



# Weather Forecast




## HYDERABAD

TEMPE  
RATURE


 $\frac{H}{L} \frac{28^{\circ}C}{22^{\circ}C}$


## VIJAYAWADA

TEMPE  
RATURE


 $\frac{H}{L} \frac{29^{\circ}C}{24^{\circ}C}$

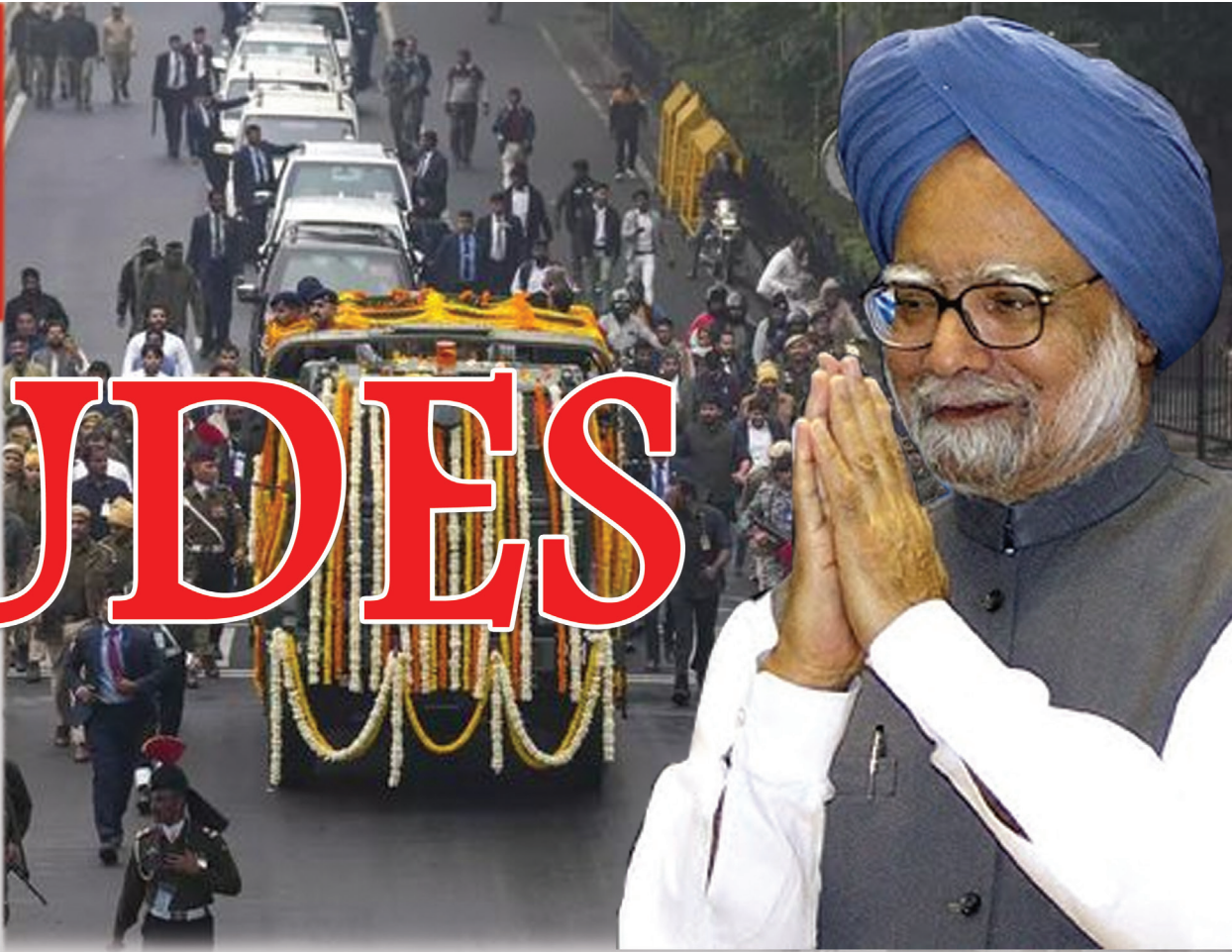
## TIRUPATHI

TEMPE  
RATURE


 $\frac{H}{L} \frac{26^{\circ}C}{24^{\circ}C}$

# FORMER PM SINGH'S FUNERAL CONCLUDES

The loss of the seasoned statesman has left the nation mourning, with tributes pouring in from leaders across the political spectrum and abroad.



# ACB Hands Over Key Evidence to ED in Formula E Case

2<sup>nd</sup> page

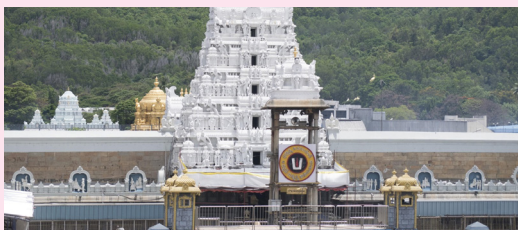
# Nitish Kumar Shines with Century in Melbourne Test

A photograph of Virat Kohli, an Indian cricketer, celebrating a century in a Test match. He is wearing a white Indian national cricket team jersey with 'DREAM11' and the Adidas logo. He is holding a wooden cricket bat in his right hand and his batting helmet in his left hand, both raised in the air. He has a beard and is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred crowd of spectators in a stadium.

## Telangana Assembly to Hold Special Session

2<sup>nd</sup> page

# TTD Announces Key Changes for Vaikunta Dwara Darshans

2<sup>nd</sup> page

India Chooses Pigeon  
1  
Product Bought  
Every Second\*  
4 Cr  
Happily Users  
Added Each  
Year\*

**SUPER  
KHUSH  
2025  
SALE**

MRP ₹ 4,450/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

Prime Induction Cooktop +  
Cute 3 Ltrs Stainless Steel Cooker

MRP ₹ 6,054/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

Neo 2 Burner Glass Cooktop +  
Imperi Cast Iron Tawa 280

MRP ₹ 4,200/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

Exella 550W 3 Jar Mixer Grinder +  
Comfy 1000 W Iron

MRP ₹ 4,355/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

Favorite 3 Ltr Induction Base Pressure Cooker +  
Favorite 5 Ltr Induction Base Pressure Cooker +  
Favo Plus Tawa 280

MRP ₹ 4,440/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

Electric 1.8 Ltr Single Pot +  
Hot Kettle 1.5 Ltrs

MRP ₹ 4,435/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

1.5L Swift Multi-Cook Kettle + Poppr Toaster +  
Inox Hydra Duo Cap 900ml Bottle

MRP ₹ 4,254/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

Shine Mop + ThermoXon Stack 1000ml Flask +  
Radiance Emergency Lamp +  
Heat N Treat Lunch Box Pack of 4

MRP ₹ 4,955/-  
COMBO PRICE  
**₹2025**

Zeora Chopper 350 Mt +  
SS serving Insulated Casserole 3600 Mt +  
Idly Maker (4 Plates)

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# Formula E Case

continued from P-1

It also noted violations of business rules by the municipal department during agreements. The counter accused KTR of obstructing the investigation by filing a petition for case dismissal on irrelevant grounds. With the ACB providing detailed records and reinforcing its claims, the ED's investigation gains momentum, further complicating matters for KTR and the ruling BRS party. This development adds another layer of scrutiny to the high-profile case.

## Century in Melbourne Test

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Nitish's achievement has garnered praise from various quarters, including Keshineni Shivnath, President of the Andhra Cricket Association (ACA) and Member of Parliament. He congratulated Reddy for his selection to the Indian cricket team and announced a cash reward of Rs. 25 lakhs. Shivnath also mentioned that the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister will soon present the award to Reddy. Nitish's exceptional performance in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, particularly in the fourth Test, has drawn significant attention as an all-rounder.

Shivnath highlighted that young cricketers like Nitish Kumar Reddy serve as role models for today's youth. He also revealed plans to build a state-of-the-art stadium in Amaravati and a stadium in Visakhapatnam, with the ACA considering the possibility of an IPL team for Andhra Pradesh in the near future.

## Telangana Assembly to Hold Special Session

**TPN , Telangana :** The Telangana Legislative Assembly will convene for a special session on the 30th of December, 2024, at 10 am on Monday. During this session, the assembly will observe a period of mourning and pay tribute to the late former Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh.

Dr. Singh, aged 92, passed away on Thursday night after suffering from age-related health issues. His family rushed him to the hospital after he lost consciousness, but despite efforts to resuscitate him for an hour and a half, he was declared dead at 9:51 am by AIIMS.

In honor of his passing, the central government has declared a seven-day mourning period. Dr. Singh, an esteemed economist, served as India's Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014 and played a crucial role in shaping the country's economic policies. His death has left the nation in grief, and his contributions to India's development will be remembered fondly. The Telangana Assembly will join the rest of the country in paying respects to the late leader during this special session.

## TTD Announces Key Changes for Vaikunta Dwara Darshans



**TPN , TTD :** Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has made significant announcements regarding Vaikunta Dwara Darshans, prioritizing common devotees over VIP arrangements.

### Key Highlights:

**No Recommendation Letters:** TTD EO Shyamala Rao announced that recommendation letters for VIP break darshans will not be accepted from January 10 to 19. Only protocol dignitaries present in person will be allowed break darshans.

**Vaikunta Dwara Darshans:** The darshans will be held for 10 days, from January 10 to 19, to accommodate more devotees.

**Special Entry Tickets:** A total of 1.40 lakh special entry Darshan tickets, priced at Rs. 300 each, have been released for this period.

**Room Allotment Canceled:** Room allotments for donors will be suspended from January 8 to 19 to prioritize common devotees.

**Temple Arrangements:** The Koil Alwar Thirumanjanam ritual will be conducted on January 7 as part of the preparations for Vaikunta Ekadashi.

In the Dial Your TTD EO program, Shyamala Rao addressed several concerns raised by devotees, including complaints about staff behavior towards the elderly and women. He assured appropriate action to ensure better service and experience for all devotees. This decision underscores TTD's commitment to making Vaikunta Ekadashi more accessible and equitable for common devotees.

# KTR Files Affidavit in High Court

**KTR Denies Role in Contract Implementation and Fund Transfers Responsibilities Rest with HMDA and Statutory Approvals Refund Application Possible for Unheld Formula E Race**

**TPN , Hyderabad:** Telangana Minister K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has filed a reply affidavit in the High Court, asserting that he has no involvement in the implementation of contracts or the payment of funds related to the Formula E race project. In his affidavit, KTR clarified that the procedural responsibilities for contract implementation and fund disbursement do not fall under his purview as a minister. He emphasized that matters related to permissions, fund payments to foreign companies, and associated banking processes are handled by statutory bodies like the Hyderabad Metropolitan De-

velopment Authority (HMDA) and require government approval for amounts exceeding ₹10 crores.

KTR highlighted that HMDA operates under specific statutory rules, and there is no provision that ties him to the transfer of funds or their procedural approvals. He reiterated that he has no role in fund transfers and that all issues related to payments must comply with the law.

Addressing the Formula E race's financial aspects, KTR stated that he took charge as the promoter for the e-car race after these issues



arose. He mentioned that since the 10th season of competitions has not taken place, an application for a refund can be submitted to the Formula E organization.

The affidavit aims to clarify the minister's role amidst legal scrutiny regarding contract payments and procedural lapses associated with the high-profile event.

## Government Announces 2025 Calendar Holidays

**TPN , Telangana :** The Telangana government has officially declared the list of holidays for 2025, including both general and optional holidays. Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari issued the order on Friday evening, confirming a total of 50 holidays for the upcoming year. This includes 27 general holidays and 23 optional holidays.



Key holidays include New Year on January 1, Bhogi on January 13, Sankranti/Pongal on January 14, Republic Day on January 26, Maha Shivaratri on February 26, Holi on March 14, Ugadi on March 30, and Ramzan on March 31. Other notable holidays include Dr. Ambedkar Jayanti on April 14, Good Friday on April

18, Bakrid on June 7, Muharram on July 6, Bonalu on July 21, Independence Day on August 15, Krishna Ashtami on August 16, Ganesh Chaturthi on August 27, Milad-un-Nabi on September 5, Bathukamma on September 21, Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti on October 2, Vijaya Dashami on October 3, Diwali on October 20, Karthika Pournami on November 5, Christmas on December 25, and Boxing Day on December 26.

These holidays are in line with the state's efforts to ensure the welfare and cultural practices of its people.

## TGSRTC Extends Concession for Accredited Journalists

**TPN , Hyderabad:** The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) has announced an extension of the concession for accredited journalists by an additional three months. Journalists can collect their renewed passes from nearby bus pass centers. To renew their passes, journalists are required to present their accreditation cards and old bus passes. In 2021, TGSRTC Chairman VC Sajjanar had introduced a concession for accredited journalists, enabling them to avail discounts

when booking tickets online through the official TGSRTC website. This initiative was aimed at easing travel for journalists and enhancing their access to the transport system. The recent extension of the concession reflects TGSRTC's ongoing support for the media community, ensuring continued benefits for accredited scribes. Journalists are advised to renew their bus passes at the earliest to avoid any inconvenience during their travels.

## HC Upholds Indiramma Committees for Housing Scheme

**TPN , Hyderabad:** The Telangana High Court's division bench has refused to suspend the operations of the Indiramma Committees, which are tasked with selecting beneficiaries for the state's housing scheme designed to assist the homeless poor. The court declined to stay the earlier orders issued by a single judge and directed the state government to file a counter, with the next hearing scheduled for January 24, 2025. The Indiramma housing scheme aims to provide Rs 5 lakh in financial assistance for the construction of 450,000 houses in its initial phase.

This initiative was formalized through a government order dated October 11, which established committees at both village panchayat and municipal ward levels. These committees are chaired by panchayat sarpanches or special officers appointed by the district collector, and include two women from self-help

groups, along with three local representatives from different communities (one each from BC, SC, and ST) in rural areas. In urban areas, ward councillors or corporators serve as chairpersons.

The establishment of these committees was challenged in court by Nithish Kumar and another petitioner from Nizamabad. However, their plea was dismissed by a single judge, who emphasized that the beneficiary selection process would adhere to established eligibility criteria and that the government retains discretionary power in implementing such schemes. The judge further noted that judicial review under Article 226 is limited unless there is a violation of fundamental rights.

This ruling ensures the continued operation of the Indiramma Committees in selecting deserving beneficiaries for the housing scheme.

## Bhu Bharati Portal Set to Launch on January 1

**TPN , Telangana :** The Telangana government has announced that the much-anticipated Bhu Bharati portal will go live on January 1, marking a significant shift in the state's land records management system. The existing Dharani portal will cease operations on December 31, with all its data being transferred to the National Informatics Center (NIC) for integration into the new platform.

The transition comes amid growing concerns over alleged irregularities in the Dharani portal. Reports of hundreds of acres being removed from restricted lists overnight have caused a stir within the revenue department. Investigations are underway to identify those responsible, focusing on server access logs, IP

addresses, and unauthorized modifications to survey numbers. The government is also preparing an action plan for a forensic audit of Dharani transactions. Initial findings have already uncovered suspicious activities, with transaction histories shedding light on critical discrepancies.

The launch of the Bhu Bharati portal aims to address these issues and ensure greater transparency and accountability in land records management.

However, the revelations of irregularities have put revenue department officials under scrutiny, signaling a period of significant reforms and accountability.

## ACB Files Counter in High Court Over Formula E Racing Case



**TPN , Hyderabad :** The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has submitted a detailed counter in the High Court in connection with the Formula E car racing case, accusing K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) of criminal misconduct and misappropriation of government funds.

According to the counter, KTR allegedly pressured officials to make payments without obtaining Cabinet approval or clearance from the Finance Department. A sum of ₹55 crore was reportedly transferred to a foreign company without requisite permissions, leading to an additional burden of ₹8 crore on the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA).

The ACB refuted claims that the case was politically motivated or influenced, stating that the FIR against KTR was filed only after obtaining the necessary approvals from the concerned authorities. The bureau emphasized that business rules were violated when the Municipal Department entered into agreements, and payments to the Formula E Operations (FEO) company were made under KTR's instructions.

The counter also challenged KTR's petition seeking the dismissal of the case, citing it as baseless and an obstruction to the investigation. It noted that Supreme Court orders allow registration of cases without preliminary investigation in instances of serious allegations. The delay in filing the FIR, ACB argued, does not invalidate the seriousness of the charges.

The bureau underscored the need for a thorough investigation, stressing that dismissing the case on irrelevant grounds would set a harmful precedent. It maintained that allegations of misappropriation and misconduct warrant a proper judicial probe.

The High Court is expected to take up the matter soon, as the case continues to stir political and administrative debate in Telangana.





# Harish Rao Urges Youth to Adopt Hostels

**TPN , Telangana :** Former Minister Harish Rao has called on the youth to step forward and adopt hostels, offering their services to children, stating that serving children is akin to serving God. He made these remarks while participating in a distribution program of sweaters and blankets to students at Urban Residential Bridge School in Nasarpur, Siddipet district. Harish Rao urged the youth and youth organizations across the state to refrain from spending money on December 31 celebrations and instead donate it to adopt hostels.

He highlighted the difficulties students face in hostels during the winter season,

citing the lack of hot water and the government's failure to provide blankets. He also mentioned that mess bills have been pending for the past four months. Harish Rao criticized Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's statement in the Assembly, where he claimed that there was not a single pending bill in the state. He questioned whether this was true and sarcastically referred to the Chief Minister's comments, saying, "The words of the Chief Minister are grand, but the actions do not match."

Harish Rao further mocked CM Revanth Reddy, calling him a "speech Chief Minister" who has lost control over adminis-

tration. He also accused the government of failing to implement the six guarantees it promised.

Raising concerns over the rising costs of mess charges, he demanded that the state government release pending mess bills immediately. He also criticized the delay in raising mess charges from Rs. 1,050 to Rs. 1,300, which he claimed was still not implemented. Harish Rao suggested that the government should take more responsibility for students in residential schools and provide better facilities, urging the CM to fulfill his promises made in the Assembly.



## Adi Srinivas Criticizes Kavitha's Stance on BC Reservations



**TPN , Telangana :** Government Whip Adi Srinivas has slammed Kavitha Kalvakuntla for her comments on BC (Backward Classes) reservations, accusing her of showing "false love" and "deceptive affection" toward BCs. Srinivas questioned Kavitha's relevance in fighting for BC issues, stating that the BC community is capable of resolving its own problems through its leadership. He criticized her for not addressing BC issues during her tenure in power, claiming that the leadership of BCs does not need Kavitha's involvement.

Srinivas emphasized that BCs had a significant role in the Tel-

angana state's progress, especially in the 42% reservation for BCs in local bodies. He pointed out that during KCR's tenure, BCs were ignored despite promises for reservations in various sectors, including tribals and minorities. He also criticized the failure of programs meant for BCs, including the BC Corporation, and the denial of loans. Srinivas accused Kavitha of staging a drama to divert attention from other issues, including the liquor case. He called on BCs to avoid participating in any events led by Kavitha, stating that BCs should not be manipulated for political gain by upper-caste interests.

## Telangana Cabinet Meeting Postponed Amid Special Assembly Session

**TPN , Telangana :** The Telangana Cabinet meeting, initially scheduled for the 30th of this month, has been postponed due to a special assembly session. The government announced that the assembly will convene on Monday to pay tribute to the late former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh as part of the mourning days.

The government has yet to disclose the rescheduled date for the Cabinet meeting. Key issues are expected to be on the agenda, including farmer assurance programs, ration card distribution procedures, cash transfers to landless individuals, the Yadagirigutta Temple Board, caste census, and preparations for local body elections.

The postponement has heightened anticipation among political circles and stakeholders, as the upcoming Cabinet meeting is likely to address several critical matters. Observers are particularly keen to see the government's approach to these issues, which are of significant importance to the public and governance in the state.

Further updates regarding the new date for the Cabinet meeting are awaited, and the developments are being closely watched by both political analysts and the public.

## Harish Rao's Open Letter to CM Revanth Reddy: Demand for Yam Purchase Centers and Bonus Payment

**TPN , Telangana :** Former minister and BRS leader Harish Rao has addressed an open letter to Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, urging immediate action to support yam farmers in the state. Rao demanded the establishment of yam purchase centers and the payment of a Rs 400 bonus on the support price, as promised by the Congress in its Warangal Rythu Declaration during the elections.

Highlighting the plight of farmers, Rao noted that approximately 2.5 lakh metric tons of yams are expected to be produced across 6 lakh acres in Telangana. He criticized the state govern-

ment for failing to set up purchase centers, leaving farmers dependent on the open market, where they are unable to secure even the minimum support price of Rs 7,550 per quintal. Instead, farmers are reportedly receiving only Rs 6,500 to Rs 6,800 per quintal, resulting in a loss of Rs 800 per quintal.

Harish Rao urged the government to prioritize the establishment of yam purchase centers and ensure farmers receive the promised Rs 400 bonus. He emphasized the need for prompt action to prevent further losses and uphold the commitments made to farmers.

# Raghunandan Challenges KTR

**TPN , Telangana :** Medak MP Raghunandan Rao has made critical remarks regarding the Enforcement Directorate (ED) notices to Telangana Minister K.T. Rama Rao (KTR). He challenged KTR to display courage and face jail, urging him to experience life behind bars.

Raghunandan Rao accused KTR of violating the election code by organizing the Formula E car race without the Election Commission's approval. He pointed out that any expenditure during the election code requires prior permission. He further alleged that the Telangana government spent state funds on foreign companies without informing the central government or the Reserve Bank of

India (RBI), which he claimed led to the ED case against KTR.

The MP warned KTR to exercise caution while making statements such as "ED, Modi, Bodi," referencing earlier remarks by MLC Kavitha. He mocked KTR, stating that those who boldly challenge authorities often turn to courts when cases are filed against them. Raghunandan also referred to Kavitha's past tweet daring authorities to arrest her, only for her to approach the courts once a case was registered.

He emphasized that KTR must face the ED investigation and accused him of misusing public funds, which has now attracted legal scrutiny.



# Manmohan Singh Should Be Honored with Bharat Ratna: Jeevan Reddy

**TPN , Telangana :** Telangana Congress MLC Jeevan Reddy has called for the late former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to be honored with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award. Praising Singh as a visionary economist, Reddy highlighted his pivotal contributions to the nation's economic transformation and welfare policies.

Jeevan Reddy credited Manmohan Singh with initiatives such as the Employment Guarantee Scheme, the Right to Information Act, the Aadhaar program, and the first phase of the Hyderabad Metro Rail. He also noted Singh's role in waiving farmers' loans in a lump sum, which



provided significant relief to the agricultural sector. Reddy further acknowledged Singh's recommendations in allocating electricity to Telangana and his contributions to enhancing Hyderabad's IT reputation. He emphasized that honoring Manmohan Singh would also be a tribute to the legacy of PV Narasimha Rao, who recognized Singh's exceptional capabilities and appointed him as the architect of India's economic liberalization.

The proposal comes as a reminder of the late leader's extensive impact on India's growth and governance, reaffirming the need to celebrate his legacy.

# Inspection Reveals Critical Issues at Bollaram Government Hospital



**TPN , Telangana :** Malkajgiri MP conducted an inspection of Bollaram Government Hospital to review the facilities, patient well-being, and challenges faced by staff and patients. The visit highlighted several issues, including the absence of ultrasound facilities, rabies vaccines, and essential medicines. It was also reported that patients were being charged for X-rays and blood tests, and that doctors were unavailable at night, causing problems during emergencies.

During the visit, the MP met with doctors, staff, and patients in both outpatient and inpatient departments, inquiring about their illnesses and the treatment provided. Bathrooms were also inspected, and recommendations were made to maintain cleanliness.

Speaking to the media, the MP expressed concern over the lack of resources and funds at the hospital, which primarily serves the poorest of the poor. Patients, choosing government hospitals over pri-

vate ones due to affordability, demanded better facilities.

The MP noted that super-specialty hospitals like Gandhi and Osmania are witnessing an increase in patient loads due to reduced facilities, further burdening the healthcare system. The inspection also covered the Cantonment Hospital and Urban Health Center within the Malkajgiri Parliament area, where a service charge of Rs. 50 for doctor consultations was reported.

Efforts will be made to ensure the availability of medicines, equipment, and adequate staff, with a focus on increasing the number of deliveries at the hospital, which currently averages 4-5 per month. As a member of the Cantonment Board, the MP pledged to restore the hospital's former reputation and ensure free healthcare for residents. The program was attended by Hospital Superintendent Dr. Ramakrishna, senior BJP leader V.K. Mahesh, Kompally Councilor Raji Reddy, former Shamirpet MPP Chandrashekhar Yadav, and others.

This hospital, being an integral part of the cantonment area, will receive the necessary attention to improve services and meet public expectations.



## HYDRA Commissioner Ranganath: Demolitions to Resume Soon



**TPN , Hyderabad :** HYDRA Commissioner Ranganath has confirmed that demolitions of illegal constructions on water bodies will resume shortly after the identification of Full Tank Levels (FTL). Despite a temporary pause, the commissioner assured that HYDRA's operations remain robust, with 15 teams actively engaged and plans to expand.

**Key highlights of Commissioner Ranganath's statement:**  
**No Notices for Illegal Constructions:** HYDRA does not issue notices for illegal structures on water bodies, as such actions are deemed unlawful.  
**Operational Coverage:** HYDRA's jurisdiction extends up to the Outer Ring Road, focusing on disaster response and asset protection.  
**Enhanced Public Awareness:** Efforts have been made to educate citizens about FTLs and buffer zones, which will soon

be marked and published on the HYDRA website.  
**Comprehensive Data Collection:** Technical data, including aerial drone imagery, is being compared across 2006-2023 to identify encroachments. Over 1,025 water bodies have been documented, with 300 acres of government land reclaimed so far.  
**Upcoming Developments:** Establishment of a HYDRA police station. Introduction of HYDRA FM for real-time updates.

Increasing automatic weather stations for better disaster preparedness. Development of a DRF (Disaster Response Force) training center in Nagole, with plans to expand the DRF to 72 teams.

The commissioner emphasized HYDRA's commitment to prioritizing public complaints and ensuring thorough verifications for properties, whether for rent or business purposes.

Ranganath also noted that collaboration with the HYDRA Meteorological Department is underway to improve forecasting and disaster management capabilities. With these measures, he assured that HYDRA will soon demonstrate its full potential, making people more cautious and proactive.

## Excise Enforcement Press Meet Highlights: Director Kamalasan Reddy

**TPN , Telangana :** At the annual progress press meet, Director Kamalasan Reddy outlined major achievements and ongoing initiatives aimed at combating narcotics and illegal liquor in Telangana. Key Achievements and Initiatives

**Joint Operations:** Collaborated with the Anti-Narcotics Bureau and Telangana Police to combat drug trafficking.

**Focused surveillance on hotspots** like Dhulpeti and Nanak Ramguda. Conducted pub inspections and introduced drug detection tests for staff.

**Training and Investigation:** Specialized training provided to enhance investigation efficiency and increase conviction rates.

NDPS cases handled with meticulous attention, including comprehensive Panchnamas.

**Destruction of Intoxicants:** Destroyed 20,906 kg of narcotics, including ganja, valued at ₹48.64 crore.

Seized drugs worth ₹11 crore from a pharmaceutical unit involved in illicit production and export.

**Old Cases and Surveillance:** Resolution of 874 pending cases in Dhulpeti expected within two months.

Maintained surveillance on repeat offenders like Nitu Bhai in Nanak Ramguda to curb recidivism.

**Operation Duryopet:** Launched in July, this initiative led to 71 cases being registered and multiple arrests.

Successfully reduced ganja trafficking in Dhulpeti.

**Gudumba Eradication:** Stopped production of illegally brewed Gudumba in 535 hotspots across 92 mandals.

Arrested 920 individuals and seized large stocks in collaboration with Andhra Pradesh Police.

**Non-Duty Paid Liquor:** Implemented strict measures to curb the supply, resulting in in-

creased excise revenue.

Installed AI-enabled cameras in 17 distilleries for enhanced monitoring.

**Conviction Rate and Seizures:** Registered 21,254 cases (a 2.07% increase) and arrested 12,727 individuals this year. NDPS cases rose by 29.17%, with 1,045 cases registered and 471 vehicles seized.

Confiscated 1,04,730 liters of liquor; seizures down by 19.87% due to stricter enforcement.

**New Year Operations:**

Formed 40 special teams to prevent illegal liquor consumption during celebrations. Joint raids with the Narcotics Bureau and Excise Police to be monitored in real-time.

**Public Advisory** Director Kamalasan Reddy urged citizens to avoid non-duty paid liquor and narcotics during New Year celebrations, warning of strict actions against violators.



## Social Media Star Creates Ruckus with Bouncers

**TPN , Telangana :** Despite Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's recent restrictions on the use of bouncers following the Sandhya Theater incident, a social media influencer has stirred controversy. Reports reveal that the individual caused chaos in shopping malls with bouncers in tow, allegedly to gain Instagram likes. A video of the incident has gone viral, sparking public outrage.

Telangana Police Commissioner CV Anand has taken the matter seriously, issuing

a stern warning to bouncers. He emphasized that any instance of bouncers misbehaving or pushing the public will result in strict action. Furthermore, he highlighted that celebrities employing such bouncers must be held accountable for their behavior.

The incident has reignited discussions about the misuse of private security personnel in public spaces. All eyes are now on Commissioner Anand to see how he reacts to this latest controversy.

## PhD Student Deepti's Suicide: Police Expedite Investigation

**TPN , Telangana :** In the tragic suicide case of PhD student Deepti, the police have intensified their investigation, leading to the arrest and remand of three individuals, including her father. Deepti allegedly took her own life due to harassment related to money her father, Sangeeta Rao, had borrowed.

According to reports, Constable Anil had been pressuring Deepti to repay the money borrowed by her father, often summoning her to the police station and subjecting her to harassment. In a selfie video posted on social media before her death, Deepti accused Constable Anil of repeatedly threatening her and driving her to despair. She also alleged that Anil's wife, Anita, and her father, Somayya, demanded additional money to withdraw a related case.

The police have arrested Deepti's father, Sangeeta Rao, for deceiving Constable Anil with false promises of a job for his wife. Anita and Somayya were also taken into custody for harassing Deepti. All three have been remanded. Meanwhile, Constable Anil and another accused, Saidulu, are reportedly absconding.

The case has sparked public outrage, with calls for justice for Deepti and strict action against those responsible for her untimely death.



## Cyclist Killed in Tragic Accident Near Madhapur

**TPN , Hyderabad:** A tragic accident claimed the life of a 33-year-old cyclist in Madhapur on Saturday morning. The victim, identified as Ganesh, was on his way to work around 6:40 AM when he was struck by a speeding car near the Parvat Nagar junction. Due to the impact, Ganesh's head hit the footpath railings, leading to excessive bleeding. He died on the spot.

Ganesh, who worked for a private company, was cycling to work when the fatal incident occurred. The car driver has been taken into police custody, but no formal complaint has yet been filed by the victim's family. The body has been sent for postmortem.

This accident follows another tragic incident just a day earlier at the same spot, where two young individuals were killed in a bike crash with a divider.

In response to the tragedy, the Hyderabad Cyclists Union expressed their grief and urged the Madhapur police to ensure better safety measures for cyclists. The union highlighted that many cyclists come from economically weaker backgrounds and rely on bicycles for their livelihood.

Hyderabad's BYCS mayor Santhana Selvan appealed to authorities for justice and increased safety for cyclists in the area.



## Two Sentenced to Life Imprisonment for Murder in LB Nagar

**TPN , Hyderabad:** On Friday, December 27, the Additional District and Sessions Judge at LB Nagar, Ranga Reddy district, sentenced two men to rigorous life imprisonment for the brutal murder of Sri Ramulu in 2015. The convicted men, Guduru Kumar alias Komaraiah and Kotha Kurva Ramachandraiah alias Ramchendri, were also fined Rs 5,000 each.

The crime occurred on October 23, 2015, when the accused attacked the victim, Sri Ramulu, and stole Rs 11,000 from him. During the attack, one of the victim's testicles was fatally injured. Sri Ramulu was rushed to the government hospital in Chevella, where he succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment.

The Chevella police filed the chargesheet on February 16, 2016, and the trial proceeded thereafter. During the trial, the court examined 15 witnesses, and based on the evidence and testimonies, the two accused were found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment.

## Hyderabad Police Arrest Three for Robbery; Weapons Seized



**TPN , Hyderabad :** Hyderabad police arrested three individuals allegedly involved in a series of robbery cases, following a search operation by the Kulsumpura police on Saturday, December 28. The accused, identified as Syed Abul Hasan (32), Syed Taleb Ali (23), and Saif Ali Mirza (19), were found with stolen items and weapons.

**Details of the Crime** On December 24, the trio threatened a laborer, R Krishna, with a knife and robbed him of his phone and motorcycle on the 100 Feet Road in Kulsumpura. Acting on the complaint, police launched a four-day search operation and apprehended the suspects.





# Tragic Triple Deaths in Kamareddy Pond: Suspense Deepens

**TPN , Telangana :** In a shocking development in the Kamareddy case, three lives were lost in a tragic sequence of events. The incident unfolded when Constable Shruti reportedly attempted suicide by jumping into a pond. In a desperate bid to rescue her, Sub-Inspector Sai Kumar and a civilian named Nikhil also jumped into the pond. However, none of them survived as they were unable to swim.

According to preliminary police findings, Constable Shruti was the first to jump into the pond. Nikhil, a bystander, followed in an attempt to save her but tragically lost his life.

Upon hearing Shruti's cries for help, Sub-Inspector Sai Kumar rushed to her rescue. Unfortunately, the large size of the pond proved fatal as Sai Kumar also drowned.

The case has left investigators baffled due to the lack of eyewitnesses and concrete evidence. With many questions still unanswered, the mystery surrounding the tragic deaths has deepened. Reports suggest that a scene reconstruction is likely to take place today to ascertain the sequence of events and determine the underlying cause of the incident.

The community is in shock as the deaths of three individuals, including a police officer, have raised concerns about mental health, safety measures, and timely interventions. Authorities are urging anyone with information about the incident to come forward.

The tragic loss highlights the critical need for enhanced training in basic survival skills, such as swimming, particularly for first responders. The investigation continues as authorities work to uncover the truth behind the Kamareddy case.



## Tractor Accident in Hakimpet: Ten Seriously Injured



**TPN , Telangana :** A tragic accident occurred in Hakimpet, Malsipet Mandal of Medak district, on Saturday morning, leaving ten people seriously injured. The incident happened when a tractor carrying laborers overturned while en route to a construction site.

Local residents promptly assisted in transporting the injured to the nearby Thupran Government Hospital, where they are currently receiving treatment. Eyewitnesses reported that the tractor overturned due to a loss of control, causing severe injuries to the workers.

Upon receiving information about the accident, police rushed to the scene to carry out rescue operations and ensure the injured were safely taken to the hospital. Authorities have registered a case and launched an investigation to determine the exact cause of the accident.

This unfortunate event has brought attention to the need for strict safety measures when transporting laborers. Further updates on the condition of the injured and the outcome of the investigation are awaited.

## Drunk Driving Crackdown in Uppal: 15 Arrested

**TPN , Telangana :** As part of measures to curb road accidents caused by drunk driving, Hyderabad traffic police have intensified their efforts ahead of the New Year celebrations. Late on Friday night, a drunk driving check was conducted at Uppal Nalla Cheruvu under the supervision of Traffic Inspector Lakshmi Madhavi.

During the operation, 15 motorists were caught violating the rules. Their vehicles were seized, and the individuals were subsequently arrested. Speaking on the occasion, Inspector Lakshmi Madhavi urged motorists to avoid drinking and driving, reminding them of the responsibility they owe to their families and others on the road.

Recent incidents of tragic road accidents caused by drunk drivers have prompted the Hyderabad Traffic Department to adopt a zero-tolerance approach. Security and enforcement measures have been significantly increased, with checks planned across various parts of the city to ensure public safety.

Citizens are advised to celebrate responsibly and to use alternative transportation methods if consuming alcohol. The crackdown aims to prevent accidents and ensure a safer New Year for all.



# Food Poisoning Incident in Nirmal District KGBV: 10 Students Fall Ill

**TPN , Telangana :** In a concerning incident at the Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) in Anantapet, Nirmal district, 10 female students reportedly fell ill due to food poisoning. The students became sick after consuming undercooked rice, experiencing severe vomiting and stomach pain.



Upon receiving information, Mandal Education Officer (MEO) Venkateshwarlu promptly moved the affected students to the government hospital in the district center. Initial treatment was provided, and

five students have since recovered and returned to school. The remaining five are still under medical supervision.

MEO Venkateshwarlu explained that newly appointed meal preparation staff, unfamiliar with proper cooking techniques, prepared the undercooked rice that led to the incident. Authorities are expected to take necessary steps to prevent such negligence in the future. This incident raises concerns about food safety standards in educational institutions. Parents and local authorities are urging immediate action to ensure better training for staff and stricter oversight of food preparation processes.

## We Want Our Teachers": Protests Erupt in Siddipet



**TPN , Telangana :** Students from Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBV) in Siddipet and Jagtial districts staged protests demanding the return of their original teachers. The protests were sparked by recent staff transfers and replacements, which students rejected.

In Siddipet, students of Dubbaka KGBV staged a dharna in front of the school, questioning the rationale behind transferring their teachers and replacing them with others. Education Officer Prabhudas intervened to pacify the protesting students, but the concerns persisted.

Meanwhile, similar scenes unfolded in Jagtial district at the KGBV in Kumaripalli, Vellatur Mandal. Teachers at the school have been on an 18-day strike at the district headquarters, demanding regularization of their services. In response, authorities arranged substitute teachers, including appointing Sushila, a teacher from Godiselapeta BC Colony, as the special officer in charge.

However, students protested against the new appointments, shouting slogans and blocking the special officer from entering the premises. Unable to handle the resistance, the teacher reportedly left the school.

The protests highlight the strong bond between students and their regular teachers and underline the urgency for the government to address the demands of the striking staff. Students and parents are calling for a swift resolution to ensure continuity in education without further disruptions.

## Telangana ACB Nabs Two Officials for Bribery



**TPN , Hyderabad:** Telangana's Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) apprehended two government officials in separate incidents for demanding bribes to perform official duties.

In the first case, a deputy tehsildar of Shankarapatnam Mandal in Siddipet district was caught red-handed accepting a bribe of ₹6,000. The bribe was sought from a complainant to forward a file for the Nala conversion of agricultural land measuring 2.25 guntas to the tahsildar. ACB officials recovered the bribe amount from the deputy tehsildar, with a chemical test confirming traces of the bribe money on his right hand. The accused was later produced before the Special Judge for SPE & ACB cases in Karimnagar. In another case earlier in the day, ACB officials arrested Merugu Rathnam, a deputy surveyor from Dammannapet Mandal in Bhadradri Kothagudem district. He was caught demanding and accepting ₹50,000 from a complainant for conducting a land survey and preparing an official report for a property owned by the complainant's sister. The ACB urged citizens to report any incidents of bribery by calling their hotline at \*1064\*. These arrests underline the agency's commitment to eliminating corruption and ensuring accountability among government officials.

## Annual Crime Report 2024: Sharp Rise in Cheating Cases in Khammam

**TPN , Khammam:** The annual crime report for 2024 revealed a significant increase in cheating cases and economic offences under the Khammam Police Commissionerate limits. The overall crime rate rose by 16%, with property-related crimes increasing by 50.2% and economic offences by 63%. Cheating cases witnessed a staggering rise of 112.3%, with 397 cases reported in 2024 compared to 187 in 2023. Additionally, cybercrimes surged, with 276 cases registered this year against 219 last year. Releasing the report, Commissioner of Police Sunil Dutt highlighted the improved detection of property offences, which rose by 22.4% due to the efforts of the clues team and extensive use of CCTV cameras. A total of 8,873 FIRs were filed in 2024, compared to 7,667 in 2023.

**Other notable statistics include:**  
**Economic Offences :** Increased from 446 in 2023 to 727 in 2024.  
**Crime Against Women :** Rose by 10%.  
**Atrocities Against SC/STs :** Jumped by 14.63%.  
**Murders:** Declined slightly, with 26 reported in 2024 compared to 28 in 2023.

While certain crimes such as robberies, house break-ins, and sexual jealousy cases decreased due to intensified patrolling and use of fingerprint devices, road accidents, missing persons, and kidnapping cases saw an uptick. Road accidents rose from 701 in 2023 to 785 in 2024, and missing cases increased from 438 to 558. The Commissioner emphasized the ongoing efforts to strengthen law enforcement and community safety measures.





# Choice Of Manmohan Singh Funeral Site An "Insult", Says Rahul Gandhi; BJP Hits Back



The controversy surrounding the site chosen for Dr. Manmohan Singh's last rites took a political turn today after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accused the government of showing disrespect to the former prime minister. Dr. Singh, who passed away on December 26 at the age of 92, was cremated at Nigambodh Ghat in Delhi with full state honours. However, the location sparked a row, with Gandhi suggesting it was an "insult" to Singh's legacy. Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, took to social media to express his displeasure, questioning the decision to conduct Dr. Singh's funeral at Nigambodh Ghat. He claimed the site was not in keeping with the tradition of giving former prime ministers a dignified memorial. "The great son of Mother India and the first Prime Minister from the Sikh community, Dr. Manmohan Singh ji, has been insulted by this government. His last rites were performed at Nigambodh Ghat today, which is a disrespectful departure from past practices," Gandhi wrote on X. Gandhi emphasized that previous prime ministers had been given dignified memorials where people could pay homage with ease. "Dr. Singh, who served as prime minister for a decade and helped elevate India's economic standing, deserves far more. His policies continue to benefit the poor and marginalized sections of our society, and yet he was not afforded the respect he was due," he added, calling for a memorial to honor Singh's contributions to the nation. In response, the BJP quickly rebuked Gandhi's comments, accusing him of politicizing the issue on the day of the cremation. BJP spokesperson

Sambit Patra dismissed Gandhi's criticism, labeling it a new low in Indian politics. "Rahul Gandhi's remarks are shameful, especially considering that the cabinet, following Dr. Singh's death, decided to honor him with a memorial. A letter was sent to Congress and Dr. Singh's family proposing the creation of this memorial," Patra said during a press conference. The BJP further accused the Congress party of hypocrisy, pointing to instances in the past where Congress had allegedly shown disrespect toward its own leaders, such as former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao and former President Pranab Mukherjee. Dr. Singh's body was taken to Nigambodh Ghat in a flower-decked vehicle, accompanied by tight security and a large crowd of supporters. Rahul Gandhi walked beside the procession and later participated in carrying the casket to the pyre. The funeral ceremony was attended by several dignitaries, including President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, and Jairam Ramesh were present, alongside senior BJP leaders Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh. Foreign dignitaries also attended the ceremony to pay their respects, including Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Mauritius Foreign Minister Dhananjay Ramful. The final rites saw Dr. Singh's eldest daughter, Upinder Singh, light the funeral pyre, as Sikh priests recited Gurbani hymns. The ceremony concluded with a solemn 21-gun salute from the armed forces, honoring Dr. Singh's legacy and contributions to India.



## Homelessness in the U.S. Hits Alarming Record

The homelessness crisis in the United States has reached an unprecedented scale, resembling a storm growing silently over the ocean before crashing onto shore with devastating force. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) latest report, a staggering 771,480 people were homeless on a single night in January 2024. This marks the highest figure ever recorded and reflects an 18.1% surge compared to the previous year. This sharp increase sheds light on longstanding systemic issues, including stagnant wages, skyrocketing housing costs, and the lingering impacts of natural disasters. HUD's findings underscore the intersection of economic instability, housing shortages, and climate crises, which together create a perfect storm for those already teetering on the edge of financial security. The crisis has been especially acute in states like Illinois and Hawaii. Illinois reported a jaw-dropping 116.2% rise in homelessness, primarily driven by an influx of migrants seeking shelter in cities like Chicago. Meanwhile, Hawaii faced an 87% increase in its homeless population due to devastating wildfires that displaced hundreds last year. These statistics highlight the interconnected nature of homelessness, where factors such as economic uncertainty, environmental disasters, and insufficient affordable housing exacerbate an already dire situation. Adrienne Todman, HUD's Deputy Secretary, has emphasized that "no American should endure homelessness," yet the statistics paint a grim picture. Children and families are bearing the brunt of this crisis, with nearly 150,000 children reported homeless—a 33% increase from 2023. Family homelessness also surged by 40%, driven by mounting financial

pressures and unaffordable rent hikes. The data also reveal stark racial disparities. Black Americans, who make up just 12% of the U.S. population, account for 32% of the homeless population. This alarming disparity underscores the persistent impact of structural racism on housing insecurity, highlighting the urgent need for targeted policies to address racial inequities and promote housing stability. The homelessness crisis extends beyond mere numbers; it is a humanitarian catastrophe that threatens to reshape the social fabric of the nation. Without significant policy interventions and increased investments in affordable housing, homelessness risks becoming a permanent feature of American life. Measures such as rent control, increased wages, and robust social safety nets could play a pivotal role in reversing the current trajectory. The situation calls for immediate action to prevent further escalation. Policymakers must prioritize funding for affordable housing projects, expand emergency shelters, and implement programs that address the root causes of homelessness, such as income inequality and inadequate access to mental health services. As the crisis deepens, its ripple effects could lead to greater social instability and economic strain across communities. The time to act is now. The question remains: will the U.S. rise to meet this challenge, or will homelessness continue to grow unchecked, leaving millions vulnerable to the harsh realities of life without stable shelter? The stakes have never been higher, and the nation's response will define its commitment to addressing one of the most pressing humanitarian issues of our time.

## "Fewer Re-Runs Of Friends, More Books": Vivek Ramaswamy On H1B Row

Vivek Ramaswamy, the entrepreneur and former Republican presidential candidate, has weighed in on the ongoing debate over immigration and hiring trends in the U.S. tech sector. His comments, posted on X (formerly Twitter), came amid growing discussions about Indian immigrants' success in the United States and the cultural implications of the H1B visa program. Ramaswamy, who is set to lead the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) alongside Elon Musk in the upcoming Donald Trump administration, called for a cultural shift in the U.S. to prioritize excellence, achievement, and hard work over mediocrity. Ramaswamy, a first-generation U.S. citizen whose parents immigrated from India, argued that the reason many top tech companies hire foreign-born and first-generation engineers is not due to an innate IQ advantage, but a cultural difference. He rejected the idea that these workers are chosen because they are inherently smarter than native-born Americans. Instead, Ramaswamy suggested that it is American culture that needs to change to ensure global competitiveness. He highlighted a shift in American culture that began in the 1990s, which, according to him, has been more focused on social conformity and popularity than on academic and intellectual excellence. Ramaswamy claimed that American society began to value normalcy and mediocrity over achievement, a trend that is reflected in popular media and school systems. He criticized shows like *Boy Meets World*, *Saved by the Bell*, and *Family Matters* for portraying characters who prioritized social status over intellectual pursuits. In contrast, Ramaswamy pointed out that immigrant parents, particularly those from India, often place greater emphasis on academic success, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.



He described how many immigrant parents actively discouraged their children from watching television shows that promoted what he termed "mediocrity," encouraging them instead to focus on their studies and participate in extracurricular academic activities. To support his argument, Ramaswamy proposed a cultural shift in the U.S. that would prioritize "achievement over normalcy, excellence over mediocrity, nerdiness over conformity, and hard work over laziness." He suggested that American youth should focus more on activities like math tutoring, weekend science competitions, and reading books, and less on social activities like sleepovers, Saturday morning cartoons, and hanging out at the mall. He emphasized that

this cultural shift is necessary if the U.S. wants to remain competitive in a hyper-competitive global market for technical talent. Ramaswamy acknowledged that such an approach is often met with skepticism in American society. Many American parents view the intense focus on academics as extreme, and children who excel in STEM fields are often seen as "nerds" or outliers. However, Ramaswamy argued that this mindset is counterproductive in the global competition for top talent. He warned that if the U.S. continues to venerate mediocrity over excellence, it risks falling behind countries like China in the race for technological advancement. He referred to the current moment as America's

"Sputnik moment," drawing a parallel to the Cold War-era launch of the Soviet Union's first satellite, which spurred the U.S. to accelerate its space program. Ramaswamy expressed hope that the election of Donald Trump could mark the beginning of a new era in America, but only if the country undergoes a cultural awakening to prioritize achievement and excellence. Ramaswamy's call for cultural change comes amid broader discussions about the H1B visa program, which allows U.S. companies to hire foreign workers, particularly in the tech industry. Critics argue that the program displaces American workers, while supporters, including Ramaswamy, suggest that it helps bring in top talent from around the world, which is essential for maintaining U.S. global leadership in innovation. Ramaswamy concluded by urging Americans to stop focusing on victimhood or legislating alternative hiring practices, and instead to address the cultural issues that are hindering the country's ability to compete on a global stage. He expressed confidence that the U.S. can make this cultural shift and become a global leader in innovation once again. In a related note, Canadian musician Grimes, Elon Musk's former partner, also addressed the rising anti-India sentiment on social media. She defended Indian culture, recalling her own experiences growing up in a half-Indian household, and emphasized that Indian culture blends well with Western values. Ramaswamy's comments have sparked a significant conversation about how U.S. culture can evolve to foster a competitive, achievement-driven society in the face of global challenges. Whether this shift will take place remains to be seen, but it underscores the ongoing debate over immigration, hiring practices, and the future of America's global standing in the tech industry.



# Farewell to Manmohan Singh

## Last Rites Held With State Honours, Nation Pays Tribute

TPN Correspondent  
New Delhi, Dec 29

Former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, regarded as the "architect of India's economic reforms," was laid to rest with full state honours on Saturday at Nigambodh Ghat in Delhi. Dr. Singh, who served two terms as Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014 in the Congress-led UPA government, passed away at the age of 92 due to age-related complications.

The funeral was attended by a host of political dignitaries, including President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, and members of the Gandhi family, including Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

The Centre declared a seven-day state mourning in honour of Dr. Singh, during which the national flag will fly at half-mast across the country. The Congress party also announced the cancellation of its official programs, including its Foundation Day celebration, for the next seven days. These activities will resume on January 3.

### Political Dispute Over Memorial Site

A political dispute erupted between the Centre and the Congress over the location for Dr. Singh's memorial. The Congress party expressed disappointment with the selection of Nigambodh Ghat for the last rites, arguing that it was not suitable for a memorial. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to Prime Minister Modi, requesting that the location of the final rites be preserved for a memorial, as is customary for former leaders and Prime Ministers. In response, BJP spokesperson CR Kesavan criticized the Congress for its stance, calling it "ironic" given that the Congress-led UPA government had not built a memorial for former Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, who passed away in 2004.

The Centre, however, clarified that it would allocate a suitable space for Dr. Singh's memorial and had already communicated this to Kharge and Dr. Singh's family.

Sharmistha Mukherjee, daughter of the late former President Pranab Mukherjee, also criticized Kharge's request. In a statement on X, she pointed out that when her father passed away in 2020, the Congress leadership did not even convene a condolence meeting, let alone discuss a memorial for him.

### A Legacy of Reforms and Achievements

Dr. Singh's death marks the end of an era in Indian politics. Born in 1932, he was a distinguished economist and served in various key positions before becoming Prime Minister, including as



the Finance Minister during the 1991 economic reforms. He held degrees from the University of Cambridge and Nuffield College, Oxford. Dr. Singh was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian award, in 1987. Dr. Singh's leadership during his tenure as

Prime Minister is widely credited for liberalizing India's economy and making significant strides in sectors like infrastructure, education, and healthcare. World leaders, including French President Emmanuel Macron, former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, US Secretary

of State Antony Blinken, and Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, have expressed their condolences.

The nation bids farewell to a leader who played a pivotal role in shaping modern India's economic landscape.



## All-Woman Team To Investigate Anna University Rape Survivor To Receive Rs 25 Lakh Compensation

TPN Correspondent  
Chennai, Dec 29

The Madras High Court has directed the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the recent alleged sexual assault of a woman student at Anna University in Chennai. The SIT will consist of three women IPS officers, ensuring a sensitive and thorough investigation. The court also ordered the state government to provide the victim with a compensation of Rs 25 lakh. This ruling came during the hearing of a plea submitted to transfer the investigation to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). In addition, the bench, comprising Justice S. M. Subramaniam and Justice V. Lakshminarayan, emphasized that the survivor's education should not be disrupted by the traumatic event. The court instructed Anna University not to charge any fees from her during this period. The incident, which has sparked widespread outrage from opposition parties and civil society, led to one arrest so far. The court's intervention aims to ensure justice for the victim and uphold her rights throughout the investigation.

## Row Over AAP's Free Schemes After Lt Governor Orders Investigation

TPN Correspondent  
New Delhi, Dec 29

Delhi Lt Governor VK Saxena has ordered investigations into allegations surrounding the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) welfare schemes ahead of the upcoming assembly elections. The orders follow complaints raised by Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit, prompting separate directives to the Delhi Chief Secretary and the Commissioner of Police.

The allegations include claims of fraudulent personal data collection under AAP's Mahila Samman Yojana, the presence of Punjab intelligence officers near Congress candidates' residences, and the transfer of cash from Punjab to Delhi to influence the elections.

In his complaint to the Lt Governor, Mr. Dikshit alleged that cash was being transported from Punjab to Delhi to fund election-related activities. In response, the Lt Governor's office has instructed the Delhi Police to monitor vehicles entering the city from neighboring states and has alerted police forces in Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan to prevent any illegal activity.



Dikshit's complaint also raised concerns about the Mahila Samman Yojana, a scheme offering Rs 2,100 per month to eligible women. The Lt Governor has tasked the Chief Secretary with conducting an inquiry into claims that private individuals were illegally collecting personal data under the pretext of enrolling beneficiaries. The Delhi Police has been directed to take legal action against those organizing unauthorized registration camps.

In response, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal dismissed the allegations as "fake." He criticized the BJP, claiming that if they win the elections, they will cancel the Mahila Samman Yojana,

Sanjeevani Yojana, free electricity, free education, and other benefits.

Earlier, the Delhi government's Women and Child Development and Health departments issued public notices clarifying that the Mahila Samman Yojana and the Sanjeevani Yojana were not government-approved schemes and warned citizens against sharing personal details with unauthorized individuals, labeling the registrations as fraudulent.

In another serious accusation, Dikshit alleged that Punjab intelligence officers were stationed near Congress candidates' homes in Delhi. The Lt Governor's office has instructed the Delhi Police Commissioner to investigate this claim and submit a report within three days.

AAP has claimed the investigations are politically motivated, accusing the BJP of using the Lt Governor's office to undermine its election campaign. The party has also alleged that the BJP's opposition to the Mahila Samman Yojana reflects its lack of respect for women. AAP further emphasized that over 22 lakh women have already registered for the scheme, showing widespread public support.

### Manipur CM Condemns Indiscriminate Firing by Kuki Militants; Two Injured



TPN Correspondent  
Imphal, Dec 29

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh strongly condemned the "indiscriminate firing" by Kuki militants on two villages in Imphal East district on Friday, which resulted in the injury of a policeman and a civilian. The attack, which originated from the hills, targeted the villages of Sanasabi and Thamnapokpi, causing widespread panic in the area.

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), the

Chief Minister expressed his outrage, calling the attack a "cowardly and unprovoked assault on innocent lives." He emphasized that the attack undermined peace and harmony, and called on both central forces and state police to coordinate effectively in such situations. "Strongly condemn the indiscriminate firing by Kuki militants at Sanasabi and Thamnapokpi in Imphal East, which injured civilians and security personnel. This cowardly and unprovoked attack on innocent lives is an assault on peace

and harmony," the Chief Minister said. He further assured that adequate security personnel had been dispatched to the affected areas and that the injured were receiving medical assistance. Singh appealed for calm and unity in the face of such challenges. The two targeted villages are located at the foothills of the region. Disturbing visuals from the area showed people from the Meitei community, including elderly women and children, fleeing the violence as automatic gunfire echoed in the background.

## 5,000 Tourists Rescued in Himachal's Kullu Amid Heavy Snowfall

TPN Correspondent  
Kullu Dec 29

Around 5,000 tourists stranded in Solang Nala, a popular ski resort in Himachal Pradesh's Kullu, were rescued on Friday following heavy snowfall in the region. The Kullu police launched a rescue operation on December 27 after approximately 1,000 vehicles, carrying tourists and other travelers, became stuck due to the snow. "Due to fresh snowfall on December 27, about

1,000 vehicles, including those carrying around 5,000 tourists, were stranded in Solang Nala. Kullu Police successfully rescued the tourists and transported them to safe locations. The rescue operation is ongoing," the Kullu police stated in a post on X.

The ongoing snowfall has caused widespread disruptions across the state, with the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issuing an orange alert for heavy snowfall and cold waves on December 27 and 28. Himachal Pradesh has

been experiencing intense weather conditions, particularly in the districts of Lahaul-Spiti, Chamba, Kangra, Kullu, Shimla, and Kinnaur. The IMD forecasted that from December 29 onwards, a renewed cold wave will affect the plains, including Bilaspur, Hamirpur, and Una districts. Mandi, Kullu, and Chamba are also expected to face severe cold conditions until January 1. Dense fog is predicted for isolated areas on January 1, further complicating travel with reduced visibility.







# Bhutan Holds Special Prayers for Manmohan Singh, King Attends Funeral in Delhi

Bhutan paid tribute to former Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with special prayers and ceremonies on Saturday, following his passing. King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck led the nation in honoring Dr. Singh, attending his funeral in Delhi, a day after offering prayers at a Buddhist monastery in Thimphu.

Separate prayer ceremonies were held across all 20 Dzongkhags (districts) of Bhutan in his memory, the Bhutan government confirmed. The royal family, along with senior government officials, participated in the ceremonies, which included lighting a thousand butter lamps at Thimphu's Kuenrey of Tashichhodzong, led by the King. Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, Indian Ambassador Sudhakar Dalela, and members of the Bhutanese royal family were also present.

As a mark of respect, Bhutan's national flag was flown at half-mast throughout the country and at its embassies and consulates worldwide. "As a mark of respect to the late former prime minister and in solidarity with the government and people of India, all national flags across the country and at Bhutan's embassies, missions, and consulates abroad are being flown at half-mast," the Bhutanese government stated.

On Saturday, King Wangchuck attended



Dr. Singh's funeral at Nigambodh Ghat in Delhi, paying his respects in person. Dr. Singh, who served as India's prime minister from 2004 to 2014, was widely regarded as the architect of India's economic reforms. He passed away on Thursday at the age of 92 at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). Under Dr. Singh's leadership, India-Bhutan relations flourished, particularly in

the areas of trade and hydro-power cooperation. The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, signed in 1949 and renewed in 2007 during Dr. Singh's tenure, remains the foundation of strong India-Bhutan ties. The cooperation in hydro-power development, underpinned by agreements made during his time as prime minister, continues to be a key element of the bilateral relationship.



## What OpenAI Whistleblower Suchir Balaji's Mother Said About His Death

Suchir Balaji, a former researcher at OpenAI, was found dead in his San Francisco apartment last month. Known for his criticism of the company, Balaji had accused OpenAI of violating copyright laws, particularly in its use of internet-sourced data to train its AI models. His tragic death came just a month after he publicly shared his concerns.

In an interview with Business Insider, Balaji's mother, Poornima Ramarao, spoke about her son's growing disillusionment with OpenAI and the factors that led to his decision to leave the company. She revealed that Balaji believed OpenAI had deviated from its original mission, moving away from being a nonprofit, open-source initiative to a more commercially-driven organization. His concerns deepened as OpenAI launched ChatGPT, a product built with the data he had contributed to for GPT-4. Ramarao said her son felt that artificial intelligence posed a danger to humanity. The ideological clash between his values and OpenAI's corporate direction ultimately led him to resign in August.



## Donald Trump Hints at Potential Meeting with Bill Gates in Message to Elon Musk

President-elect Donald Trump has sparked speculation with a recent post on Truth Social, suggesting that Bill Gates may soon meet him at Mar-a-Lago. The post also included a warm reference to Elon Musk's son, X Æ A-Xii, and expressed enthusiasm for an upcoming New Year's Eve celebration.

Reports indicate that Gates has indeed reached out to Trump's transition team to discuss a potential meeting, though details remain unclear. This follows a series of meetings between Trump and various tech CEOs since his November election victory.

Trump's relationships with tech leaders have garnered significant attention, particularly after naming Musk as co-leader of his government efficiency initiative. However, Musk has faced criticism from some Trump supporters due to his backing of a visa program that allows highly skilled foreign workers to immigrate to the U.S.

The meeting between Trump and Gates would not be their first. They initially met in December 2016, before Trump's first presidential term. Since his recent election win, Trump has engaged with several tech leaders and business executives, with many hoping to align their companies with the incoming administration's policies. These meetings often focus on issues such as reshoring manufacturing jobs and addressing regulatory concerns, with CEOs hoping to start their relationship with the new president on a positive note.



## Indian-Americans Condemn Racist Attacks on Donald Trump's AI Appointee Sriram Krishnan

Indian-American community leaders have strongly condemned the racist attacks on Sriram Krishnan, who was recently appointed by President-elect Donald Trump as Senior AI Advisor. The attacks, which targeted Krishnan's Indian origin, have been denounced by groups including Indiaspora, emphasizing that there is no place for racial discrimination in public discourse.

In a media advisory issued on Saturday, the Indian-American diaspora expressed its support for Krishnan, condemning the "reprehensible racist attacks" directed at him. "There is absolutely no place in our public discourse for spiteful, vengeful, racially motivated, ad hominem epithets," the statement said. It reiterated the community's strong endorsement of Krishnan's appointment, expressing confidence in his ability to serve the country effectively. Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna also spoke out against those attacking Krishnan over his Indian heritage. He stressed that the United States' ability to attract talent from around the world is a testament to its "exceptionalism," which sets it apart from countries like China. "It is great that talent around the world wants to come here, not to China, and that Sriram can rise to the highest levels," Khanna wrote on X, referring to the concept of "American exceptionalism."

Krishnan, who was nominated by Trump as Senior Policy Advisor for Artificial Intelligence at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, acknowledged the opportunity and expressed his gratitude. Trump announced the appointment on Truth Social, highlighting Krishnan's extensive background in technology and his work with companies like Microsoft, Meta, and X. Krishnan previously served as a General Partner at Andreessen Horowitz and invested in prominent firms like SpaceX and Figma. Krishnan holds a Bachelor of Technology in Information Technology from SRM Engineering College, Anna University.



## Issued Over 1 Million Nonimmigrant Visas To Indians For 2nd Year: US Embassy

The US mission in India announced on Friday that it issued over one million nonimmigrant visas in 2024, marking the second consecutive year of surpassing this milestone. This includes a record number of visitor visas, reflecting the growing demand among Indians for travel to the US for tourism, business, and education.

In the past four years, the number of Indian visitors to the US has increased fivefold, with over two million Indians traveling to the US in the first 11 months of 2024, a 26% rise from the previous year. The embassy also highlighted the success of a pilot program allowing Indian H-1B visa holders to renew their visas without leaving the US, with plans to formalize this process in 2025. Additionally, the mission issued tens of thousands of immigrant visas, contributing to family reunification and the migration of skilled professionals. India continues to be the top sender of international students to the US, with over 331,000 students studying there in 2024, marking the highest number since the 2008/2009 academic year.

# Putin Apologizes to Azerbaijan Over Plane Crash in Russian Airspace



Russian President Vladimir Putin has issued an apology to Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev following the tragic crash of an Azerbaijan Airlines passenger plane in Russian airspace on Wednesday. The plane, Flight J2-8243, crashed in a fiery explosion near Aktau in Kazakhstan after diverting from southern Russia, where Ukrainian drone attacks were reported in several cities.

The incident, which resulted in the deaths of at least 38 people, occurred after the plane attempted to land at Grozny Airport in Chechnya. As the aircraft was attempting to land, Ukrainian drones were reportedly attacking cities including Grozny, Mozdok, and Vladikavkaz. Russian air defense systems successfully repelled these attacks, but the plane was forced to divert from its intended route.

In a statement released by the Kremlin on Saturday, President Putin extended his "deep and sincere condolences" to the families of the victims and wished a speedy recovery to the injured passengers. "President Vladimir Putin apologised for the tragic incident that occurred in Russian airspace," the statement read.

The plane was originally traveling on its scheduled route when it encountered difficulties, prompting multiple attempts to land at Grozny airport. Despite the efforts, the aircraft tragically crashed, sparking a ball of fire upon impact near the city of Aktau in Kazakhstan.

The Azerbaijani authorities are investigating the incident, while Putin's apology marks a significant diplomatic gesture following the tragedy. The crash has raised concerns over the safety of air travel in the region amid ongoing conflicts.



## Cochin Shipyard Secures ₹450 Crore Tug Boat Order from Adani Ports

Cochin Shipyard Ltd (CSL) has secured an order from Adani Ports and Special Economic Zones (SEZ) for eight new tug boats, marking a significant expansion of the latter's maritime fleet. The deal, valued at an estimated ₹450 crore, was confirmed through a BSE filing on December 27. The order is categorized as "Significant," ranging between ₹200 to ₹500 crore.

The eight tug boats will be 70 T Bollard Pull ASD (Azimuthing Stern Drive) Tugs and will be delivered by Udupi Cochin Shipyard Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of CSL. The first batch of deliveries is scheduled to begin in December 2026, with the entire order expected to be completed by August 2028.

This order is part of Adani Group's strategy to bolster its fleet and enhance its presence in the Indian maritime sector. With the new tugs, Adani Ports aims to increase its fleet size to 152 tug boats by the end of the project. Ashwani Gupta, Whole-time Director and CEO of Adani Ports and SEZ, expressed confidence in CSL's capabilities, stating, "This collaboration to procure from Cochin Shipyard Ltd signifies our commitment to enhancing



maritime infrastructure in India and demonstrates our confidence in our nation's PSUs. By leveraging local manufacturing capabilities, which are world-class, we aim to contribute to the 'Make in India' initiative while ensuring that our operations meet international standards of safety and efficiency." Following the announcement, Adani Ports and SEZ's shares closed 1.06% lower at ₹1,230.75, while Cochin Shipyard shares surged by 5%, closing at ₹1,532.10. The order follows a previous deal in which CSL is already constructing three similar tugs for Adani, further strengthening the ongoing collaboration between the two companies.

## BluSmart Set to Launch EV-Cab Service in Mumbai with Exclusive Invite-Only Registrations

BluSmart, the Gurugram-based electric vehicle (EV) cab service provider, is set to expand its operations to Mumbai, marking its first entry into the city. The company announced on Saturday, December 28, that it will begin operations in Mumbai on January 1, 2025, offering a premium, invite-only experience to select users.

In a post on the social media platform X, BluSmart teased the launch, stating, "Mumbai, we're arriving soon—exclusively for a select few to experience it before everyone else." The company revealed that its services will initially be available to a limited group of users, giving them an exclusive chance to experience the new EV cab service ahead of the general rollout. BluSmart's announcement emphasized the promise of a reliable, safe, and punctual travel experience. The company added, "Starting January 1, 2025, BluSmart is here to make your journeys reliable, safer, and always on time. After months of dedication and hard work, we're excited to bring this dream to life in your city." As part of the exclusive launch, BluSmart is offering an invite-only program, allowing users to be among the first to enjoy its premium rides. To gain access to the service, potential users must fill out a form providing basic details such as their name, phone number, and email address. Those selected will then receive an invite



to join the premium rides experience before the service is widely available.

BluSmart, founded in 2019, operates a fleet of over 7,600 EV cabs and has completed more than 21 million rides across Delhi NCR and Bengaluru. The company owns all the vehicles in its fleet and employs drivers on monthly salaries, distinguishing it from competitors like Uber and Ola. Additionally, BluSmart has developed its own charging infrastructure, known as BluSmart Charge, to support its operations. With the upcoming launch in Mumbai, BluSmart is poised to make a significant impact in the city's growing EV market, providing an eco-friendly and reliable transportation option for its residents.

## Vodafone Group Clears Rs 11,650 Crore Dues, Releases Pledge on Vodafone Idea Shares

Vodafone Group has cleared outstanding dues of approximately Rs 11,650 crore (about 109 million pounds) that were raised against shares of Vodafone Idea, according to a regulatory filing.

The UK-based telecom giant had previously pledged nearly its entire stake

in Vodafone Idea (VIL) to secure the debt raised by entities based in Mauritius and India. The pledge was made in favor of HSBC Corporate Trustee Company (UK).

As per the filing, on December 27, 2024, HSBC Corporate Trustee Company (UK) Limited, acting as the security trustee for the lenders, released the pledges following the repayment of the outstanding dues owed by the Vodafone Promoter Shareholders.

This move resulted in the release of the



indirect encumbrance on 15,720,826,860 equity shares of Vodafone Idea, which represent 22.56% of the company's fully diluted share capital.

The value of these shares is approximately Rs 11,649 crore, based on Vodafone Idea's stock closing at Rs 7.41 per share on Friday.

As of September 30, 2024, Vodafone Group holds a 22.56% stake in Vodafone Idea, while the Aditya Birla Group owns 14.76%, and the government holds a 23.15% stake.

## India's Forex Reserves Decline by \$8.4 Billion to \$644.3 Billion: RBI

India's foreign exchange reserves have experienced a significant decline, falling by \$8.478 billion to \$644.391 billion for the week ending December 20, 2024, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday. This follows a decrease of \$1.988 billion in the previous week, marking a continued downtrend in the country's forex reserves.

The decline has been attributed to a combination of factors, including the revaluation of reserves and interventions in the foreign exchange market by the RBI to stabilize the rupee amidst market fluctuations. At their peak, India's forex reserves had reached a record high of \$704.885 billion at the end of September 2024.

For the week ending December 20, foreign currency assets, which form a major component of the reserves, fell by \$6.014 billion, bringing the total to \$556.562 billion. These assets reflect the effect of changes in the value of non-US currencies such as the euro, pound, and yen, which are part of India's forex holdings.

In addition to the drop in foreign currency assets, India's gold reserves decreased by \$2.33 billion to \$65.726 billion



during the same period. The country's Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were also down by \$112 million, falling to \$17.885 billion. India's reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) saw a slight decline of \$23 million, bringing it to \$4.217 billion.

The steady reduction in forex reserves comes amid ongoing efforts by the RBI to manage the rupee's volatility and maintain economic stability.

## RBI's New UPI Rule Set to Transform Digital Payments in India

In a significant move to enhance the digital payment ecosystem in India, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently announced that users of prepaid payment instruments (PPIs) will now be able to use third-party applications for UPI transactions. This shift is expected to greatly improve the flexibility and convenience of digital payments across the country.

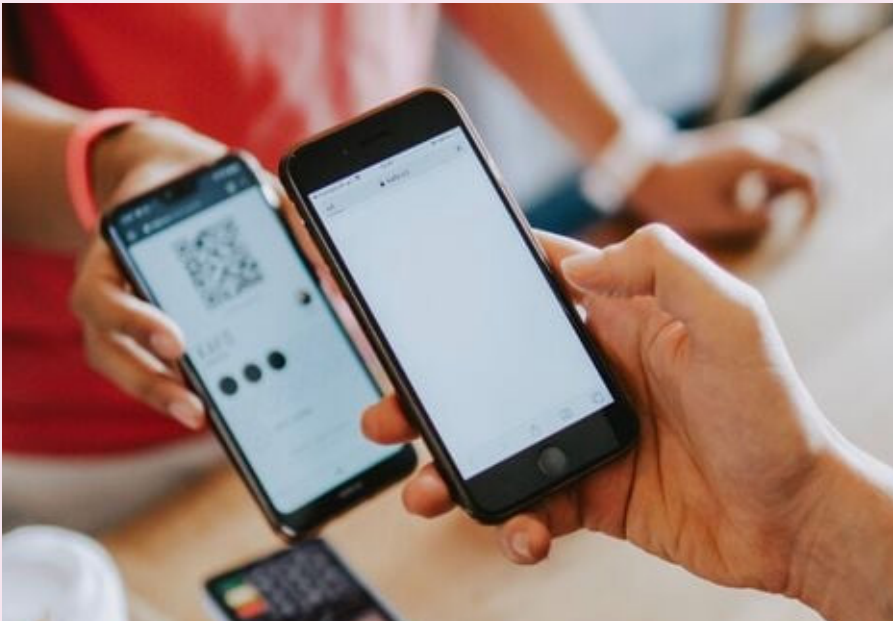
To understand the implications of this decision, it's important to first differentiate between two key digital payment systems: Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs).

UPI vs PPIs: What's the Difference?

UPI, which stands for Unified Payments Interface, is a real-time payment system that allows users to send money directly between bank accounts. UPI apps, such as Google Pay, BHIM, and PhonePe, enable seamless bank-to-bank transfers via mobile numbers and QR codes. UPI transactions are instant and linked directly to a user's bank account.

In contrast, Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) are essentially mobile wallets, like MobiKwik or Paytm, that store prepaid balances which can be used for transactions within the same app or ecosystem. PPIs are not directly linked to bank accounts, meaning users can only transfer funds within the same platform or wallet, restricting interoperability.

This is where the RBI's new rule comes into play. Until now, users of PPIs could only make UPI transactions using the UPI functionality offered by the PPI provider itself. For example, MobiKwik users could only use its own "Pocket UPI" to make transfers, while PhonePe users were restricted to using BHIM for UPI payments. The new rule, however, breaks down this limitation and allows users to link their PPI accounts with third-party UPI apps.



### The Impact of the New Rule

Under the new guidelines, which were officially rolled out on December 27, 2024, users of PPIs like MobiKwik and PhonePe will be able to make UPI payments through any third-party UPI application. This means that a MobiKwik user can now make UPI payments using Google Pay or PhonePe, and vice versa. This will enhance the interoperability between various payment systems, offering users greater flexibility in making digital payments. The change follows a statement made by the RBI in April 2024, which outlined plans to enable interoperability for PPIs through third-party UPI apps. Prior to this, PPIs were limited to using only

the UPI functionality provided by the respective PPI issuers. The RBI's latest move is seen as a step toward creating a more inclusive and accessible digital payment system.

### Benefits for Consumers and the Digital Economy

This development is expected to significantly streamline the digital payment process for users who rely on mobile wallets. By allowing PPIs to integrate with third-party UPI apps, users will now have access to a broader range of payment options, eliminating the need to stick to a single platform. It will also pave the way for easier transfers between different platforms, making it simpler for users to make payments or transfer funds across wallets.

Furthermore, this increased interoperability will help drive the adoption of digital payments across India, especially in semi-urban and rural areas where mobile wallets have a large user base. By providing more payment options and flexibility, the new rule is expected to further empower millions of consumers and boost digital transaction volumes in the country.

The RBI's move is part of a broader push to promote digital financial inclusion and reduce cash dependency in India. It not only benefits users but also strengthens the overall digital infrastructure, positioning India as a leader in digital payments globally. As the country moves towards greater financial digitization, such regulatory changes will continue to shape the future of the payments landscape.

With this latest update, the RBI has once again proven its commitment to improving the ease of conducting financial transactions for millions of Indians, while fostering a more interconnected and efficient digital payments ecosystem.



# Nitish Reddy Brings Pushpa’s “Thaggedhe Le” Spirit to Cricket

The cricket pitch often serves as a theater of human resilience and flair, and Nitish Kumar Reddy has infused it with cinematic magic. In a moment that felt straight out of a blockbuster, the young Indian cricketer brought the iconic “Thaggedhe Le” spirit from Pushpa: The Rise to the Melbourne Cricket Ground during the Boxing Day Test against Australia. Just as Allu Arjun’s Pushpa Raj embodies defiance and grit, Reddy mirrored those qualities in a thrilling display of determination under pressure. Walking in with India teetering at 191/6, Reddy faced the Australian bowling attack with nerves of steel. His innings were a masterclass in resilience, culminating in a maiden Test half-century that electrified the crowd. He reached the milestone with a crisp boundary off Mitchell Starc, and then came the moment that lit up social media—a celebratory “Thaggedhe Le” pose, bat raised, capturing the fiery spirit of Pushpa Raj. Even cricketing legend Sunil Gavaskar couldn’t resist a nod to the iconic gesture, quipping with a smile, “O... Pushpa.” For fans, particularly those from Andhra Pradesh, this moment carried immense pride. Reddy, hailing from the Telugu heartland, has quickly become a symbol of regional representation on cricket’s grandest stages. Currently the third-highest run-scorer for India in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, he’s shown an uncanny knack for thriving in high-pressure situations,



turning adversity into opportunity. With every stroke of his bat and every celebration, Reddy blends athletic excellence with cultural homage, crafting a narrative that resonates deeply with fans worldwide. As his journey unfolds, it’s evident that Nitish Kumar Reddy is destined for greatness. His ability to channel the fighting spirit of Pushpa Raj—unapologetically fierce, unyielding, and charismatic—is winning hearts on and off the field. If he continues this trajectory, not only will he etch his name in cricket’s record books, but he will also inspire a new generation of athletes to embrace their individuality and draw strength from their roots. The cricketing world now watches with bated breath as Reddy’s story gains momentum. One thing is certain: this young star is here to stay, wielding his bat with the same confidence as Pushpa Raj and leaving an indelible mark on the game for years to come. “Thaggedhe Le” isn’t just a pose; it’s a statement—and Nitish Kumar Reddy has made it his own.

# “Kurchi Madathapetti” Conquers Global Music Charts

The phenomenal rise of “Kurchi Madathapetti” highlights the unstoppable ascent of Indian cinema and music on the world stage. Once in a while, a song emerges that transcends boundaries, becoming a global sensation. In 2024, that song was none other than “Kurchi Madathapetti” from the blockbuster Guntur Karam. Starring the ever-enigmatic Superstar Mahesh Babu and helmed by ace director Trivikram, the film was a wholesome family entertainer. Yet, it was this electrifying track that stole the spotlight, propelling the movie to international acclaim and lighting up global music charts with its infectious energy. Released as a Sankranti treat, Guntur Karam received a mix of applause and critique. But amid the chatter, “Kurchi Madathapetti” stood out as a cultural phenomenon. With Thaman’s pulsating beats, mesmerizing choreography, and Mahesh Babu’s magnetic screen presence, the song didn’t just climb YouTube’s global charts—it skyrocketed, breaking records and crossing borders. No longer confined to its Telugu roots, it resonated universally, earning its place among the most celebrated songs of the year. The track’s success is a powerful testament to the expanding reach of Indian cinema and



its music. Rarely does a regional song gain this level of international recognition, but “Kurchi Madathapetti” shattered barriers, showcasing the growing curiosity and appreciation for diverse art forms worldwide. Produced by Haarika & Hassine Creations, the song’s meteoric rise underscores the universal appeal of compelling music and visuals, proving yet again that great art speaks to everyone. As digital platforms continue to erase boundaries, the stage is set for more regional creations to shine on the global stage. “Kurchi Madathapetti” serves as a shining example of Telugu cinema’s boundless potential and sets the bar high for future collaborations. With the world hungry for unique stories and sounds, it’s only a matter of time before another Thaman-Mahesh Babu masterpiece takes the world by storm. For now, “Kurchi Madathapetti” remains a dazzling jewel in Telugu cinema’s crown, promising a golden era of global triumphs.

# Man Jumps Out as Truck Skids on Icy Road in Manali, Falls into Valley



Himachal Pradesh’s recent heavy snowfall has created a picturesque winter landscape but also posed significant dangers for drivers. A video circulating on social media captures a dramatic moment in Manali, where a small truck lost control on an icy road and skidded into the Solang Valley. The footage shows the truck sliding uncontrollably on the snow-covered road as snowflakes swirl around. In a split second, the driver leaps from the moving vehicle, narrowly avoiding a catastrophic fall. Initially attempting to halt the truck, the driver slips on the ice, and within moments, the vehicle tumbles into the valley below. This incident follows a similar one earlier in the month near the Atal Tunnel, which connects Manali to the Lahaul-Spiti Valley. In that case, a Mahindra Thar also skidded off a snow-laden road, with the driver managing to escape by jumping out just in time. This week, fresh snowfall in Manali led to over 1,000 vehicles becoming stranded between Solang and Atal Tunnel. The Kullu police launched a large-scale rescue operation to assist approximately 5,000 tourists trapped by



the snowfall. Emergency teams were seen helping travelers navigate through the heavy snow to safety. “Due to fresh snowfall, about 1,000 vehicles and around 5,000 tourists were stuck in Solang Nala. The Kullu Police have rescued them and taken them to safe locations. The rescue operation is ongoing,” the police posted on social media. In addition to the traffic disruptions, over 200 roads, including three national highways, have been closed across Himachal Pradesh. The areas most affected include Shimla, Lahaul-Spiti, and Kullu. The heavy snowfall has also caused significant power outages, with more than 170 transformers disrupted across the state.

# Delhi Records Highest Single-Day December Rainfall in 101 Years

Delhi experienced its heaviest single-day rainfall in December in over a century, recording 41.2 mm of rain in the 24 hours leading up to 8:30 am on Saturday. This marks the highest December rainfall in 101 years, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The previous record for the highest single-day rainfall in December was set on December 3, 1923, with 75.7 mm of rain. This downpour also placed December 2024 among the top five wettest months of December in Delhi’s history, making it the fifth-highest since records began in 1901. The IMD noted that the 24-hour rainfall total at Safdarjung station was the second-highest on record. On Saturday, Delhi woke up to an overcast sky, with the IMD forecasting more light to moderate rain throughout the day and issuing a yellow alert. The rainfall is being driven by an active western disturbance interacting with easterly winds, affecting Northwest and Central India, including Delhi-NCR. The minimum temperature on Saturday was recorded at 12.7°C, six degrees above the season’s average, providing some relief from the usual winter chill. In terms of air quality, Delhi saw an improvement, with the



Air Quality Index (AQI) moving into the ‘moderate’ category. At 9 am on Saturday, the AQI stood at 152, according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board. AQI values between 101 and 200 are classified as ‘moderate,’ indicating a slight health concern for sensitive individuals. The unusual weather patterns this December highlight the ongoing shifts in climate, with the IMD continuing to monitor conditions closely.

# Bengaluru Woman Skips Long Queue at CTR by Ordering Dosas on Zomato

A Bengaluru woman recently shared a creative way to avoid the long queues at the city’s popular Central Tiffin Room (CTR) by ordering dosas online through Zomato and having them delivered directly to her car parked outside the restaurant. In a post on X, user @artbyahbuna explained that she had a tight schedule but was craving CTR’s famous dosas. Rather than waiting over 40 minutes for a table, she placed an order for delivery to the street right outside. Her dosas arrived in just 25 minutes, and she enjoyed her meal from the comfort of her car, making it just in time for her movie. While the plan worked well in saving time, there were a few downsides. In a follow-up post, the woman noted that she missed the in-restaurant experience and that her order came with only one chutney instead of two. Additionally, there was no cutlery provided. The post quickly went viral, receiving over 103K views, as users praised the woman’s clever solution. One user commented, “What an idea sir ji,” while another wrote, “When you use 100% of your brains.” Many shared their own similar



experiences of using takeaway to bypass long queues, with some mentioning they’ve been doing it since the COVID-19 pandemic. This clever hack to beat the long restaurant lines has sparked a conversation about how online food delivery is transforming dining experiences.



# Gus Atkinson, Saim Ayub, Shamar Joseph, Kamindu Mendis Up for ICC Men’s Emerging Cricketer of the Year

The nominees for the prestigious ICC Men’s Emerging Cricketer of the Year Award 2024 have been announced, with exciting young talents from around the globe in the running. Gus Atkinson (England), Kamindu Mendis (Sri Lanka), Saim Ayub (Pakistan), and Shamar Joseph (West Indies) have all earned nominations for their exceptional performances over the past year.

Gus Atkinson, the English pacer, has made an impressive mark since his debut in July, during James Anderson’s final Test. The 26-year-old’s stunning performance at Lord’s against the West Indies, where he took a career-best 7/45 followed by a five-wicket haul in the second innings, helped him record the fourth-best debut figures in men’s Test cricket history. Atkinson has since become a key figure in England’s pace attack, claiming 34 wickets in home Tests and contributing to the team’s historic series win in New Zealand. He also showcased his batting prowess with a brilliant 101-ball century against Sri Lanka.

Kamindu Mendis has been a revelation in Sri Lanka’s batting lineup, notching up 1,049 runs in nine Tests this year, including five centuries. His remarkable consistency saw him equal Sir Don Bradman’s record of reaching 1,000 Test runs in just 13 innings. Mendis’s career-best knock of 182 against New Zealand played a vital role in Sri Lanka’s 2-0 series win and bolstered their World Test Championship campaign. He also impressed with 267 runs in England, contributing to Sri Lanka’s first Test victory in England in a decade.

Saim Ayub of Pakistan, aged just 22, has captivated the cricket world with his fearless batting at the top of the order. Ayub’s contributions were pivotal in Pakistan’s successful series wins against Australia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. He scored two centuries in South Africa, earning the Player of the Series award in the process. Ayub also impressed with the ball, taking five wickets in ODIs at an economy rate of 4.63. His match-winning knock of 109 against South Africa in a tense chase exemplified his



all-round abilities.

Shamar Joseph, the 22-year-old West Indies pacer, has emerged as one of the most promising talents in world cricket. Joseph’s debut in Australia saw him play a crucial role in the West Indies’ first Test win in Australia since 1997. He took 13 wickets in just two Tests, including two five-wicket hauls. His brilliant 7/68 at the Gabba, delivered through pain, was key to securing a historic eight-run win for the West Indies. Joseph continued his strong form with 12 wickets in home series against Bangladesh and South Africa.

These four emerging stars have taken the cricketing world by storm, and their exceptional performances in 2024 have earned them nominations for one of the most coveted individual awards in the sport. The winner will be announced as part of the ICC Men’s Awards later this year.

# Gutsy Nitish Reddy’s Maiden Ton Keeps India Afloat vs Australia

Nitish Reddy, a relatively unknown entity in Test cricket before the Border-Gavaskar series, emerged as India’s savior on Day 3 of the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne, playing a gutsy knock that took India to 358/9. His unbeaten 105 not only gave India a fighting chance but also severely dented Australia’s hopes of securing an early win. Despite being 116 runs behind Australia’s first-innings total of 474, Reddy’s dogged century ensured that India remained in the contest, with rain bringing an early end to play.

Reddy’s stellar performance was pivotal in India’s recovery, especially after the dismissal of Rishabh Pant, whose rash shot left India struggling at 191/6. The 21-year-old Andhra Pradesh cricketer’s innings was a masterclass in resilience. His 127-run partnership with Washington Sundar (50 off 162 balls) helped India claw back into the game, shifting the momentum in their favor. The young batter’s composure under pressure drew praise from cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar, who hailed it as one of the greatest knocks in Test history, given the circumstances. As Reddy neared his maiden Test century, the tension rose. He could have been stranded on 99 when Jasprit Bumrah was dismissed, leaving Reddy to face the Australian bowlers with last-man Mohammed Siraj at the crease. Despite the pressure, Siraj survived three deliveries, allowing Reddy to bring up his hundred in style.

A picture-perfect straight drive off Scott Boland marked the moment of triumph, and Reddy took a knee, helmet in hand, acknowledging



the Indian dug-out, which rose in appreciation. The celebration was pure drama—Reddy struck a ‘Pushpa’ pose after reaching fifty and later mimicked the ‘Bahubali’ stance to celebrate his century. Reddy’s father, Muthyala, watching from the stands, was overcome with emotion as his son reached the milestone, reflecting on the family’s sacrifices. A decade ago, when Reddy’s father took a financial risk to support his son’s cricketing dreams, many advised against it, but today, Reddy’s performances are proving them right.

With 10 boundaries and a six, Reddy’s attacking game was evident. His stable defense and calculated aggression underlined his maturity, making him India’s most consistent batter of the series. His performance has not only kept India in the game but also provided hope that they can turn the match around at the MCG.

# Shreyanka Patil Nominated for ICC Women’s Emerging Cricketer of the Year 2024

India’s all-rounder Shreyanka Patil has been nominated for the ICC Women’s Emerging Cricketer of the Year 2024, joining Annerie Dercksen (South Africa), Saskia Horley (Scotland), and Freya Sargent (Ireland) as candidates for the prestigious award. Patil’s rise in international cricket has been impressive since her debut in December 2023. A dependable bowler, she has delivered consistently in high-pressure situations across white-ball formats. Patil’s performances in the Women’s T20 Asia Cup and the ICC Women’s T20 World Cup have established her as a key player for India. Her standout moment came in a must-win World Cup match against Pakistan, where she claimed figures of 2/14, helping restrict Pakistan to 105/8 and keeping India’s hopes alive in the tournament. Patil’s economical bowling, including a wicket-maiden, was crucial in the team’s success.

Annerie Dercksen has made a remarkable transition from academia to international cricket. A teacher by profession, the 23-year-old has quickly become a vital player for South Africa. She was instrumental in South Africa’s run to the ICC Women’s T20 World Cup final in 2024, contributing with both bat and ball. Her match-winning innings of 44 off 23 balls against Pakistan in a T20I series decider was a highlight. Saskia Horley has made history for Scotland,



notably scoring the country’s first-ever century in Women’s ODIs. She has been a consistent performer with both bat and ball, leading Scotland to victory with a 100-run knock and four-wicket haul in an ODI tri-series. At just 18 years old, Freya Sargent has quickly established herself as a key player for Ireland. Her match-winning performances, including career-best figures of 3/29 in ODIs and 3/30 in T20Is, have made her one of the most exciting young talents in international cricket. The winner of the ICC Women’s Emerging Cricketer of the Year Award will be announced later this year, celebrating the rise of these promising young stars in women’s cricket.

# New Zealand Stuns Sri Lanka with Thrilling 8-Run Victory in First T20I

New Zealand completed a remarkable turnaround to defeat Sri Lanka by eight runs in the first T20I in Mount Maunganui, taking a 1-0 lead in the series. Sri Lanka, chasing a target of 173, appeared to be cruising at 121 for 0, but a dramatic collapse saw them fall short, ending their innings at 164 for 8. The pivotal moment in the match came in the 14th over when New Zealand’s Jacob

Duffy delivered a game-changing spell, taking three wickets in a single over. Duffy first had Kusal Mendis (46) caught behind, before dismissing Kusal Perera and Kamindu Mendis for ducks on consecutive deliveries, reducing Sri Lanka to 121 for 3. Duffy’s figures of 4-0-21-3 helped break the chase wide open, and although Sri Lanka still had seven wickets in hand with 29 runs required from the last three overs, they couldn’t recover. Young pacer Zakary Foulkes struck another blow when Charith Asalanka pulled a short delivery straight into the hands of deep square leg. Despite Bhanuka Rajapaksa surviving a DRS review for an LBW decision, he hit back-to-back boundaries in the 18th over, keeping Sri Lanka’s hopes alive. However, Tim Robinson’s stunning catch dismissed Nissanka (90), and Matt Henry



sent Rajapaksa packing in the penultimate over. Foulkes sealed the win by taking the final two wickets, including a run-out to dismiss Wanindu Hasaranga, as New Zealand triumphed. Earlier, New Zealand’s batting was under pressure after losing early wickets, but Daryl Mitchell (62) and Michael Bracewell (59) rescued the team with a 110-run partnership. Despite being 65 for 5 at the halfway point, the pair guided New Zealand to a competitive total of 172/8, which ultimately proved to be enough.

**Brief Scores:**  
New Zealand 172/8 in 20 overs (Daryl Mitchell 62, Michael Bracewell 59; Binura Fernando 2-22, Maheesh Theekshana 2-29)  
Sri Lanka 164/8 in 20 overs (Pathum Nissanka 90, Kusal Mendis 46; Jacob Duffy 3-21, Matt Henry 2-28)  
New Zealand won by 8 runs.





## Massive 256-Foot Ram Charan Cutout to Be Unveiled Today in Vijayawada

Ahead of the grand release of Global Star Ram Charan's much-anticipated film *Game Changer*, promotional activities are reaching new heights, and fans are in for a spectacular treat. Today, on December 29, the biggest-ever cutout of Ram Charan in India will be unveiled at Vajra Grounds, Brindhavan Colony, Vijayawada.

Scheduled to begin at 3 PM, the event is expected to draw a large crowd, as fans gather to witness this colossal display celebrating the star. For those interested in attending, entry passes are available, and inquiries can be directed to +91 6281-352987.

Directed by renowned filmmaker Shankar, *Game Changer* features Ram Charan in a leading role alongside actress Kiara Advani. The film has



been generating excitement ever since its announcement, with the teaser and music, composed by Thaman, already making waves among audiences.

With the film's release set for January 10, promotional efforts have intensified, and this massive cutout unveiling marks one of the many milestones in the lead-up to the grand event. Industry insiders have high expectations for *Game Changer*, given Shankar's proven track record of delivering blockbuster films.

Fans and film enthusiasts alike are eagerly anticipating what promises to be another monumental success for Ram Charan and the team behind *Game Changer*.

## Sankranthi Showdown: Epic Trailers to Drop Soon!



As the New Year approaches, the first week of 2024 promises to be a cinematic spectacle with the release of highly anticipated trailers for Sankranthi blockbusters. The festival season is gearing up for a fierce showdown, with three major films vying for audience attention, each aiming to make a lasting impact.

The trailers, currently in the final stages of post-production, are set to be unveiled soon. With digital intermediate (DI) work and background scores nearing completion, excitement is building to a fever pitch as fans eagerly await their first glimpses of these cinematic heavyweights.

Ram Charan's *Game Changer* is expected to lead the pack with its trailer dropping on January 4. The film, already generating significant buzz, is rumored to feature a lengthy trailer exceeding three minutes. Known for its serious themes and captivating songs, *Game Changer* has piqued curiosity with Ram Charan's dual roles. Fans are keen to see how the trailer expands on the intriguing glimpses shared so far.

Nandamuri Balakrishna's *Daaku Maharaj* might surprise fans by releasing its trailer earlier, adding to the festival fervor. Shrouded in mystery, this film has revealed little about its plot or characters, making the trailer a highly anticipated revelation. Early reports suggest an emotional narrative paired with intense action, ensuring it will stand out in the Sankranthi lineup.

Meanwhile, the collaboration between Venkatesh and director Anil Ravipudi in *Sankranthi* is also generating significant excitement. With two hit songs already released, the film's trailer is expected to arrive by January 5 or 6, possibly coinciding with a grand release event in Andhra Pradesh. The trailer will focus on the hero and his dual love interests, offering a clear insight into the film's storyline and tone.

With these powerhouse trailers ready to drop, Sankranthi is set to kickstart 2024 with unmatched excitement and cinematic brilliance. Fans can look forward to a thrilling festival season filled with action, drama, and entertainment.

## Telugu Films Take Over Top 10 Grossers List of 2024!

As 2024 comes to a close, Indian cinema has witnessed a remarkable year with films across various languages breaking records at the box office. Leading the pack is Allu Arjun's *Pushpa 2*, which emerged as the year's biggest blockbuster, grossing an astounding ₹1,705 crore worldwide. The film's massive success solidified Allu Arjun's status as a pan-India superstar.

Following closely is *Kalki 2898 AD*, featuring Prabhas, which garnered ₹1,200 crore in lifetime collections. The futuristic epic further cemented Prabhas's reputation as a global star. *Rajkummar Rao* and *Shraddha Kapoor*'s horror-comedy *Stree 2* secured the third spot with ₹874.58 crore, showcasing the continued appeal of genre-bending films.

Telugu cinema dominated the fourth spot as well, with Jr NTR's *Devara* raking in ₹521 crore. *Thalapathy Vijay*'s *GOAT* claimed fifth place, earning ₹456 crore, making it a significant hit in Tamil cinema. The list also includes *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* (₹417.51 crore), *Singham Again* (₹389.64 crore), *Fighter* (₹344.46 crore), and *Teja Sajja's Hanu-Man*, which impressed with ₹350 crore to secure the 10th position. Telugu films accounted for four of the top 10 entries, sharing the spotlight with four Hindi films



and two Tamil movies.

Looking ahead to 2025, the excitement continues to build with highly anticipated releases like *Kantara*, *War 2*, *Game Changer*, *Coolie*, and *Thug Life*. Given the current trajectory of Indian films and their ability to draw audiences, it's reasonable to predict that the upcoming year will bring even more spectacular box office performances and redefine cinematic boundaries in ways we have yet to imagine.

The success of these films highlights the growing appeal of pan-India storytelling, driven by high-octane action, compelling narratives, and strong performances. With 2025 just around the corner, the Indian box office promises even bigger spectacles.

## Vijay Deverakonda Ventures into Two-Part Cinema

In the ever-evolving film industry, innovation often comes with high stakes, and Vijay Deverakonda is stepping into uncharted territory with his next project. Producer Naga Vamsi recently announced that the film will be released in two parts, a move that raises both expectations and challenges for the actor. While two-part films are a proven formula for top-tier stars, this marks a daring venture for a tier-2 hero like Deverakonda.

Naga Vamsi underscored the enormity of the task, noting that keeping audiences engaged across two separate releases demands an extraordinary narrative and a compelling lead performance. Deverakonda's character must not only captivate but also sustain the audience's interest through the entire cinematic journey. This dual-part experiment is an unprecedented challenge for heroes in his league, who are now being presented with opportunities that traditionally belonged to A-list actors.

The stakes are undeniably high. Can Deverakonda deliver a performance powerful enough to bridge two films and draw audiences back for the sequel? The industry is watching closely, as his suc-



cess could reshape the opportunities available for emerging stars and inspire other tier-2 heroes to take similar risks.

If this ambitious project achieves its goals, it could signal a paradigm shift in Indian cinema, opening doors for tier-2 actors to venture into big-budget, multi-part storytelling. Vijay Deverakonda's ability to rise to the occasion will not only define the film's success but may also establish a new benchmark for aspiring stars in the industry. For now, all eyes are on him as he gears up to tackle this cinematic challenge head-on.

## Godari Gattu Shatters Records Ahead of Sankranthi Release



The lyrical video of *Godari Gattu*, a romantic melody from the highly anticipated film *Sankranthiki Vasthunnam*, is creating waves in the world of music and cinema. Released as part of the film's musical promotions, the song has set an incredible milestone, becoming the fastest track among senior heroes to cross 50 million views—achieved in just three weeks.

Composed by Bheems Ceciroleo, the song features vocals by celebrated composer-singer Ramana Gogula and folk sensation Madhu Priya. Bhaskarabhatla's evocative lyrics, paired with the endearing chemistry of lead actors Venkatesh and Aishwarya Rajesh, have struck a chord with audiences, making the track a viral hit across social media platforms, particularly Instagram Reels.

*Godari Gattu* beautifully captures the bond of a married couple, blending heartwarming visuals with an enchanting melody.

Fans have expressed their admiration for its refreshing portrayal of love, and the song's success highlights its universal appeal.

The song's popularity has set high expectations for the rest of the album. The second song, *Meenu*, has also been well-received, and excitement is building for the Pongal special track, set to release on December 30th.

*Godari Gattu* is a part of *Sankranthiki Vasthunnam*, directed by Anil Ravipudi and produced by Shirish under Dil Raju's presentation. Slated for release on January 14th, the film promises to be a festive entertainer, combining heartwarming moments and family drama.

With *Godari Gattu* already shattering records, the film's buzz continues to grow, and audiences eagerly await its Sankranthi debut.

## Ranbir's Daughter Raha Wins Hearts with Flying Kisses!

Proving that charm is truly in the genes, little Raha Kapoor, daughter of Bollywood's star couple Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt, has already captured hearts with her adorable antics. Unlike most celebrity kids who shy away from the paparazzi, Raha is a natural. The young Kapoor greeted photographers at the airport with a cheerful "hi" and followed it up with flying kisses, leaving everyone smitten.

The sweet moment unfolded as the Kapoor family was spotted jetting off for a cozy New Year getaway. Dressed in stylish winter casuals, the trio radiated warmth and happiness. Alia, snug in a chic jacket, and Ranbir, effortlessly cool in his laid-back attire, complemented their daughter's joyful presence. Raha's confident and endearing personality took center stage, making it a pic-

ture-perfect family outing.

While the family enjoys their holiday, work beckons the superstar parents. Alia is gearing up for her next big project, *Alpha*, which is already being hailed as a game-changer. Meanwhile, Ranbir is busy with the much-anticipated *Ramayanam Part 1*, a project that has fans buzzing with excitement.

Raha's heartwarming interaction serves as a reminder that amidst the glitz and glamour of Bollywood, it's the simple joys that truly shine. As she grows, her lively personality and effortless charm hint at a promising future. Could she be the next big star in the Kapoor legacy? Only time will tell, but for now, Raha Kapoor is stealing the spotlight, one flying kiss at a time!

