityal to Gundrampalli, progress halted," he stated.

Highlighting Nalgonda's plight, he noted the adverse effects of fluoride-contaminated groundwater and untreated Musi river water. "Residents suffer due to polluted water. Farming with Musi drainage water poses health risks," he said, thanking the Chief Minister for initiating the Musi River purification project.

The minister expressed disappointment over delays in the SLBC (Srisaillam Left Bank Canal) project, which remains 70% complete. "For a decade, the project was neglected, but our government is prioritizing it. Recently, Rs. 37 crore was sanctioned for land acquisition, and Rs. 35 crore will be released next week to complete left and right canals," he added.

He also addressed the pending Gandamalla reservoir, which could irrigate 1.5 lakh acres in Aleru constituency. "Despite having a 1.5 TMC capacity, the reservoir was sidelined. If Mallanna Sagar releases 1 TMC, Gandamalla will receive water," he asserted.

Appealing for cooperation, he said, "Dalits, tribals, and the poor in Nalgonda are suffering without water. I urge all to support this cause." He also criticized the opposition for lacking constructive contributions.

The minister concluded with a call for immediate action on pending irrigation projects to alleviate the struggles of Nalgonda residents.

KTR Defends Car Race and Criticizes Revanth Reddy's Opposition

KTR Urges Debate on Formula E Race Controversy

Longstanding Efforts to Bring Car Race to Hyderabad

Formula E Race Boosts Telangana's Brand Image and Economy

KTR Criticizes Revanth Reddy for Negligence in Race Cancellation

TPN , Hyderabad: KTR, the Minister for IT, Industries, and Municipal Administration, has strongly defended the organization of the Formula E car race in Hyderabad, while criticizing Congress leader Revanth Reddy and the opposition for their stance on the event. Speaking to the media, KTR revealed that he had written to the Speaker of the Telangana Assembly, urging a debate on the issue if they dared to discuss it openly.

KTR claimed that the opposition lacked understanding of the significance of the car race and accused them of having a "sadistic mentality" by filing legal cases without any intention of understanding the event. He emphasized that their efforts to bring the race to Hyderabad have been long-standing, with discussions dating back to 2002 and 2003 under the leadership of N. Chandrababu Naidu. He further highlighted the historical context,

pointing out that 580 acres of land had been acquired in Gopanpally for a Formula 1 race track, a project that was shelved after Naidu's tenure.

The agreement for the Formula E race was signed on October 25, 2022, with the race taking place in February 2023. KTR noted that many electric vehicle companies and celebrities, including Anand Mahindra and Sachin Tendulkar, participated in the event. The race was organized by the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), with a budget of Rs. 30 to 35 crore, generating a revenue of Rs. 700 crore for the state.

KTR also addressed the issues with the event's promoter, Green Co, which backed out. He mentioned that efforts were made to save the race by sending money in two phases, ensuring Hyderabad's inclusion in future races.



The minister accused Revanth Reddy of negligence, stating that the cancellation of the race was due to Reddy's actions and that legal steps would be taken to resolve the matter. KTR reaffirmed his commitment to promoting Telangana's brand image and furthering the state's status as a hub for electric vehicles.

New Ration Cards to be Distributed After Sankranti: Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy



TPN , Hyderabad: Telangana Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy announced that new ration cards will be distributed to eligible families after this Sankranti. The minister also revealed that ration card holders will receive sannabiyam, a variety of rice, instead of the doddu rice currently being provided. This change is expected to be implemented within the next two to three months.

Speaking in the assembly, Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy emphasized that the new

ration system will offer families with valid ration cards better quality rice. He also warned that strict action will be taken against those found illegally transporting rice received through ration cards.

In addition, Minister Uttam stated that while there have been discussions regarding the establishment of new ration dealer shops, no final decision has been made yet. He noted that introducing new ration shops could affect the existing dealer shops, which must be considered carefully. Minister Uttam further highlighted the BRS government's efforts in creating 4,000 new village panchayats, a move aimed at better administration and delivery of services to the people.

The announcement has generated significant attention as it promises to enhance the ration system in the state and improve the quality of food distributed to eligible families.

Akbaruddin Owaisi Objects to Financial Discussion in Telangana Assembly



TPN , Hyderabad: AIMIM MLA Akbaruddin Owaisi raised objections during a financial discussion in the Telangana Legislative Assembly on Tuesday. While Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka was addressing the issue of debts, Owaisi expressed his anger, stating that the assembly should first clarify the topics under discussion. He pointed out that the government should prioritize

key issues for discussion and that it was not the proper way to run the assembly.

Owaisi also highlighted that, unlike the Parliament, where discussions are announced in advance, the Telangana Assembly did not provide clear information about the topic being discussed. BRS MLA Harish Rao echoed Owaisi's concerns, offering his support. BJP MLA Yeleti Maheshwar Reddy also joined the debate, demanding transparency about the topic being discussed.

In response, Minister Sridhar Babu assured the members that if there was no interest in the debt discussion, they would stop the debate. The situation created a tense atmosphere in the assembly but was eventually resolved. Owaisi also urged the Speaker to ensure that future sessions avoid any information gaps.

BRS Files Complaint Against Minister Komatireddy

TPN , Telangana: The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) party lodged a complaint with the Speaker on Wednesday regarding inappropriate remarks made by Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy during the Assembly session. The incident occurred during the Question Hour when the minister allegedly made baseless allegations against former minister Harish Rao without prior notice or permission from the Speaker. In its complaint, the BRS highlighted that such actions violate the rules and decorum of the Assembly. According to Rule 319 of the Assembly Procedure, making personal accusations or using offensive language against honorable members is strictly prohibited during sessions. Additionally, Rule 30 mandates that any discussion regarding a member must be preceded by a formal notice to the Speaker. Rule 45 further emphasizes that any behavior disrupting the proceedings of the House is against the procedural code.

The BRS termed the minister's remarks as "unethical and disrespectful," arguing that they undermined the dignity of the Assembly and violated members' privileges. The party demanded immediate action against Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, asserting that such conduct sets a negative precedent in parliamentary proceedings.

The BRS reiterated the importance of maintaining decorum in the Assembly and urged all members to adhere to the established rules to ensure constructive discussions and uphold the sanctity of the House. The Speaker has been requested to take appropriate steps to address the issue and prevent such incidents in the future.

This complaint underscores the BRS party's commitment to safeguarding the integrity of the legislative process and ensuring accountability within the Assembly.

BJP MLA Eleti Maheshwar Reddy Predicts Telangana Will Turn Into Sri Lanka Under Congress Rule

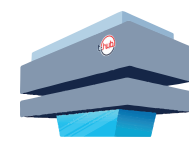
TPN , Hyderabad: BJP Legislative Party leader and Nirmal MLA Eleti Maheshwar Reddy made controversial remarks on Thursday, accusing the Congress government in Telangana of following the path of the BRS government. Speaking to the media, he predicted that Telangana would soon resemble Sri Lanka under Congress rule due to its mounting debts.

Reddy alleged that the Congress government had borrowed Rs. 1 lakh 27 thousand crores in just one year, surpassing the FRMB (Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management) limit. He expressed frustration over the government's failure to fulfill its promises despite

the heavy borrowing, claiming that the administration was primarily focused on commissions.

In a recent assembly discussion on state debts, Reddy further criticized Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, stating that the latter had acknowledged the borrowing of Rs. 1 lakh 27 thousand crores, but that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy was misleading the public with contradictory statements. Reddy also accused the government of selling lands, including 400 acres of Kanchara Gachibowli lands, to transfer to the Telangana State Industrial Corporation (TGIC) as part of its financial dealings.





Telangana's Renowned Folk Artiste Mogilaiah Passes Away at 67

TPN , Hyderabad: Pasthan Mogilaiah, a celebrated Kinnera folk artiste, passed away on Thursday morning in Telangana due to kidney and heart-related ailments. He was 67.



Mogilaiah gained widespread recognition with his heartfelt elegy in the Telugu blockbuster *Balagam* (2023). A native of Duggondi village in Warangal district, he and his wife Komuramma, also a folk artiste, belonged to the 'Sharadakandru' of the 'Beda Budaga Jangala' community. The couple had been performing since childhood, preserving their traditional art form.

Despite his fame, Mogilaiah struggled financially after suffering kidney failure. Support poured in from various quarters, including *Balagam* producer Dil Raju, director Yeldandi Venu, and actors like Megastar Chiranjeevi. The state government also assisted with medical treatment, and Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar contributed Rs 1 lakh. Transport Minister Ponnampallabharani promised a house site for the family.

BRS working president K. T. Rama Rao expressed his condolences, remembering Mogilaiah's songs as a testament to Telangana's cultural strength. *Balagam*'s team also mourned his loss.

Mogilaiah is survived by his wife, a son, and a daughter. His last rites will be performed in his native village, Duggondi. He leaves behind a legacy immortalized through his soulful music.

MLC Kavitha Slams Congress, Vows Strong Fight



TPN , Hyderabad: MLC Kavitha took to Twitter to criticize the Congress party, accusing it of targeting BRS and Chief Minister KCR through legal maneuvers due to their inability to counter them politically. She alleged that the Congress is scripting a political drama that the people are observing closely.

Kavitha also targeted Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, claiming he avoids

debates in the Assembly and resorts to filing false cases to intimidate opponents. Addressing him directly, she asserted, "We are soldiers of KCR, and your threats and strategies will not scare us."

The BRS leader concluded her statement by reaffirming her party's resolve to fight back even stronger against such alleged tactics.

Malreddy Slams Amit Shah's Ambedkar Remarks

TPN , Hyderabad: MLA Malreddy Ramreddy, the Chairman of the Telangana State Road Development Corporation, criticized Union Home Minister Amit Shah for his remarks about Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, calling them disrespectful not only to Ambedkar but to the entire nation. Ramreddy expressed his discontent during a protest near the Ambedkar statue in LB Nagar, organized in response to Shah's comments in the Rajya Sabha. He condemned the BJP for undermining the Constitution and said that Shah's remarks about Ambedkar were mocking, asserting that such disrespect towards Ambedkar reflects a lack of regard for SC, ST, and minority communities. Ramreddy emphasized that the Constitution, which provides protection to Dalits, is being targeted and warned that a conspiracy is underway to remove such safeguards.



Hydra Continues Demolitions in Manikonda Alkapuri Township

TPN , Hyderabad: The ongoing demolitions in the Manikonda Alkapuri Township were carried out by Hydra officials on December 19, 2024. The demolition was focused on buildings and apartments constructed before 2016, in line with Hydra's earlier notice. During the operation, residents of the Anuhar Apartments attempted to block the bulldozers, leading to a heated argument between Hydra staff and the apartment residents.



In recent months, Hydra had announced that it would demolish buildings and apartments constructed prior to 2016, a decision that has sparked considerable tension among the affected residents. When officials began demolishing certain structures in Alkapuri, residents questioned the actions, causing an atmosphere of unrest.

The demolition focused on apartment buildings in Alkapuri Colony, where Hydra authorities claim that residential permits were misused to create commercial establishments. The dispute escalated between Hydra officials and local business owners, further intensifying the situation.

Local sources suggest that there have been significant commercial violations, with businesses operating without the necessary permissions, leading to potential revenue loss for the Manikonda Municipality. These demolitions have raised concerns among residents, questioning the timing and execution of the actions.

Hydra's ongoing crackdown on illegal constructions has become a focal point in the region, as both residential and commercial stakeholders continue to voice their opposition. The situation remains tense, with authorities aiming to enforce compliance with building regulations in the area.

Hyderabad Book Fair 2024 Inaugurated at NTR Stadium

TPN , Hyderabad : The 37th edition of the Hyderabad Book Fair 2024 kicked off on Thursday at NTR Stadium, offering a unique opportunity for book enthusiasts to immerse themselves in a world of literature. The event was inaugurated by Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who emphasized the growing influence of digital media while advocating for the preservation of traditional book reading.

The 11-day event, running daily from 12 pm to 9 pm, is expected to attract students, writers, journalists, and book lovers. The fair features a range of activities, including book launches, interactive sessions, and discussions. With over 210 publishers and suppliers from across the country, including major publishing houses like Telugu Academy, Penguin, and Emesco, the fair offers books at discounted prices.

Speaking at the inauguration, CM Revanth highlighted the diminishing importance of books in the digital era and stressed that events like the Hyderabad Book Fair inspire future generations to read and engage with history. He noted the value of reading books written by historians to learn about unsung heroes and their contributions to society.

In honor of prominent historians, the Telangana government also announced the renaming of the Telugu University after Suravaram Pratap Reddy. The event was attended by several government ministers and dignitaries, including MLC M Kodandaram and Justice Sudarshan Reddy, who are advisors for this year's book fair.



Congress MLA Raj Gopal Reddy Slams Andhra Media and BRS Party



TPN , Hyderabad: Congress MLA Raj Gopal Reddy has once again sparked controversy with his comments targeting Andhra media channels and the ruling BRS party. Speaking during a recent chat-session, Reddy expressed frustration over the continued influence of Andhra media in Telangana politics, even after the state has been formed for 10 years.

Reddy stated that he would not accept this interference and emphasized that the fight for Telangana's formation was driven by the desire for self-respect. He

further accused the BRS party of trying to create divisions within Telangana, but asserted that the Congress would not fall into the party's trap. He also addressed his expectations regarding ministerial positions, saying that the decision would be handled by the high command and that he would not be swayed by the lack of such a post at the moment.

Reddy's remarks highlight ongoing tensions within Telangana politics, as the Congress MLA continues to voice his discontent with both media influence and political rivalries.

CM Revanth Reddy Calls for Historical Truth at Book Fair



TPN , Hyderabad: Chief Minister Revanth Reddy emphasized the importance of historians, poets, and artists in ensuring that future generations receive accurate information about the real fighters and martyrs of historical movements. In his address at the inauguration of the 37th Hyderabad Book Fair, held at NTR Stadium, he highlighted the role of poets and artists in sharpening their voices to reveal the truths of history.

Reddy pointed out that history is often written by the victors, leaving the sacrifices of unsung heroes and martyrs less documented. He specifically referred to the armed peasant struggle and the two phases of the Telangana movement, where the focus tends to be more on those who politically benefited rather than those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

With the rise of digital and social media, Reddy noted the difficulty in distinguishing fact from fiction. He stressed that books remain a reliable source for uncovering the truth, urging the youth to turn to literature for clarity. He also praised the growth of the Hyderabad Book Fair, which began in 1985 at the City Central Library and has since expanded to a state-level event, inspiring intellectual engagement among future generations.

Minister Jupally Krishna Rao, Ponnampallabharani, CM Advisor Vem Narender Reddy, and several prominent poets, writers, and artists were present at the event, showing their support for the ongoing promotion of literature and historical accuracy.

Minister Ponnampalli Responds on Gurukul schools



TPN , Telangana: In a short discussion on Gurukul schools in Telangana, Minister Ponnampalli Prabhakar addressed various issues and initiatives taken by the government.

The Minister highlighted that Telangana has 327 BC Gurukul schools, but only 21 have their own buildings, with the rest operating in rented premises. He pointed out that in Karimnagar district alone, 33 BC Gurukul schools exist, but only one has a government building. Criticizing previous administrations, he noted that even during a five-year tenure, no efforts were made to construct proper facilities.

To address concerns, the government has implemented common diets across Gurukul schools, revised diet charges by 40%, and ensured the admission process is competitive and transparent. Integrated residential schools are being established on 25-acre campuses with an investment of ₹150-200 crore each.

Minister Prabhakar assured that monthly payments for building rents and mess charges would be made by the 10th of every month under CM Revanth Reddy's leadership. He urged political and administrative stakeholders to avoid politicizing the education system and instead contribute constructively.

The Minister also called on educators to treat students like their own children and urged public officials to ensure basic amenities like kitchens, electricity, and bathrooms in all schools. The government aims to strengthen Gurukul schools, benefiting over 8 lakh students from marginalized communities.

Formula-E Case: RS Praveen Kumar's Comments Spark Debate



TPN , Telangana : The political landscape in Telangana heated up as BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) was named A-1 in the Formula-E car racing controversy. The ACB, acting on orders from Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, filed an FIR (14/2024) alleging procedural violations involving ₹55 crores. IAS officer Arvind Kumar was listed as A-2 in the case.

BRS leader RS Praveen Kumar took to social media to critique the case. On the X platform, he stated, "Having investigated financial crimes as Hyderabad Crime Branch DCP for two years, I reviewed the FIR thoroughly. This case stands out as one of the weakest ever, with no evidence linking the ₹55 crores to KTR."

Praveen Kumar further argued that the allegations merely pointed to procedural lapses, which are commonplace across departments and often resolved through cabinet decisions or departmental inquiries. He criticized the ACB's six-month investigation, claiming it failed to establish corruption against KTR, Arvind Kumar, or Chief Engineer BLN Reddy.

The former DCP also highlighted the revenue potential of the Formula-E project, stating, "The ₹55 crores spent would have generated hundreds of crores for the state. Cancelling the agreement was a poorly considered decision."

Serious Road Accident in Khammam

Lorry Driver Killed Near New Bus Stand

TPN, Telangana: Khammam witnessed a tragic road accident near the new bus stand early this morning when a lorry carrying iron poles rammed into a parked lorry. The impact killed the driver of the moving lorry instantly as he was trapped in the cabin.

The parked lorry, which had hit a road divider at 3 a.m. and remained on the main road for 18 hours, became a hazard for other vehicles. Local residents alleged that the negligence of traffic police, who failed to remove the obstructing vehicle, led to the second accident this week in the same area.

The new bus stand has become a hotspot for such incidents due to the

presence of heavy vehicles parked irresponsibly, causing inconvenience to commuters. Despite repeated complaints, the police reportedly did not respond promptly since dawn.

Efforts are now underway by the police to regulate traffic and address public grievances. Locals have demanded immediate action to prevent further mishaps in the area. Authorities must ensure better traffic management and enforce stricter regulations to avoid repeat incidents.

This marks the second road accident near the new bus stand within a week, raising concerns about road safety in the district.



Prisoner Dies of Heart Attack in Jagtial Sub-Jail, Tensions Rise

TPN , Jagtial: A prisoner in Jagtial sub-jail, identified as Kyatham Malleshham, suffered a fatal heart attack and passed away at the Jagtial government hospital while receiving treatment. Malleshham, a resident of Ramannapet village in Mallyala mandal and a former deputy sarpanch, was accused in a rape case and had been in jail for the past 15 days.

According to reports, the police rushed Malleshham to the hospital after he complained of severe chest pain. However, he succumbed during treatment, sparking outrage among his family members. They alleged that Malleshham was falsely implicated in the case and expressed anguish that they were not informed about his hospitalization until after his death.

The incident has led to a tense atmosphere near the Jagtial sub-jail, with family members demanding justice and accountability for the lack of timely communication. Authorities are investigating the circumstances surrounding Malleshham's death to address concerns raised by his family and prevent further escalation.

Telangana Governor to Visit Medak, Interact with Residential School Students

TPN , Medak: Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma is set to visit Medak on Sunday, December 22, for a series of engagements, including an interaction with girl students of the Social Welfare Residential School in Kulcharam. This visit comes amidst concerns over recent incidents in residential institutes across the state.

Before the interaction, the Governor will offer prayers at the historic Medak Cathedral. The session with students is aimed at understanding their challenges and

ensuring their safety and well-being in residential schools.

Medak Collector Rahul Raj has been overseeing preparations for the Governor's visit. On Thursday, he inspected both the cathedral and the residential school to ensure all arrangements are in place. The visit underscores the Governor's commitment to addressing issues faced by students in residential institutions and promoting a secure learning environment.



Newborn Baby Found Abandoned in Crematorium, Police Investigating

TPN, Telangana: In a heart-wrenching incident, a newborn baby boy was discovered abandoned in a crematorium in New Gullagudem, Bhadrachalam district. Locals, alerted by the sound of crying, found the infant and immediately informed a local CPI leader, who then contacted the Three Town police.

The police responded promptly, rescued the baby, and transferred him to the Maternal and Child Health Center in Ramavaram for medical treatment. After confirming the ba-



by's health was stable, he was shifted to a children's home in Bhadrachalam under the supervision of the District Child Protection Officer (DCPO).

The abandonment of the infant has sparked outrage and deep sorrow among locals. Many ex-

pressed their grief and anger at the mother's actions, questioning how she could leave her newborn in such a perilous situation. While some empathize with the potential hardships the mother may have faced, others condemned her decision, highlighting the sanctity of a mother's role in nurturing her child. The Three Town police have intensified their investigation to identify those responsible for abandoning the baby. The incident has raised concerns about awareness and support systems for vulnerable mothers facing extreme challenges.

Class 2 Student Dies in Tragic Road Accident in Karimnagar

TPN, Karimnagar: In a heart-wrenching incident, Bolli Mahi, a 7-year-old Class 2 student, lost her life in a road accident on Thursday evening in Bommanapalli village of Chigurumamidi mandal.

The accident occurred when Mahi was returning home from school. According to locals, she was struck by an autorickshaw while walking on the road. The impact left the young girl critically injured. Witnesses and villagers

rushed to her aid and immediately arranged for her transportation to the hospital through a 108 ambulance.

Despite their swift efforts, Mahi succumbed to her injuries on the way to the hospital. Her untimely demise has left her family and the local community in deep shock and mourning.

The tragic accident has brought attention to the need for stricter road safety measures, especially near schools

and residential areas. Villagers have expressed concerns over reckless driving in the region and called for authorities to take immediate steps to prevent such incidents in the future.

Mahi's death is a somber reminder of the importance of road safety and vigilance, particularly for young children. The incident underscores the urgency of implementing safer transportation practices in rural areas.





Sri Lankan President's Visit to India Strengthens Bilateral Ties Amid Regional Dynamics

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who assumed office in September, made his first overseas visit to India this week. This visit marks a significant step in reinforcing the strong relationship between the two nations. Dissanayake's presidential victory, followed by his party, the National People's Power (NPP), securing a historic win with full control of the Sri Lankan Parliament, has raised hopes for a renewed focus on Indo-Sri Lanka relations.

India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, had visited Sri Lanka shortly after Dissanayake's election, underscoring India's commitment to maintaining a robust partnership with its southern neighbor. By choosing India as his first destination abroad, Dissanayake has sent a clear message that Sri Lanka is committed to strengthening its ties with New Delhi. Despite his affiliation with the traditionally anti-India Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), Dissanayake's visit served to reassure India of his intent to prioritize mutual interests.

During his visit, the Sri Lankan President acknowledged India's vital role in supporting Sri Lanka during its financial crisis, especially in terms of economic assistance and restructuring bilateral debt. Dissanayake reaffirmed his country's commitment to not allowing its territory to be used in ways that could harm India's interests. He expressed optimism about the growing cooperation between the two nations.



India, in turn, emphasized its long-term commitment to sustainable cooperation with Sri Lanka, highlighting projects aligned with the island's development priorities. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated, India's bilateral projects will continue to focus on areas such as housing, renewable energy, agriculture, and infrastructure. In particular, India is keen to assist Sri Lanka with digital identity and public infrastructure projects, such as Aadhaar-like systems and UPI payment platforms, which are vital for Sri Lanka's development.

A significant development during this visit was the agreement between India and Sri Lanka to expedite defense cooperation. The two nations are set to strengthen their security engagement through joint exercises, maritime surveillance, and defense dialogues. With China's growing presence in the Indi-

an Ocean region, enhanced security ties with Sri Lanka are crucial for India to safeguard its strategic interests in the region.

The visit also addressed sensitive issues, including the rights of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority and the long-standing dispute over fishing rights in the Palk Strait. India's approach to these issues was measured, focusing on Sri Lanka's commitment to implementing its constitution and addressing humanitarian concerns over fishermen's encroachment.

While Sri Lanka continues to balance its relations with both China and India, this visit has reassured New Delhi of the continuity in their partnership. As the region faces increasing geopolitical competition, it is essential for both nations to maintain a strong, pragmatic relationship to address the challenges ahead.



Priyanka Gandhi's Parliamentary Debut: A Need for Fresh Perspective in Congress

Priyanka Gandhi's debut speech in Parliament has garnered attention for its bold rhetoric, drawing comparisons to her brother's headline-grabbing style. While some statements echoed a familiar tone, she presented herself as less bitter and more open to forging a new path for the Congress party. Her speech, though impactful, warrants deeper scrutiny, especially in the context of Congress's stagnation in electoral politics and the evolving political landscape in India.

Priyanka, often compared to Indira Gandhi by party members, faces the challenge of carving out her unique political identity. For a party struggling with relevance, her leadership could signal a much-needed shift. In her speech, she focused on the present, critiquing the ruling party for its disconnect with the masses. Phrases like "Vartmaan ki baat kijiye" (focus on the present) and "Paise ke bal par sarkar giraaye jaate hain" (governments are toppled with money power) were powerful, but also reflective of Congress's internal contradictions.

While Priyanka rightfully emphasized the need for politicians to stay grounded and alert to contemporary issues, the same standard must be applied to her own party. If Congress indeed has a mechanism for gathering timely feedback, why has it faced consecutive electoral defeats,

especially in states where it previously had an advantage? Congress has struggled to evolve over the past 15 years, relying on an outdated approach that prioritizes ideological "ought to be" over pragmatic "what is."

This disconnect is evident in Congress's insistence on discussing issues like the caste census or the alleged threat to the Constitution, which, while important, may not resonate with the pressing concerns of ordinary citizens. The party's continuous targeting of business houses and its reluctance to adapt have alienated potential supporters. A shift in approach is necessary, one that moves away from old Congress playbooks and embraces the present realities.

Priyanka Gandhi has shown a willingness to take a new direction, but she must leave behind the worn-out strategies that have held the party back. The Congress leadership must stop lecturing the public and begin focusing on real-time feedback, addressing the concerns that matter to the people today. Priyanka's potential lies in drawing inspiration from the best qualities of past leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, while recognizing that the Modi era demands bold welfarism, assertive nationalism, and an understanding of India's rising aspirations.

Time for Parliament to Repeal the Places of Worship Act



The Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, passed just before the Babri Masjid demolition, remains a contentious law. It froze the religious character of all places of worship to what it was on August 15, 1947, prohibiting changes or legal challenges to this status. The law exempted the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, acknowledging that courts were already handling the case. Intended to prevent future controversies, the law has instead become an obstacle to Hindu rights, particularly in places like Mathura and Varanasi, where Hindu temples lie beneath mosques.

In the wake of legal challenges to this law, the Supreme Court has recently directed the Union Government to file its counter-affidavit by January 2024. This has renewed the debate on whether the law, in its current form, is justifiable. The BJP, which has long championed the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, should not wait for the

court's judgment. Instead, it should introduce a bill in Parliament to repeal the Places of Worship Act, a move that could decisively end the legal standoff and remove an undue restriction on Hindu religious freedom.

Repealing the law would be straightforward. Much like the historic abrogation of Article 370, which required a two-thirds majority in Parliament, repealing the Places of Worship law would only require a simple majority in both Houses. If necessary, a joint session of Parliament could expedite the process, overcoming any potential deadlocks in the individual Houses. The law, which was a product of political expediency, has outlived its original purpose and now serves as a hindrance to the Hindu community's claims to religious sites.

The 1991 law, criticized as weak and contradictory, was passed under the minority Narasimha Rao govern-

ment. Critics argue that it was an attempt to appease both secular and religious factions without taking a firm stance. However, in its current form, it continues to prevent Hindus from reclaiming temples at sites such as Krishna Janmabhoomi in Mathura and Kashi Vishwanath in Varanasi—locations of deep religious significance for millions of Hindus.

The repeal would send a clear message that the government does not endorse the sanctity of a law that impedes Hindu movements. It would also render the ongoing Supreme Court case irrelevant, eliminating the need for further counter-affidavits. While opposition parties may challenge the repeal, Parliament's authority to make or amend laws would stand firm. Repealing the Places of Worship Act would be a decisive step toward honoring the rights of Hindus and would eliminate unnecessary legal hurdles in the path of reclaiming sacred sites.



Delhi's Air Pollution Crisis: Lessons from Beijing's Transformation

Air pollution in Delhi has become an annual ritual, where hazardous levels of smog trigger momentary concern from the media, public, and government. Each winter, the city grapples with poor air quality, often with the Air Quality Index (AQI) hovering in the "very poor" or "unhealthy" range, considered hazardous by global standards. However, once the AQI settles around 200, restrictions are relaxed, and life returns to normal—until the next pollution spike. This pattern has become all too familiar, and once again, the focus shifts to combating pollution rather than long-term solutions.

A similar crisis once unfolded in Beijing, where rapid industrialization, urbanization, and motorization led to severe air pollution. The once iconic "blue skies of Beijing" became a rarity, with AQI levels soaring over 500 in 2009, a figure far exceeding Delhi's worst levels today. This public health hazard drew global attention and forced the Chinese government to adopt aggressive measures to address the issue.

Beijing's response to its pollution crisis provides valuable lessons for Delhi. The city's efforts to reduce air

pollution focused on a multi-pronged strategy. One of the key measures was the prohibition of new coal-fired power plants in specific areas, significantly reducing harmful emissions. The city also shifted towards renewable energy sources, which have contributed to cleaner air and a reduced carbon footprint. In addition, Beijing developed greenways for pedestrians and cyclists, promoting more sustainable transportation options and reducing reliance on motor vehicles.

Traffic control measures played a crucial role in managing pollution levels. By limiting the number of cars on the road and implementing stricter vehicle emissions standards, Beijing was able to reduce the concentration of harmful pollutants in the air. The government also increased transparency in air quality data, ensuring that residents were better informed about the state of the environment and could take necessary precautions.

As a result of these efforts, Beijing has seen a dramatic improvement in its air quality. The AQI, once regularly above 500, has now dropped to around 25 on average—a stark contrast to its past.

PM and King Charles Discuss Strengthening India-UK Ties and Global Issues

TPN CORRESPONDENT DELHI
DECEMBER.20

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with UK's King Charles III on Thursday to reaffirm India's commitment to enhancing the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two nations. During their conversation, they reflected on the long-standing relationship between the countries and their shared vision of expanding cooperation in various sectors.

Both leaders emphasized their commitment to strengthening the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, a key pillar of the bilateral relationship. According to an official statement, they discussed the importance of continuing to build on this partnership, which has contributed significantly to their collaboration in trade, defense, technology, and other areas.

The dialogue also included a discussion on the Commonwealth of Nations, with both leaders exchanging views on the outcomes of the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held in Samoa. As important members of the Commonwealth, India and the UK reiterated their support for advancing the organization's



goals and working together to address global challenges.

Climate change and sustainability were central topics during the exchange. Prime Minister Modi praised King Charles for his long-time advocacy for environmental issues and shared insights into India's efforts to combat climate change and promote sustainable development. Modi highlighted the country's initiatives aimed at enhancing green development and reducing carbon

emissions.

In a warm and cordial gesture, the leaders exchanged festive greetings for the upcoming Christmas and New Year, with Prime Minister Modi wishing King Charles good health and well-being. This conversation underscores the ongoing efforts by both leaders to strengthen the ties between India and the UK, with a focus on mutual goals for global peace, environmental sustainability, and economic growth.



"BJP's Bid To Distract From Ambedkar Row": Rahul Gandhi On Parliament Tussle

TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
DECEMBER.20

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi sharply criticized the BJP for creating a diversion from Union Home Minister Amit Shah's controversial remarks on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Speaking at a press conference on Thursday, Gandhi accused the ruling party of orchestrating chaos in Parliament to distract from Shah's comments, which sparked a massive row between the Opposition and the BJP.

Gandhi, holding a copy of the Indian Constitution, claimed that the BJP's actions were an attempt to divert attention from the Home Minister's "anti-constitutional and anti-Ambedkar" mindset. He added that the BJP was undermining Ambedkar's legacy and contribution. Referring to the incident at Parliament, Gandhi explained that while Opposition MPs were heading to Ambedkar's statue, BJP MPs blocked their entry, brandishing sticks. He called for Shah to apologize and resign over the remarks, labeling the incident as an insult to Ambedkar.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge also condemned Shah's comments, accusing him of refusing to acknowledge his mistake. Kharge emphasized that Congress had demanded Shah's resignation, or at the very least, for Prime Minister Modi to remove him. He explained that, after realizing neither of these actions would take place, Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, staged a protest. Kharge further alleged that BJP MPs physically attacked Congress leaders, including pushing him to the ground.

The confrontation led to complaints from both parties. The BJP accused Rahul Gandhi of injuring two of their MPs, Pratap Sarangi and Mukesh Rajput, during the incident. BJP's Nagaland MP, Pahangnon Konyak, also accused Gandhi of misbehaving with her. In response, Congress filed a complaint claiming BJP MPs had pushed and misbehaved with Kharge.

The tensions began earlier in the week when Amit Shah made disparaging remarks about Ambedkar during a debate in the Rajya Sabha. His comments were widely criticized, with the Congress and Trinamool Congress moving privilege motions against him. Despite the protests, Shah refused to resign, defending his remarks. Prime Minister Modi also defended Shah, accusing the Congress of spreading malicious lies.



Rahul Gandhi's Alleged Push Leads to Injury for BJP MP Pratap Sarangi

TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
DECEMBER.20

BJP MP Pratap Chandra Sarangi from Odisha has been at the center of controversy following a recent altercation with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi inside the Parliament premises. Sarangi, who sustained a head injury during the incident, was taken to the hospital for treatment. The injury allegedly occurred when another MP fell on him after being pushed by Rahul Gandhi during heated protests between the INDIA bloc and BJP MPs.

Pratap Chandra Sarangi, born on January 4, 1955, in Gopinathpur village of Balasore district, Odisha, is a prominent leader within the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Fakir Mohan College in Balasore and started his political journey through volunteer work with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Sarangi was also actively involved in the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal.

"Not In His Nature To Be Nasty": Omar Abdullah Defends Rahul



TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
DECEMBER.20

Omar Abdullah, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and ally of the Congress party, came to the defense of senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi after BJP MP Pratap Chandra Sarangi accused him of being responsible for his injuries during a brawl in Parliament. Sarangi claimed that Gandhi had pushed another MP, causing that MP to fall onto him, resulting in his own fall.

"I was standing near the stairs when Rahul Gandhi came and pushed an MP, who then fell on me," Sarangi said, asserting that this incident led to his injury. The BJP MP's state-

ment quickly gained attention on social media, fueling further debate.

However, Omar Abdullah dismissed the allegations, asserting that it was completely out of character for Rahul Gandhi to engage in such behavior. "I know Rahul, he would not push anyone, much less a member of parliament. It's simply not in his nature to be rude or nasty to anyone," Abdullah wrote on X, expressing his belief in Gandhi's good character. His comments were an attempt to counter the circulating accusations and offer a more balanced perspective on the situation.

The incident in question reportedly took place during a chaotic scene in Parliament, which had seen protests and disruptions. Rahul Gandhi has long been a vocal figure in Indian politics, often at the center of heated exchanges in Parliament. However, those close to him, like Omar Abdullah, maintain that his actions have always been grounded in civility and respect.

The controversy surrounding this event is just the latest in a series of political disputes within the Indian Parliament, where tensions often flare during debates and protests. Despite the allegations, Abdullah's defense of Gandhi highlights the ongoing political rifts between Congress and the BJP, as both sides continue to exchange sharp criticisms.

Fracas at Parliament: BJP MPs Injured, Complaints Filed by Congress and NDA

TPN CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI
DECEMBER.20

A confrontation between the opposition and ruling NDA factions at Parliament on Thursday turned violent, leading to injuries for two BJP MPs and allegations of misconduct. The chaos erupted after a protest related to alleged insults against Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, with both sides accusing each other of physical aggression.

The BJP has charged Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, with pushing an MP, leading to injuries to BJP lawmakers Mukesh Rajput and Pratap Chandra Sarangi. However, Gandhi denied the accusations, claiming he was the one who was pushed by a member of the ruling party. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge also accused BJP MPs of shoving him and injuring his knees during the incident. The altercation took place as members of both the Opposition and NDA were engaged in protests at the Parliament complex. BJP MPs Rajput and Sarangi were injured and rushed to RML hospital, where they were treated for head injuries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi contacted the injured MPs to inquire about their condition.

In response to the fracas, both Congress and



BJP lodged complaints at Parliament Street police station, blaming each other for the disturbance. Additionally, both parties filed formal complaints with the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Chairs, seeking action against the opposing members.

The incident occurred amid rising tensions over remarks made by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, which were viewed by many, including the Congress, as disrespectful to Dr. Ambedkar. The altercation in Parliament marked an unprecedented escalation in the ongoing dispute, with both sides accusing each other of physical aggression and misconduct on the hallowed grounds of the Indian Parliament.

Shah would have been 'scrap dealer' if there wasn't Ambedkar's Constitution: Siddaramaiah



TPN CORRESPONDENT DELHI
DECEMBER.20

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has intensified his criticism of Union Home Minister Amit Shah following his controversial remarks about Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Parliament. Speaking in the Karnataka State Assembly on Thursday, Siddaramaiah alleged that without the Constitution framed by Ambedkar, Shah would have been nothing more than a "scrap dealer" in his village, not the Home Minister of India.

Siddaramaiah also took aim at Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, suggesting that if he were truly upholding the Constitution, he should have immediately suspended Shah from the House for his derogatory comments about Ambedkar. The Chief Minister was responding to the ongoing controversy sparked by Shah's remarks, which many, including Congress leaders, saw as disrespectful to the architect of the Indian Constitution.

"The entire country has heard the derogatory words spoken by the Home Minister about Babasaheb Ambedkar," Siddaramaiah stated, calling Shah's comments a revelation of the BJP's true stance on Ambedkar. He further emphasized that Shah's remarks were not surprising, claiming that they exposed the real mindset of the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Siddaramaiah sarcastically congratulated Shah for "courageously revealing the innermost opinion" of the BJP about Ambedkar, accusing the ruling party of being "anti-Ambedkar" and undermining the legacy of Dr. Ambedkar's Constitution. He criticized the BJP and its affiliates for their ongoing campaign to distort facts and misrepresent Shah's words.

In response to these accusations, Shah defended himself in the Rajya Sabha, stating that the Congress had twisted his comments and launched a malicious campaign to tarnish his statements on Ambedkar. He further accused the Congress of misrepresenting his position and promote an "anti-Ambedkar" narrative. The clash over Shah's comments continues to stir intense political debates in the country.



India Has Been Key Partner In Indo-Pacific On Number Of Shared Issues: US



WASHINGTON: On Wednesday, Vedant Patel, Principal Deputy Spokesperson of the US Department of State, reaffirmed India's importance as a key partner in the Biden administration, emphasizing the strength of the bilateral relationship. Patel's comments came in response to a question about the meeting between US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar in late November during the G7 meeting in Italy.

Patel highlighted the close partnership between the United States and India, noting that the collaboration spans various areas, including security, trade, and consular issues such as visa matters. He further underscored India's significant role in the Indo-Pacific and the shared commitment of both nations to address global challenges. Patel also reiterated that the Biden administration remains committed to deepening cooperation with India.

In the meeting, held on the sidelines of the G7

summit in Fiumicino, Italy, Blinken and Jaishankar reaffirmed their dedication to strengthening bilateral ties. Blinken expressed the United States' eagerness to continue working closely with India to address pressing global security issues. Jaishankar also posted about the successful bilateral discussion on X, stating that the conversation covered the state of the world and the ongoing progress in the India-US partnership.

For his part, Blinken echoed the sentiment, writing that US-India ties are stronger when both nations collaborate, particularly on promoting global security and prosperity. He added that their continued cooperation is essential for addressing the challenges facing the world.

The positive tone of the meeting and the shared commitment to deepening cooperation further solidified the importance of the US-India partnership, which is poised to continue making strides on key global issues under the Biden administration.

Italy's PM Giorgia Meloni Defends Friendship with Elon Musk Amid Controversy



MILAN: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has defended her friendship with US tech billionaire Elon Musk, dismissing suggestions that their relationship could influence her political decisions. Speaking to Italian lawmakers on Wednesday, Meloni responded to questions about her interactions with Musk, emphasizing that her government would not be swayed by his economic interests, especially in areas like space policy.

"I can be a friend of Elon Musk and at the same time head the first Italian government to introduce a new law regulating private activity in space," Meloni stated, referring to a new framework her government passed earlier this year, which allows foreign space companies to operate in Italy. This move is expected to attract significant investments, with projections of 7.3 billion euros (USD 7.7 billion) by 2026.

Meloni also took a swipe at previous Italian leaders, suggesting that unlike them, she does not "slavishly follow what others did" when dealing with foreign relations. She added that while she maintains "good relationships with many people," she does not "take orders from anyone."

The relationship between Meloni and Musk has been under scrutiny due to their frequent meetings since Meloni's far-right-led government took power in 2022, as part of her efforts to boost Italy's economic ties with international investors. The two were seen together at various events, including a black-tie function in New York in September 2023, where Musk presented Meloni with an award. A photo from the event, showing them looking affectionately at each other, sparked rumors of a romantic relationship, which Musk quickly denied.



Russia Ready For A Missile "Duel" With US: Vladimir Putin

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday suggested a missile "duel" with the United States to showcase the effectiveness of Russia's new Oreshnik hypersonic ballistic missile. The proposal was made in response to Western doubts about the missile's capabilities, with Putin asserting that it could defeat any U.S. missile defense system.

Putin proposed that both sides select designated targets to be protected by U.S. missiles, offering to conduct an experiment to prove the Oreshnik's superiority. "We're ready for such an experiment," Putin declared, suggesting a direct challenge to the U.S. missile defense technology. The Oreshnik missile, while a new weapon in Russia's arsenal, is based on previous Russian missile design developments. Putin described it as a modern and advanced system, signaling his confidence in its ability to evade missile defense systems and demonstrate Russia's growing military capabilities.

Russia first deployed the Oreshnik missile in a strike on the Ukrainian city of Dnipro on November 21, framing the attack as a retaliatory measure after Ukraine used U.S. ATACMs ballistic missiles and British Storm Shadows to target Russian territory. The missile attack underscored the ongoing military escalation between Russia and Ukraine, with Western-supplied weapons playing a central role in the conflict. Putin's comments come as tensions between Russia and the West continue to escalate over the ongoing war in Ukraine. The Russian president's challenge highlights the technological rivalry between the two powers, particularly in the field of missile defense and hypersonic weaponry. As both Russia and the United States

UK PM Keir Starmer Hosts Indian Investors to Strengthen UK-India Economic Ties

LONDON: UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer recently welcomed a delegation of Indian investors and CEOs to Downing Street, focusing on boosting economic opportunities between the UK and India. This visit follows his meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20, where both leaders committed to advancing a UK-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. The partnership emphasizes collaboration in sectors like economic growth, security, defense, technology, climate, health, and education.

Supported by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the delegation engaged in discussions with key UK officials, including Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves, Foreign Secretary David Lammy, and Secretary of State Jonathan Reynolds. They explored potential avenues for further strengthening the UK-India trade relationship, particularly in light of ongoing negotiations for a UK-India trade deal.

With bilateral trade already valued at £42 billion and supporting over 600,000 jobs in both nations, the two countries are looking to expand their economic ties. Mr. Starmer expressed enthusiasm about the opportunities, stating, "India is a vital partner for the UK, and we have huge ambition to unlock more opportunities together, building on our already strong relationship."

Jonathan Reynolds, Business and Trade Secretary, emphasized the UK's unmatched opportunities for Indian businesses, noting that India is already the second-largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) projects into the UK. He



reiterated the government's commitment to enhancing trade and investment links with India.

The delegation, led by Sunil Bharti Mittal, Founder and Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, highlighted India's rapid economic growth and its status as the fastest-growing large economy. Mittal also underscored the significant potential of the ongoing India-UK Free Trade Agreement negotiations for mutual growth and collaboration.

The event culminated in an evening reception hosted by the High Commission of India in London, reinforcing the importance of the UK-India partnership and signaling further opportunities for cooperation.

Sri Lanka to Lift Vehicle Import Ban, Private Car Imports Allowed in 2025



goods and services.

President Anura Kumara Dissanayake confirmed in Parliament on Wednesday that while the ban on public transport vehicle imports will be lifted immediately, private car imports will only be permitted starting February 2025. However, he emphasized that the decision is subject to specific regulations designed to protect the country's ongoing efforts to bolster foreign reserves and ensure economic stability.

The policy shift is seen as a positive sign of economic recovery in Sri Lanka, which has been grappling with inflation, a shortage of foreign currency, and a decline in living standards. The import of vehicles, which had been severely restricted, is expected to provide some relief to the transportation sector, particularly public transport services that have been struggling with outdated fleets.

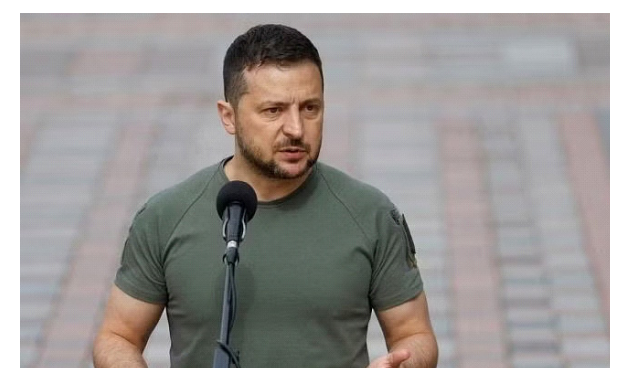
Despite the easing of restrictions, the government remains cautious and will enforce rules to prevent excessive spending of foreign currency on imports, aiming to balance economic recovery with the need to safeguard national reserves. The move signals gradual stabilization in Sri Lanka's economy and its readiness to open up key sectors to international trade once more.

Zelensky Urges Trump to Support EU Alliance Against Russia Amid War Concerns

BRUSSELS: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy called on US President-elect Donald Trump to align with Europe in the fight against Russia and help secure Ukraine's future. Speaking ahead of an EU summit focused on the ongoing Ukraine war, Zelenskyy emphasized the importance of unity between the United States, the European Union, and European countries in addressing the Russian threat.

Zelenskyy's appeal comes amid growing concerns that Trump, a known NATO skeptic, might curtail American support for Ukraine's war effort. Trump has repeatedly expressed his intention to end the war quickly and has suggested that Ukrainian President Zelenskyy be open to negotiating a peace deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin. However, the specifics of these negotiations, including whether Ukraine would have to cede any territory to Russia, remain unclear. During the EU summit, EU diplomats signaled strong support for Ukraine, stressing that any peace settlement must include Ukraine and uphold its territorial integrity. They expressed their determination to send a clear message to Trump, affirming their commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty.

Antonio Costa, the new European Council President, underscored the EU's resolve in achiev-



ing a just and lasting peace. He emphasized that the war in Ukraine transcends national borders and is a critical issue for international law. "This war is not only about Ukraine, it is not only about Europe; it is about international law. The invasion must be defeated," Costa told reporters.

The EU leaders, while focused on supporting Ukraine's defense against Russian aggression, are keen to show that their backing for Kyiv remains steadfast, even as Trump's position on the war has raised questions about future US involvement. As the conflict approaches its third year, the EU continues to emphasize the need for unity among Western allies to ensure Ukraine's victory and uphold the principles of international law.



Indian Stock Markets Lose ₹10 Lakh Crore in Four Sessions Amid Fed's Hawkish Stance

Indian stock markets experienced a significant downturn, shedding ₹10.5 lakh crore in market value over four sessions, following the US Federal Reserve's hawkish commentary. The Fed's decision to cut interest rates by just 25 basis points, along with signals that there may not be multiple rate cuts in 2025, dampened investor sentiment. This was compounded by a strong recovery in the US dollar, creating further uncertainty in global markets. High valuations added to the selling pressure, leading to a sharp decline in the markets.

On Thursday, the BSE Sensex, which had closed at 80,182 in the previous session, opened at 79,029, touching an intraday low of 79,020. Despite a brief recovery to 79,516, the index closed at 79,218, losing 964 points. The NSE Nifty followed a similar trend, opening at 23,877, reaching a low of 24,870 before recovering slightly to 24,004. It closed down by 247 points at 23,951. The Bank Nifty also saw a substantial loss of 563 points, settling at 51,575.

In the Nifty50, 14 stocks advanced, while 36 stocks declined. Dr. Reddy's, Cipla, BPCL, Sun Pharma, and



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Apollo Hospitals were the top gainers, while Bajaj Finserv, JSW Steel, Bajaj Finance, Grasim, and Asian Paints saw the most significant losses. The pharma and healthcare sectors saw increased demand, while other sectors such as banking, automotive, finance, IT, and FMCG were hit hard.

Despite the overall weakness in the market, the breadth favored buyers, with 1,100 stocks advancing and 2,890 stocks declining. Shares of 76 companies hit 52-week highs, while 50 reached 52-week lows. In the short term, investors are advised to consider stocks like Sun Pharma, Torrent Pharma, Ipka Labs, Lupin, and Hind Petro.

The market decline, triggered by the US Fed's stance, has led to a growing sense of uncertainty, with further risks looming if Nifty falls below the 200DEMA.

SEBI Revises Merchant Banker and IPO Framework for SMEs to Enhance Investor Protection

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Wednesday introduced significant changes to the regulatory framework for merchant bankers (MBs) and initial public offerings (IPOs) for small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The revisions aim to strengthen the structure for IPOs, ensuring better opportunities for SMEs with a proven track record to raise funds and get listed on stock exchanges, while enhancing investor protection.

SEBI's new guidelines for merchant bankers focus on updating eligibility criteria, activities that they can undertake, and the net worth requirements, including criteria for liquid net worth. These changes are designed to ensure that only qualified and capable entities handle SME IPOs, safeguarding the interests of investors.

The updated framework will allow well-established SMEs to tap public markets for fundraising, providing them with the much-needed capital to expand their operations. By easing the entry process for these businesses, SEBI aims to boost the participation of SMEs in the Indian capital markets.



With the new norms in place, SMEs with sound financial records and business models will have an opportunity to raise funds from the public, paving the way for their growth and development. The regulations are also intended to ensure that investors are well-protected, creating a more transparent and trustworthy environment for both companies and potential investors.

SEBI's move to revise the framework for merchant bankers and SME IPOs reflects its commitment to fostering a more vibrant and robust stock market while maintaining strict investor safeguards.

India's Solar Manufacturing Sector Set for Growth with Rs 1 Lakh Crore Investment



India's solar equipment manufacturing sector is poised for robust growth over the next 2-3 years, with an expected capital expenditure (Capex) of nearly Rs 1 lakh crore, according to CareEdge Ratings. A significant portion of this investment—around Rs 70,000 crore—will be funded through debt, which includes funding for polysilicon and wafer production capacities.

As of September 2024, India's total renewable energy capacity stood at 155 Gigawatts, with the solar segment contributing the largest share of 91 GW. This expansion reflects India's strong commitment to renewable energy, driven by favorable policies, competitive tariffs, and substantial investor interest.

In the fiscal year 2023-24, India added 18.5 GW of renewable energy capacity. CareEdge Ratings anticipates that annual installations will exceed 35 GW over the next two years, supported by a pipeline of over 100 GW. This growth will be fueled by an ambitious annual tendering target of 50 GW for renewable energy, with solar power expected to account for the majority of this capacity.

Over the next 2-3 years, significant additions in solar capacity will come from rooftop installa-

tions, hybrid solar components, and off-grid solar projects, contributing 20 GW to the national grid. The government's proactive policies, including tariffs and non-tariff barriers, are also fostering demand for domestic solar equipment manufacturers.

To counteract the predatory pricing from Chinese manufacturers, the government imposed a 25% Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on Chinese solar cells and 40% on modules, effective from April 2022. This move has made domestic solar modules more cost-competitive, boosting the prospects for Indian manufacturers.

Despite the growth outlook, challenges remain. These include the lack of integrated solar equipment manufacturing capacity, supply chain dependencies on China, increasing competition, and potential delays in renewable energy capacity additions.

India continues to focus on reducing its dependence on fossil fuels and increasing its renewable energy capacity, in line with its commitments made during COP26. The country aims to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel electricity capacity by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2070, marking its ambitious green energy agenda.

India's GDP Growth Forecasted at 6.6% in FY26, Driven by Investment and Capex

India Ratings and Research has forecasted a 6.6% GDP growth for India in FY26, a slight increase from its revised FY25 growth estimate of 6.4%. Despite the current challenges posed by tightening monetary, fiscal, and external factors, the agency expects growth to recover in the coming financial year, driven by a combination of monetary easing and improvements in public and private investments, particularly in capital expenditure (capex).

The Indian economy has faced a cyclical slowdown over the past three quarters, largely due to the lingering effects of COVID-19 and base effect distortions. While Q1 FY25 is expected to experience weaker growth due to the strong base effect and the general elections scheduled for May 2024, a recovery is anticipated in Q2 FY25, though the impact of weak private sector capex may still affect the growth.

India Ratings highlights that while the economy is currently undergoing a phase of monetary, fiscal, and external tightening, the easing of monetary conditions is expected to provide a boost in the near term. However, fiscal and external pressures are likely to persist through FY26, limiting the scope for aggressive policy interventions.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the growth forecast for FY26 aligns with the best decadal growth period India wit-



nessed between FY11 and FY20. The improvement in investments, both public and private, is expected to play a key role in supporting the economy's recovery. The agency notes that the focus on capex will help rejuvenate growth in key sectors, providing the necessary momentum to sustain economic expansion in FY26 and beyond.

Devendra Kumar Pant, Chief Economist at India Ratings, emphasized that the economy's growth slowdown is expected to reverse from Q3 FY25 onwards, reinforcing the belief that India's economic resilience will support strong growth prospects in FY26.

Sensex Drops 965 Points as US Fed Signals Fewer Rate Cuts

Equity benchmark Sensex suffered a sharp decline of nearly 965 points on Thursday, falling below the 80,000 mark, driven by heavy selling in global equities following the US Federal Reserve's indication of fewer rate cuts in 2025. The broader market also felt the impact of deep losses in key sectors, including consumer durables, banking, and IT stocks, exacerbated by foreign fund outflows.

The significant drop in the Indian stock market was largely influenced by the US Federal Reserve's hawkish stance. The Fed's recent comments indicated that interest rate cuts may be more limited in 2025, which spooked investors and caused a sell-off across global markets. As investors reassessed future growth prospects amid tighter monetary conditions, market sentiment turned bearish, contributing to the sharp fall in Sensex.



Consumer durables stocks, which have been key drivers of the Indian market, saw considerable losses, alongside banking and IT stocks, both of which are sensitive to global financial conditions. This sectoral weakness deepened the overall market's downward trajectory. Analysts pointed to the rising uncertainty in global markets, particularly due to the US Fed's policy outlook, which affected investor confidence.

Additionally, foreign fund outflows compounded the negative sentiment, leading to further pressure on the stock indices. The Sensex, which had closed at 80,182 in the previous session, opened lower at 79,029 and ended the day at 79,218, marking a decline of 964 points.

The Nifty 50 index also mirrored the trend, closing 247 points lower. Experts believe that unless there is a significant rebound in global market sentiment, the Indian stock market could face more challenges in the short term, especially if the Nifty falls below crucial support levels.

Investors are advised to stay cautious as market volatility continues, driven by external macroeconomic factors and domestic concerns.



YouTube will Soon Take Down Videos With Click Bait Titles And Thumbnails

YouTube has introduced stricter measures aimed at curbing “egregious clickbait” on its platform, specifically targeting Indian users and content creators. This new policy, announced on December 19, outlines the company’s commitment to enhancing user experience by reducing misleading content that exploits sensationalized titles or thumbnails to attract views.

The term “egregious clickbait” refers to videos where the title or thumbnail promises or implies certain content that is not delivered in the actual video. This often happens with misleading claims about breaking news or current events that fail to meet viewers’ expectations upon watching. YouTube’s new guidelines seek to address this growing problem, which has increasingly affected the credibility of content on the platform.

YouTube has clarified that clickbait in this context involves video titles or thumbnails that exaggerate or distort the content’s subject matter, making false or unverified claims to mislead viewers into clicking the video. The platform highlights that while creative freedom in content creation is encouraged, it is important to ensure that the actual content aligns with the message conveyed in the title and thumbnail.

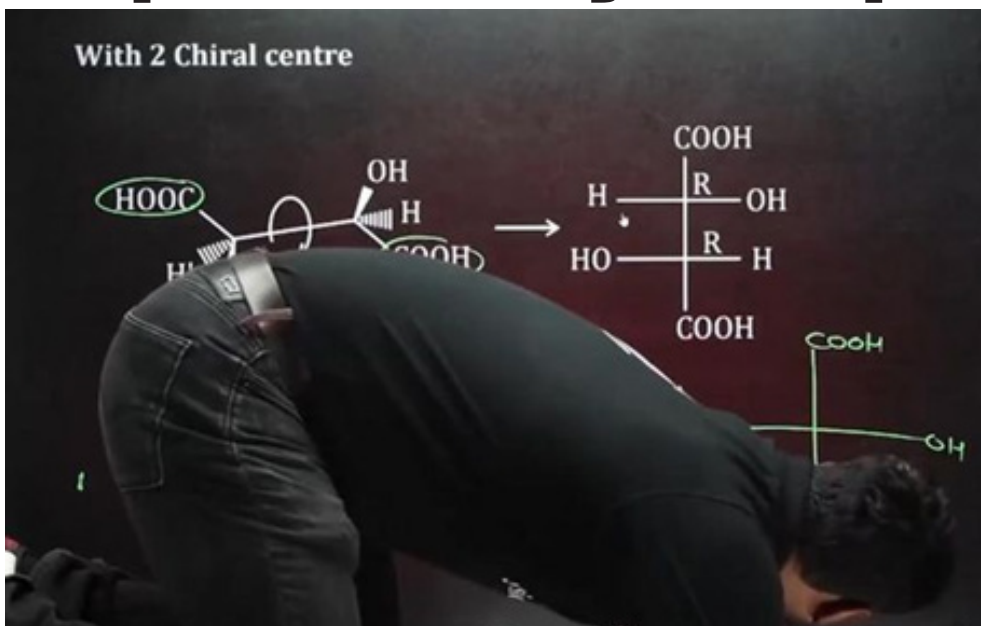


In recent years, YouTube has taken several steps to ensure the integrity of the platform, introducing various measures to combat misinformation, hate speech, and harmful content. The focus on clickbait now marks another significant step in refining the platform’s content policies to promote a more authentic user experience.

Indian content creators, in particular, will feel the impact of these stricter measures. As YouTube continues to prioritize the need for transparency and user trust, creators will need to be more cautious in how they design their video titles and thumbnails. Failure to comply with these new guidelines could result in videos being removed or channels facing restrictions.

The move is part of a broader effort by YouTube to tackle the spread of misleading or sensationalized content, which has long been a challenge for social media platforms globally. By implementing these changes, YouTube hopes to foster a more trustworthy and credible environment for both creators and viewers.

Viral Video: Physics Wallah Teacher Uses Body to Explain Chirality Concept



Teaching methodologies are constantly evolving, and one recent lesson by Harsh Tyagi, an educator at India’s 101st unicorn startup Physics Wallah, showcased an unconventional approach to explaining complex scientific concepts. Physics Wallah, valued at over \$2.8 billion, offers courses for NEET and JEE, and Tyagi’s lesson on chirality has garnered widespread attention for its unique and creative teaching style.

Chirality, a fundamental concept in chemistry, refers to objects or molecules that exist in two forms, similar to how your left and right hands are mirror images of each other but cannot be perfectly aligned. In chiral molecules, no amount of rotation or flipping can make one image match the other. This concept is critical in understanding how molecules interact, and Tyagi’s lesson aimed to make it easier for students to grasp.

To explain chirality in a more engaging way, Tyagi used his own body to demonstrate the idea. In a video that

quickly went viral, he positioned himself on all fours on a table, with his hands extended to the floor and his legs raised. By mimicking the shape of a trigonal planar molecule, Tyagi physically demonstrated how chirality works, offering a more dynamic and memorable visual than traditional methods.

While the demonstration has been widely appreciated for its creativity, it has also divided opinion among students. Some praised Tyagi for his innovative teaching style, which made a complex concept more accessible. However, others felt the approach was too unconventional and distracting, expressing a preference for more traditional methods.

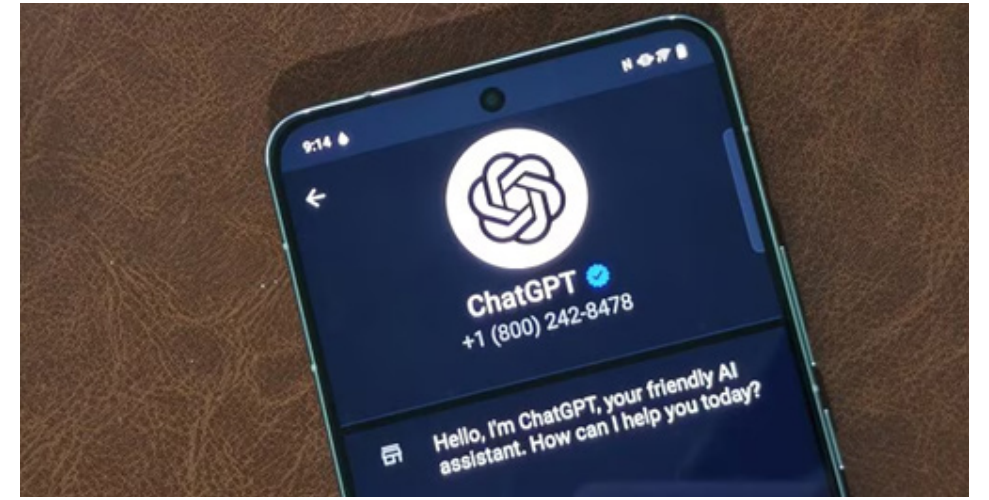
Regardless of differing opinions, Tyagi’s demonstration has sparked important discussions on how educators can adapt their teaching methods to make learning more interactive and engaging, especially when explaining abstract concepts like chirality in chemistry.

OpenAI Makes ChatGPT Accessible via Landline and Flip Phones in the US and Canada

OpenAI has unveiled an exciting new feature for users in the United States and Canada: the ability to communicate with ChatGPT through flip phones and fixed landline phones. Starting Thursday, users can dial 1-800-CHATGPT to access the AI for up to 15 minutes per month, making it easier than ever to interact with ChatGPT, regardless of having access to smartphones or internet-enabled devices.

This move is part of OpenAI’s ongoing efforts to make its AI more accessible to a broader audience. The new service does not require users to have a subscription or even an account, allowing anyone with a basic phone line to interact with ChatGPT. Whether you’re using a landline or a flip phone, you can now make inquiries and have natural conversations with the AI, as it responds to voice input in a friendly, easy-to-understand manner.

The service provides a variety of useful functions. Users can ask ChatGPT personal queries, such as advice on various topics, or even learn about new phrases in different languages.



The AI is designed to offer a seamless voice exchange experience, providing a conversation that feels just like speaking to a human assistant. This opens up new possibilities for people who may not have had the means or inclination to use more traditional digital devices for interacting with AI.

This development is significant because it bridges the gap between advanced AI technology and users who rely on older, more basic communication methods. By providing an intuitive, voice-based way to in-

teract with ChatGPT, OpenAI ensures that even those with limited access to modern devices can benefit from the knowledge and assistance the AI offers.

With this new service, OpenAI has further expanded the reach of ChatGPT, ensuring that it is accessible to an even larger demographic. Whether for educational purposes, personal queries, or casual learning, ChatGPT’s voice capabilities open up a world of possibilities for everyone with access to a phone.

Can Your Daily Cup of Tea Ruin Your Health? Experts Weigh In

For many, a warm cup of tea is the perfect start to the day, offering comfort and relaxation. But with concerns about caffeine and its potential health effects, many wonder: Could that daily cup of tea be doing more harm than good? Here’s what the experts have to say.

Is One Cup of Tea Harmful?

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), tea, like coffee, contains caffeine, which stimulates the central nervous system and can lead to dependency. The recommended daily caffeine limit is 300 milligrams, which is roughly the amount found in two cups of tea. A 150 ml cup of tea typically contains 30-65 mg of caffeine, so one cup a day generally falls within safe limits.

Experts agree that moderate tea consumption, around two cups per day, does not pose significant health risks. However, it’s important to note that the type of tea and how it’s consumed can impact its health benefits. Green tea, for instance, offers antioxidants that can support overall health, while excessive milk and sugar can lessen the benefits.

The Real Concern: Snacks with Tea

While one cup of tea a day isn’t harmful, many people pair their tea with high-calorie snacks like biscuits,



toast, and fried foods. Nutritionist Deepsikha Jain points out that if you consume 4-5 biscuits with your tea, you could easily add 300-400 calories to your daily intake. These additional calories can contribute to weight gain and other health issues when consumed regularly. So, while the tea itself isn’t harmful, the snacks you pair with it can make a difference in your overall health.

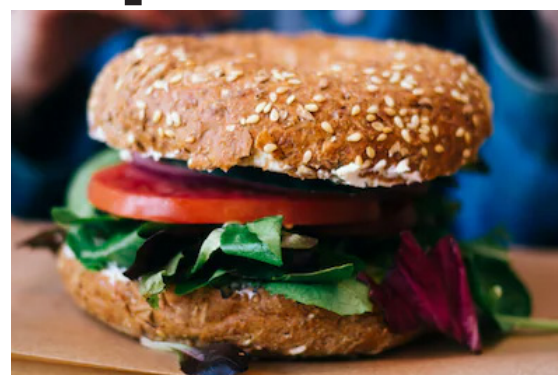
Moderation is Key

In conclusion, there’s no need to worry about that daily cup of tea. It’s the extra calories from snacks that you should be mindful of. As long as you enjoy your tea in moderation and avoid pairing it with unhealthy snacks, it can be a healthy, comforting part of your routine.

Shantanu Deshpande Critiques India’s Junk Food Epidemic in Viral Post

A recent LinkedIn post by Shantanu Deshpande, the CEO of Bombay Shaving Company, has gone viral, sparking widespread discussion about the declining state of healthy diets in India. Deshpande highlighted several factors contributing to what he called the “biggest epidemic” of poor nutrition in the country, focusing on the growing reliance on processed and ultra-processed foods.

Deshpande’s post begins by drawing attention to the increasing consumption of unhealthy foods high in palm oil and sugar. He points out that the nutritional value of India’s grains has deteriorated over the past 50 years, as agricultural practices have shifted focus from nutrition to maximizing yield. “We are suffering from the biggest epidemic of poor nutrition and unhealthy processed food,” he writes, emphasizing the widespread addiction to junk



food. He adds that this trend, driven by inexpensive and easily accessible fast foods like Rs 49 pizzas, Rs 20 energy drinks, and Rs 30 burgers, is mirroring the unhealthy patterns seen in countries like China and the US—without the economic buffer required for such diets.

In his post, Deshpande also criticized the food delivery sector, particularly platforms like Zomato, Swiggy, and Zepto. He described the practice of delivering “frozen purees and cur-

ries” or reheated food as part of the modern fast-food culture, which often fails to provide genuinely fresh meals. Deshpande expressed frustration over the prioritization of speed and convenience in food delivery, noting that food delivery services rush meals to customers in minutes, compromising quality and nutritional value.

Deshpande urged food delivery companies to focus on providing healthier, non-stale options that could truly meet consumer needs. While he acknowledged the current limitations in offering fresh meals within such a short time frame, he called for innovation to create healthier, quicker food options. “I would LOVE if we innovate and are able to actually give non-stale and decent food in 10 min,” he wrote, calling it a “massive unlock” for the future of Indian commerce.



ICC Announces Neutral Venues for 2025 Champions Trophy and India-Pakistan Matches



The uncertainty surrounding the venue for the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy has finally been resolved. After months of speculation, the International Cricket Council (ICC) officially announced that the prestigious event will be held in Pakistan, with some matches played at a neutral venue. The ICC confirmed the decision in a statement, bringing clarity to the host locations for the 2025 edition of the tournament.

In another significant development, the ICC, led by Jay Shah, revealed that all India vs. Pakistan matches in ICC events will be held at neutral venues until 2027. This means that upcoming India-Pakistan encounters

in major ICC events, including the Champions Trophy 2025, will not take place in either country. Instead, neutral venues will be chosen for these high-profile matches.

This decision applies to multiple upcoming ICC events. Apart from the 2025 Champions Trophy, which will be hosted by Pakistan, the rule will also apply to the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, both of which are set to be held in India. Additionally, the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup will be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka.

The decision comes amid ongoing political tensions between India

and Pakistan, which have often affected bilateral cricket series. In the past, both teams have faced challenges in playing each other in their respective countries due to diplomatic reasons, leading to the need for neutral venues to host their encounters.

With this announcement, the ICC has provided certainty about the logistics of upcoming events and clarified the situation for fans and teams. While it may disappoint some who were hoping for India and Pakistan to face off on home soil, the move ensures the smooth organization of these high-profile fixtures in the coming years.

PSG Defeats Monaco 4-2, Extends Unbeaten Run but Loses Donnarumma to Injury

Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) extended their unbeaten start to the Ligue 1 season with a 4-2 victory over Monaco on Wednesday, but the win was marred by a serious injury to goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma. The Italy international was left requiring 10 staples after sustaining deep facial lacerations when he was struck by the studs of Monaco's Wilfried Singo. PSG captain Marquinhos expressed concern over the lack of a red card, stating, "I don't know if the referee was badly positioned, but VAR needed to intervene. You have to protect the players."



Despite the injury setback, PSG continued their relentless push for victory. After Donnarumma was replaced by Matvey Safonov, Desire Doue gave the visitors the lead with his first league goal. However, Monaco responded strongly in the second half, scoring twice in quick succession to take the lead. First, Eliesse Ben Seghir converted a penalty after a handball by Marquinhos, and Maghnes Aklouches's cross allowed Brel Embolo to poke the home side ahead.

But PSG was far from finished. Ousmane Dembele equalized shortly after Monaco's second goal, and Goncalo Ramos gave PSG the lead with a header off

a corner shortly after coming on. Monaco goalkeeper Philipp Koehn denied Lee Kang-in's powerful long-range effort with a brilliant save that tipped the ball onto the post.

Tempers flared when Monaco's head coach Adi Huetter was sent off for his reaction to a penalty appeal being turned down for a challenge on Embolo. Dembele sealed PSG's victory with a second goal deep into stoppage time, signaling his return to form after reports of tension with coach Luis Enrique in recent weeks.

With the win, PSG now hold a 10-point lead over second-placed Marseille and Monaco in the Ligue 1 standings. The Parisians will next face Lens in the French Cup before a rematch with Monaco in the Champions Trophy on January 5.

Manu Bhaker's Olympic success becomes defining moment for Indian shooting in 2024



Manu Bhaker's remarkable achievements at the Paris Olympics 2024 have become a defining moment for Indian shooting. Despite narrowly missing a historic hat-trick of medals, finishing fourth in the women's 25m sports pistol event, Bhaker's two bronze medals in 10m air pistol and 10m mixed team pistol were historic. Her triumphs in Paris made her the first Indian woman athlete to secure two medals in a single Olympic Games, marking a major milestone for Indian shooting.

India had a record 21 shooters at the 2024 Olympics, finally breaking a nearly decade-long medal drought in the sport. Alongside Bhaker's success, Swapnil Kusale also earned a bronze in the 50m rifle 3-positions, contributing to India's three-bronze haul.

The spotlight remained on Bhaker, who had faced disappointment at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics due to a pistol malfunction that dashed her hopes. This time, she stepped into the Cha-teauroux range with confidence and composure, ending the country's Olympic medal drought in shooting. Her coach, Jaspal Rana, played a crucial role in her success. Despite facing challenges, including being sidelined by the National Rifle Association of

India and forced to coach from the stands, Jaspal's unwavering support helped Bhaker overcome her doubts and excel.

Along with Bhaker, Sarabjot Singh also had an extraordinary year. After overcoming a career-threatening injury in 2023, the Ambala shooter clinched a joint bronze medal with Bhaker in the 10m mixed team event. Swapnil Kusale's success was a personal victory for his coach, Deepali Deshpande, who had faced criticism for India's performance at Tokyo 2020 but guided Kusale to an Olympic medal.

Despite the success, there were some near-misses. Arjun Babuta, Maheshwari Chauhan, and Anant Jeet Singh Naruka, who finished fourth in their respective events, are seen as hopefuls for future Olympic glory.

The lead-up to Paris was marked by selection controversies, as shooters like Rudrankksh Patil and Tilottama Sen, who had earned quota places, missed out on the final team due to disputes over Olympic selection criteria. However, the success of Bhaker, Sarabjot, and Swapnil has revitalized Indian shooting, paving the way for even greater achievements at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Real Madrid beats Pachuca in Intercontinental Cup final

Real Madrid triumphed over Mexican team Pachuca 3-0 in the Intercontinental Cup final on Wednesday, making Carlo Ancelotti the most decorated coach in the club's history. With this win, Ancelotti secured his 15th title with the Spanish giants, surpassing the 14 trophies won by both him and the legendary Miguel Muñoz, who led the team during the 1960s and 70s.

"Very happy, it's a triumph," said Ancelotti, 65, who had been named FIFA's Men's Coach of the Year just the day before. "We didn't get off to a good start but finished well, showing great attitude."

The victory marked Real Madrid's fourth Intercontinental Cup title, adding to their previous wins in 1960, 1998, and 2002. Kylian Mbappé, Rodrygo, and Vinícius Júnior each found the back of the net, securing a dominant win for the European champions.

Pachuca, which was competing for its first-ever Intercontinental Cup title, was outplayed by the reigning European champions in the final. The match took place as part of FIFA's revamped Club World Cup, which now fea-



tures 32 teams from across the globe, starting in 2025.

This victory adds another prestigious trophy to Ancelotti's already impressive resume, solidifying his legacy as one of the most successful coaches in football history. With this title, he continues to expand his collection of honors, reinforcing Real Madrid's position as one of the world's most dominant football clubs.

Bonmati's Goal Secures Barcelona's Top Spot in Women's Champions League

Aitana Bonmati's decisive goal helped Barcelona secure a 3-0 win over Manchester City on Wednesday, ensuring the defending champions topped Group D in the Women's Champions League and advanced to the quarterfinals. Bonmati, who recently won the prestigious FIFA Women's Player of the Year award for the second consecutive year, scored in the 57th minute, racing through and calmly slotting the ball between the goalkeeper's legs to double Barcelona's lead.

The victory ensured both Barcelona and Manchester City finished with 15 points in the group, but Barcelona's superior goal difference saw them finish as group winners. The



result continued Barcelona's strong campaign, highlighting their dominance in European women's football.

Bonmati, who also won back-to-back Ballon d'Or awards in wom-

en's soccer, played a crucial role in securing the top spot for her team, underlining her importance in Barcelona's success.

In other Group D action, Arsenal confirmed their place as another group winner, securing a 3-2 victory over Bayern Munich. Spain's Marióna Caldentey scored an 86th-minute penalty to seal the win, securing Arsenal's qualification as the fourth and final group winner.

Barcelona, Arsenal, Lyon, and Chelsea have now progressed to the knockout stages as group winners, marking another chapter in the growing prominence of women's football in Europe.



Meenu from Sankranthiki Vasthunnam: A Romantic Melody

Venkatesh's upcoming film *Sankranthiki Vasthunnam* is generating significant buzz as it prepares for its release on January 14th, coinciding with the Sankranti festival. The promotional activities for the movie are in full swing, with the first song already receiving a tremendous response and the second song's teaser also creating excitement among fans.

The song, titled "Meenu," showcases a tender and romantic storyline. Venkatesh, portraying a police academy trainer, narrates his love story with Meenakshi, one of his trainees. Their budding romance is filled with cherished moments that unfold throughout the song. At one point, Venkatesh's wife, Aishwarya, grows worried about the bond he shares with Meenakshi. However, Venkatesh reassures her by saying that he never kissed Meenakshi, which instantly calms her down and brings peace to the situation.

The song is a delightful romantic melody, composed by the talented Bheems Ceciroleo. The lyrics, penned by Anantha Sriram, beautifully capture the essence of love and longing. Bheems' music, combined with Pranavi Acharya's soulful vocals, creates a magical atmosphere that is bound to resonate with

listeners. Given its melodic charm and emotional depth, the song is expected to become an instant hit.

Directed by Anil Ravipudi and produced by Sri Venkateswara Creations, *Sankranthiki Vasthunnam* promises to be a perfect treat for audiences during the festive season. With its captivating music and heartwarming storyline, the film is poised to make a significant impact when it hits theaters on January 14th. Fans are eagerly anticipating the film's release, and the romantic melody "Meenu" has only added to the excitement surrounding this upcoming blockbuster.



Raja Saab Producers Address Film's Progress, Stay Silent on Postponement Rumors

The buzz surrounding Prabhas' upcoming film *The Raja Saab* has intensified following rumors about its potential postponement due to the actor's reported injury. The speculation escalated further when Siddhu Jonnalagadda announced the release of his next film on the same date *The Raja Saab* had originally chosen, leading many in the industry to assume that the film would be delayed.

In response to these growing speculations, the team behind *The Raja Saab* issued a statement updating the public on the film's progress but refrained from addressing the postponement rumors directly. The statement confirmed that the film's shooting is progressing rapidly, with nearly 80% of the shoot completed. The team emphasized that post-production work is also underway, indicating that the production is



on track.

Regarding the teaser, the team responded to various rumors claiming it would be released around Christmas or New Year. They urged the public not to believe these false reports, stating that an official announcement would

be made at the appropriate time. The statement concluded by assuring fans that the teaser, when it arrives, will be an exciting and thrilling treat, promising to leave viewers spellbound.

Interestingly, while the statement provided clarity on the teaser release, it did not address the rumors about the film's postponement, nor did it include a confirmed release date on the poster, fueling further doubts among fans and industry watchers.

Directed by Maruthi, *The Raja Saab* stars Prabhas in the lead role, with Niddhi Agerwal and Malavika Mohanan playing the female leads. Despite the ongoing speculation about the film's release, the team remains tight-lipped about any delays, keeping audiences eagerly awaiting more official updates in the coming weeks.

Upendra's UI: The Movie Set to Deliver a Powerful Message on Global Warming

Upendra's latest film, *UI: The Movie*, is more than just an action-packed spectacle; it aims to deliver a thought-provoking message about the planet's future. Set to release tomorrow, the futuristic film delves deep into the devastating consequences of global warming, offering a wake-up call for viewers about the urgent need for environmental conservation.

The movie envisions a world ravaged by climate change, where humanity is grappling to survive amidst rising temperatures and deteriorating ecosystems. While the plot remains under wraps, reports suggest that *UI* highlights the severe impact of pollution, biodiversity loss, and the role of politicians in exacerbating these environmental crises. The film promises to combine intense action with a compelling narrative that critiques the political apathy towards pressing global issues.



In an interesting decision, the filmmakers have kept the film's runtime to a concise 2 hours and 12 minutes, ensuring that the narrative remains engaging without any lulls. This move is expected to keep audiences hooked from start to finish, with every moment contributing to the film's core message.

The film has garnered significant attention, especially since Upendra has stepped behind the camera as the director after a considerable gap. His return to direction has added an extra layer of anticipation for the movie, as fans are eager to see how he handles this ambitious project.

UI: The Movie has been mounted on a hefty budget of nearly 100 crore, making it one of Upendra's most expensive ventures to date. Produced as a joint venture between Lahari Films and Venus Entertainers, the movie is being brought to the Telugu audience by Geetha Arts. With the overwhelming response to the trailer and promotional materials, expectations for *UI* are running high. The film's release is eagerly awaited, as it promises to be both an action-packed experience and a timely reminder of the environmental issues that threaten the future of the planet.

Kamal Haasan's Indian 3: Shankar's Franchise Continues with Exciting Updates

The *Indian* franchise, starring Kamal Haasan in the lead role, continues to captivate audiences, and the third installment, *Indian 3*, is already generating significant buzz. Directed by Shankar, the franchise has already seen the release of *Indian 2*, a highly anticipated sequel. However, despite a grand release on July 12 this year, *Indian 2* fell short of expectations at the box office, failing to meet the audience's hopes.



Rumors have been circulating that *Indian 3* might bypass a theatrical release and head straight to OTT platforms, following the financial setbacks faced by the producers of the sequel. However, Shankar remains optimistic about the future of the franchise, dismissing negative reviews of *Indian 2* and expressing confidence in the upcoming projects. He believes that films like *Game Changer* and *Indian 3* will surely resonate with audiences when they hit theaters.

Kamal Haasan's fans are particularly excited as *Indian 3* is confirmed to be released in cinemas, with Shankar's team planning a significant promotional campaign to boost anticipation. The

latest updates suggest that after the release of *Game Changer*, the *Indian 3* promotions will take center stage, and a trailer is expected to be unveiled soon. The trailer is expected to generate massive excitement and hype for the film, signaling the high expectations surrounding its release.

Shankar's fans can look forward to a thrilling couple of years, as *Indian 3* and *Game Changer* are both set to release in close proximity, giving moviegoers two major films to look forward to from the renowned director. With all the buzz around the upcoming projects, *Indian 3* is expected to reignite the interest in the franchise and deliver the much-anticipated cinematic experience that fans have been waiting for.

Keerthy Suresh Shares Glimpse of Dreamy Wedding with Thalapathy Vijay in Attendance

Actress Keerthy Suresh and her longtime partner, Anthony Thattai, tied the knot in a beautiful ceremony in Goa on December 12. Among the distinguished guests at the wedding was none other than Keerthy's co-star, the beloved actor Thalapathy Vijay, who added star power to the celebration.

On the evening following her wedding, the new bride shared a series of stunning photos from the event on her Instagram. One of the pictures featured the newlyweds posing alongside Vijay, who looked dashing in traditional attire, capturing a moment of warmth and joy.

Keerthy also shared another candid image of Vijay interacting with some of the guests at the ceremony, showcasing the personal and intimate nature of the event. In her heartfelt post, she expressed her gratitude to Vijay for attending and blessing their special day. The post, which was accompanied by a caption that read, "When our dream icon blessed us at our dream weddinggg! @actorvijay sir. With love, Your Nanbi and Nanban," reflected the deep admiration and affection Keerthy holds for the actor, both as a colleague and a friend.

Thalapathy Vijay's presence at Keerthy's wedding added an extra touch of magic to



the celebration, making the occasion even more memorable for the couple. Their bond, both on-screen and off, has resonated with fans, and this moment further solidified their close friendship.

As the newlyweds embark on this new chapter of their lives, the sweet memories of their dream wedding, along with the support of close friends like Vijay, will undoubtedly be cherished forever.