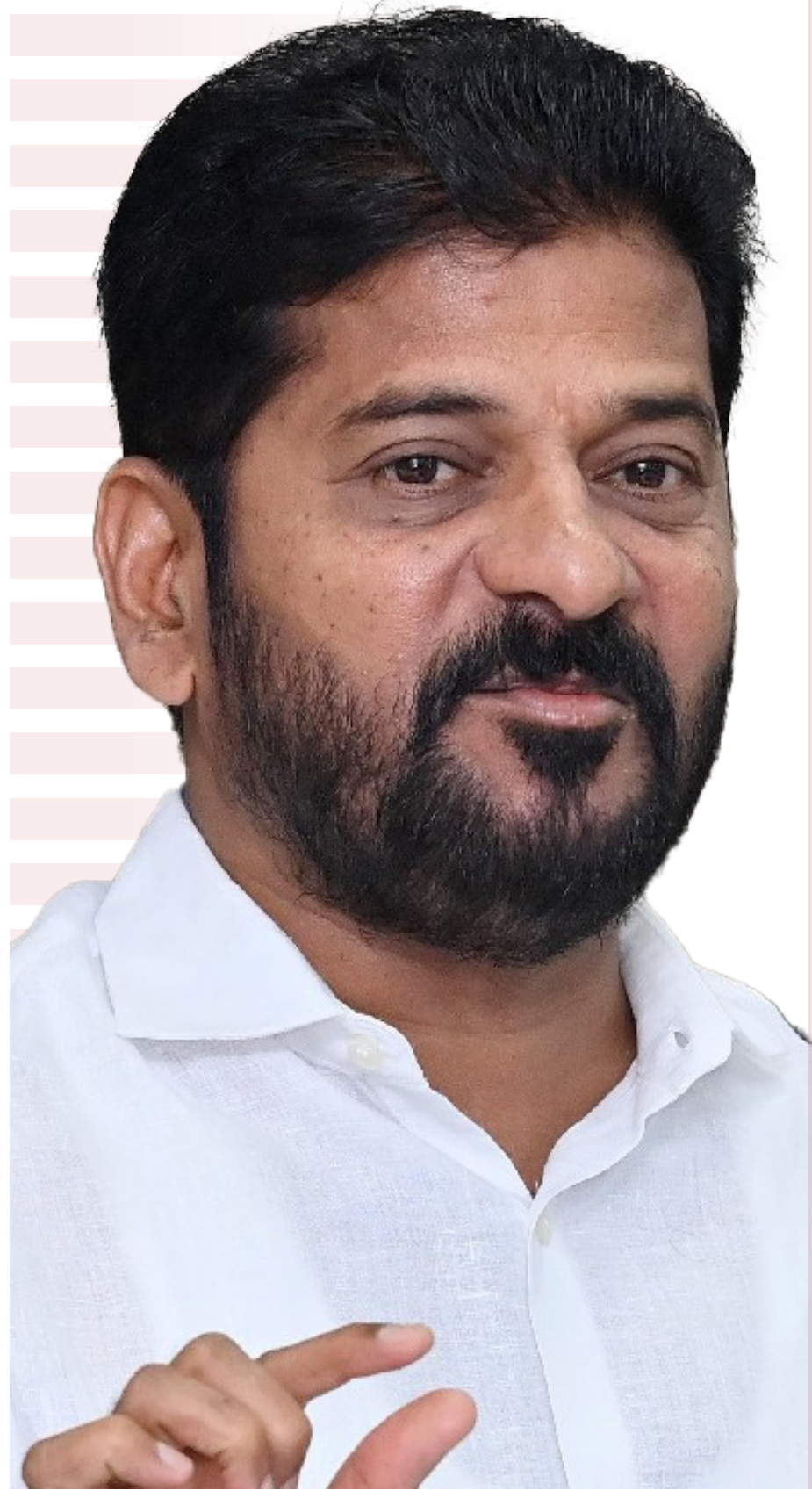




Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
H 33° C L 25° C	H 35° C L 26° C	H 36° C L 26° C



CM Revanth Reddy Warns of Deepfake Threats Cyber Safety

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Chief Minister Revanth Reddy emphasized the need for Telangana to be recognized as the number one state in cyber safety. He addressed the growing concerns around cybercrimes and their significant impact on the economy. According to him, Telangana should be viewed as a secure business hub, and there needs to be increased awareness about cyber threats among the public. He highlighted the toll-free number 1930 for reporting cybercrimes, urging everyone to use it to raise awareness and ensure better communication between the police and citizens.

In his remarks, CM Revanth Reddy pointed out how the nature of crime is changing, noting that while thieves once had to break into homes to commit robberies, today's cybercriminals can steal with a mere click. He lauded the Telangana police for their vigilance in combating cybercrime, noting that their efforts have been recognized with awards by the central government. However, he stressed that more needs to be done to prevent such crimes.

The Chief Minister also raised concerns about the rise of deepfake technology, warning that it is being used to create chaos and unrest in society. He called for a coordinated national approach to tackle cybercrimes, stating that Telangana is poised to lead the way in cybercrime prevention and will set an example for the rest of the country.



Sand Mafia in Hyderabad: Huge Illegal Trade Uncovered

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : A major sand mafia operation has been uncovered in Hyderabad, where illegal sand trade is booming. The mafia is allegedly booking sand from other regions, bringing it into Hyderabad, and dumping it for resale at inflated prices. Sand that costs around ₹10,000 in the source areas is being sold for as much as ₹50,000 in Hyderabad.

Authorities discovered this illegal trade when the mafia began dumping sand in various locations across the city, where it was being sold in bulk. Task Force teams conducted raids on multiple sand dumping sites and found that the mafia was charging customers ₹50,000 per truckload. The mafia was found to be using riverbank areas as delivery points, but the sand was being transported illegally into Hyderabad.

Following the raids, the Task Force filed cases against those involved in the illegal dumping, noting that the sand was being brought into the city without proper documentation. The authorities are continuing their investigation to tackle this illegal sand trade.

BJP Strongly Opposes Religious-Based Reservations

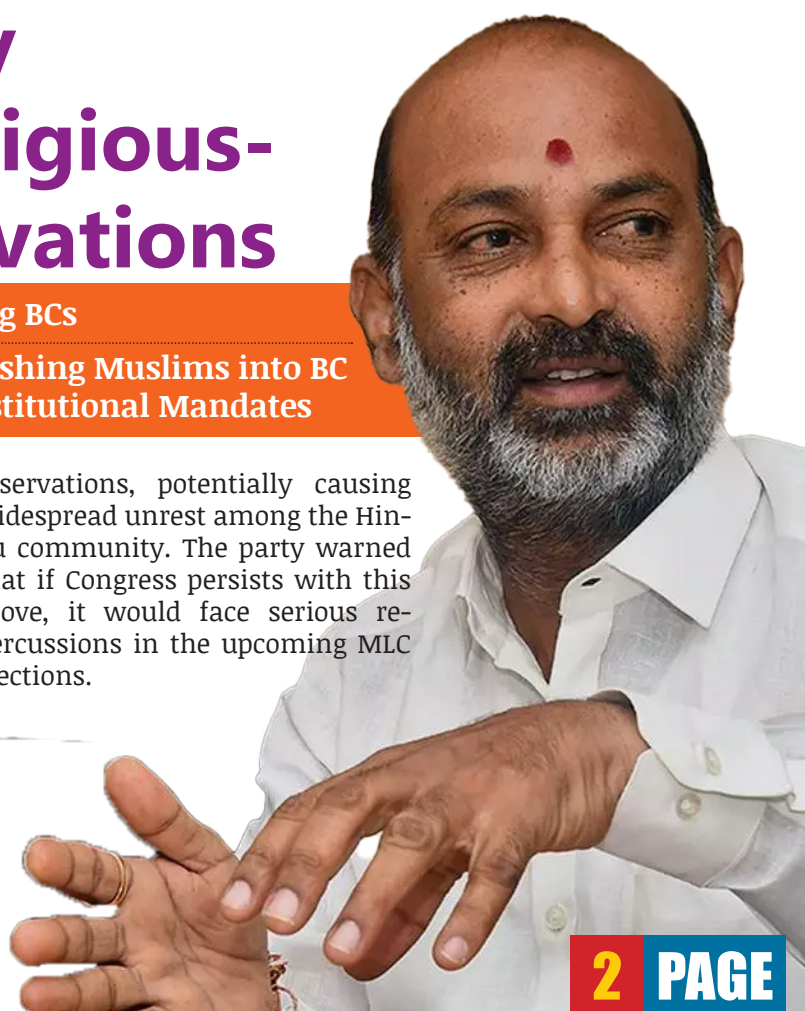
Congress Accused of Betraying BCs

BJP Criticizes Congress for Pushing Muslims into BC List; Calls for Upholding Constitutional Mandates

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has firmly rejected the inclusion of Muslims in the Backward Classes (BC) list, stressing that it would be detrimental to the interests of BCs. BJP leaders have criticized Congress for continuing to push this agenda, labeling it an act of "sheer foolishness." According to BJP representatives, Congress lacks sincerity when it comes to fulfilling its promises to BC communities.

The BJP has argued that including Muslims in the BC category would lead to the dilution of BCs' rightful

reservations, potentially causing widespread unrest among the Hindu community. The party warned that if Congress persists with this move, it would face serious repercussions in the upcoming MLC elections.



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New Security Policy on the Horizon: Minister Sridhar Babu

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Telangana's IT and Industries Minister, Duddilla Sridhar Babu, has announced that the state will soon launch a new security policy, aligned with the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, to enhance cybersecurity. Addressing the 'SHIELD 2025' conference at HICC Novotel, organized by the Telangana Cyber Security Bureau (TGCSB), Cyberabad Police, and the Society for Cyberabad Security Council (SCSC), the Minister emphasized the importance of preempting cybercrimes and ensuring robust protection systems.

Minister Sridhar Babu outlined plans to establish a state-of-the-art Giga Watt Data Center powered by advanced Artificial Intelligence technologies. As countries compete for dominance in cyberspace, he stressed that data protection is critical in safeguarding personal privacy and national economic stability, especially as cybercriminals increasingly target data over financial assets. The Minister praised the Telangana Police's ongoing efforts in combating cybercrime, citing the recovery of Rs. 185 crore out of the Rs. 350 crore looted by cyber offenders. He also expressed concern about India's reliance on imported cybersecurity software

worth \$7 billion annually, despite being the second-largest software engineering hub globally. He called on industry leaders to innovate and develop indigenous cybersecurity solutions.

Sridhar Babu assured the state government's full support for forward-thinking innovators in the cybersecurity field and emphasized the importance of contemporary solutions over traditional methods. Reflecting on the significance of data privacy, he pointed out how tech giants like Google often know more about individuals than they know about themselves. While acknowledging the vast opportunities provided by technology, he also warned about the evolving tactics of cybercriminals, particularly with the rise of Artificial Intelligence.

Addressing the growing menace of the dark web, where personal data is freely available for purchase, he highlighted the staggering \$10 trillion in global cybercrime losses annually, with India alone losing Rs. 15,000 crore. He noted that many victims of cybercrime hesitate to report incidents, making recovery difficult. He urged citizens to remain vigilant and proactive, emphasizing that cybersecurity is a

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Shabbir Ali Responds to Bandi Sanjay and Kishan Reddy's Comments on BCs and Minorities

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Shabbir Ali, former Minister and senior Congress leader, has strongly criticized the statements made by BJP leaders Bandi Sanjay and Kishan Reddy regarding the inclusion of minorities

in the BC (Backward Classes) list. Ali stated that it is incorrect to claim that minorities have been included within the BC category, especially when these accusations are made by



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Telangana Government Signs Key Agreement to Boost Startup Growth

- T-Hub partners with Goiás Hub, Brazil for international startup collaboration.
- The agreement opens up opportunities for mutual cooperation in various sectors.

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : The Telangana government has taken a significant step towards promoting the growth of startups with a new international partnership. The state has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Goiás Hub, a leading innovation center in Brazil, to enhance startup collaboration between the two regions.

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) and IT Minister K. T. Rama Rao held discussions with representatives from Goiás Hub at the HICC in Hyderabad on Tuesday. Following

these talks, Sujith, CEO of T-Hub Foundation, and José Frederico Lyra Netto, Secretary of Science, Technology, and Innovation from the Goiás State Government, signed the agreement.

This agreement will open up opportunities for Telangana startups in Brazil, while also providing Brazilian startups with access to the vibrant startup ecosystem in Telangana. The partnership will focus on key sectors including Artificial In-



telligence, IT, Agri-Tech, Healthcare, Biotechnology, and Mining, promoting mutual cooperation and innovation between the regions.

Additionally, the collaboration will strengthen market access, capacity building, incubation, technical partnerships, and investment opportunities. This agreement will further solidify the ties between the startup ecosystems of Telangana and Brazil, fostering a global network of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Orders Special RTC Buses for Maha Shivaratri

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Minister Ponnam Prabhakar has directed the RTC (Road Transport Corporation) officials to operate special buses for the upcoming Maha Shivaratri festival, scheduled for February 26. Recognizing the large number of devotees who will be traveling to temples like Vemulawada, Keesara, and other prominent pilgrimage sites, the minister has instructed the RTC to arrange sufficient buses to avoid any inconvenience to the public.

During a review meeting with RTC officials at his residence in Hyderabad, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar emphasized the need for efficient transportation to handle the influx of devotees to various temples such as Vemulawada, Srisailem, Edupalya,



and Palakurthi. He further directed that actions should be taken at bus stations with higher congestion to ensure smooth operations and a hassle-free travel experience for the devotees.

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BJP Strongly Opposes Religious-Based Reservations

The BJP reiterated its stance that BCs must receive 42% reservations, as promised, and accused Congress of backtracking on its commitments. They called on BCs to recognize the betrayal and deceit by Congress and to hold them accountable.

On another issue, the BJP has condemned Congress for delaying local body elections in Telangana. The BJP stressed the importance of holding these elections on time, pointing out that the 15th Finance Commission's grants would be halted if elections were further delayed. They also accused Congress of violating the 73rd and 74th

Constitutional Amendments, which mandate holding local body elections every five years.

BJP leaders also criticized Congress for failing to hold local elections, which they argue has brought village development to a halt. They emphasized the importance of having elected sarpanches to ensure the functioning of village assemblies and development programs.

According to the BJP, the delay in local body elections stems from Congress' fear of defeat, and they urged the party to respect the Constitution by conducting the elections without further delay.

Shabbir Ali Responds to Bandi Sanjay and Kishan Reddy's Comments on BCs and Minorities

central ministers. Ali pointed out that while general individuals or educated people might make such remarks, it is inappropriate when ministers like Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay make such statements, which he believes stir unnecessary controversy. He added that these ministers should be more cautious with their statements as they hold important positions in the government.

He also referred to historical reports like the Hunter Commission (1882), the Miller Commission (1918), and the Kaka Kalekar Report (1953), which included certain castes under the BC category. Ali emphasized that backward Muslim communities have always been included in the BC list, citing examples like bar-

bers and washermen, whose professions are historically recognized as backward. Moreover, he clarified that the Supreme Court had already provided clarity on this matter, confirming that several Muslim castes are part of the BC list. Ali also pointed out that in states like Gujarat, there are OBC Muslims as well, challenging the claim that such an inclusion is specific to Telangana. He further challenged central ministers, saying that if they are so adamant, they should remove Muslim communities from the BC list in Gujarat too. Shabbir Ali's response comes amid growing political debate over the status of backward classes and the inclusion of minorities in various welfare schemes.

New Security Policy on the Horizon: Minister Sridhar Babu

collective responsibility. Minister Sridhar Babu also highlighted Telangana's efforts in training youth as cybersecurity specialists through the Skill University, reaffirming the state's commitment to building a strong cybersecurity ecosystem.

The event was attended by notable figures, including Home Secretary Ravi Gupta, DGP Dr. Jitender, TGCSB Director Shikha Goel, Cyberabad CP Avinash Mohanty, and other distinguished guests.

CPI(M) State Secretary John Wesley Writes Open Letter to CM Revanth Reddy on University Development

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : In an open letter addressed to Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, CPI(M) State Secretary John Wesley raised concerns over the severe lack of infrastructure in the state's universities, calling for the allocation of ₹5,000 crore in the upcoming budget for the development of educational institutions.

Wesley pointed out that students in the 15 universities across Telangana, including the prestigious Osmania University, are facing significant difficulties due to a shortage of basic facilities. He highlighted the vacancies in professor, assistant professor, associate professor, and non-teaching staff positions, which are hindering the provision of



quality education. Additionally, Wesley noted that contract lecturers have been working for long periods without any permanent appointment, further affecting the educational experience.

The letter also stressed the dire need for better facilities,

including lab equipment, hostels, mess facilities, sports amenities, and other essential infrastructure. Despite Osmania University's century-long legacy, it has failed to secure accreditation from the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC),

which is a critical reflection of the institution's deteriorating standards.

Wesley also expressed concerns over the encroachment of university lands, urging the government to take immediate steps to protect these valuable assets. He called for the government to give special attention to the development of universities and to ensure that the state's educational infrastructure meets the growing demands of students.

In his letter, Wesley appealed to the Chief Minister to take immediate action to address these long-standing issues, asserting that the future of Telangana's higher education depends on the urgent resolution of these concerns.

Youth Congress' Struggle to Dismantle BRS Rule Will Not Be Forgotten: Madhuyashki Goud



- Faced with baton charges and imprisonment, Youth Congress continues its fight.
- Efforts to increase Youth Congress' role in the government.
- Ensuring government schemes reach workers.
- Will discuss the importance of Youth Congress with CM and PCC President.

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Former MP and TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman, Madhuyashki Goud, emphasized that the Youth Congress' fight to dismantle the BRS government will be remembered for a long time. Many workers endured baton charges and faced imprisonment in this struggle, he noted.

Madhuyashki Goud attended the concluding ceremony of the Youth Congress Training Camp in Maheshwaram, which had been ongoing for three days. During his address, Madhuyashki Goud interacted with the Youth Congress representatives, listening to their concerns and issues. He mentioned that the Youth Congress has the power to counter the communal politics played by BJP and RSS, and highlighted the need to involve more youth in the party. He stressed the importance of reaching out to the youth, addressing their issues, and explaining the Congress ideology.

He assured that he would speak

to CM Revanth Reddy, PCC President, and other senior leaders to ensure Youth Congress gets its due share in the government. He also mentioned that he would raise the need for Youth Congress to be given proper priority in the Political Affairs Committee.

Madhuyashki Goud acknowledged the challenges many activists have faced under the BRS rule and assured that TPCC's legal cell would provide necessary legal assistance to those involved in cases. He requested a list of activists facing cases across districts.

Additionally, he promised to speak with the Chief Minister about providing opportunities for those who have worked hard for Congress, particularly in government schemes and contractors. With various software companies being established in the state, he encouraged Youth Congress leaders to proactively ensure employment and job opportunities for Youth Congress representatives.

He urged for strengthening the Youth Congress from the grassroots level, utilizing social media and technology to connect with the youth. The event concluded with the distribution of certificates to those who completed the training. Youth Congress National In-charge Surabhi Diwedi and State Youth Congress President Jakkaidi Shiva Charan Reddy were also present during the ceremony.

Hydra Commissioner Ranganath's Key Warning on Agricultural Land Purchases

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Hydra Commissioner Ranganath recently made a crucial announcement regarding the sale of plots on agricultural land under the guise of "farm land." He cautioned the public not to buy plots in unauthorized layouts, as this could lead to serious legal complications.

The warning came after complaints were filed at the Hydra main office on Monday, regarding the sale of agricultural land as plots. Local residents from the Rajendranagar mandal in Lakshmiguda, specifically in survey number 50, raised concerns about the sale of two acres of agricultural land as plots. Upon in-

vestigation, Commissioner Ranganath explained that, according to regulations, developers need proper permissions to develop layouts and should pay the government a fee for such projects. However, some unscrupulous developers are attempting to bypass these rules by converting agricultural lands into plots for sale.

The commissioner also emphasized that, according to the government's 2018 directive, agricultural land must be sold in a minimum of half-acre units to be registered as plots. Selling land in smaller units, without the proper permissions, could result in legal issues for both buyers and sellers.



Telangana Government Extends Deadline for SC Categorization Commission

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : The Telangana government has taken another crucial decision by extending the deadline for the Commission formed to study the categorization of Scheduled Castes (SC). The government issued orders to extend the timeline for the commission's work.

The commission, headed by retired High Court judge Justice Dr. Shameem Akhtar, was set up to study the categorization of SCs in the state. Justice Shameem, who assumed office on November 11, was initially tasked with submitting the report within 60 days, due on January 10. However, the government extended this period by another 10 days.

Recently, the Commission submitted its report to the government. However, leaders, including the founder of the MMPS (Madhiga Maha Parishad), Mand Krishnamadiga, and other prominent leaders, raised several objections regarding the categorization. As the SC categorization bill is still under consideration, it is anticipated that further amendments may be required, and the Commission will need to provide opinions on these proposed changes. Therefore, the Telangana government has decided to extend the Commission's deadline again, now until March 10. The orders were issued by the government today to facilitate further examination and revisions.

Gutta Sukhender Reddy Counterattacks KTR's Farmers' Protest Remarks in Legislative Council



TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : In the Telangana Legislative Council, Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy held a chat-session and launched a counterattack on KTR's recent remarks regarding the farmers' protest. He accused political parties of using farmers' protests for their own political gains. He criticized that despite power cuts and damaged transformers, it is the farmers who are taking to the streets,

implying that political parties are influencing these protests. He also added that farmers would not protest unless prompted by political parties. Further, Gutta Sukhender Reddy highlighted that the state government had successfully completed a 100% caste-based survey, stressing that the BC (Backward Class) census being conducted was a first of its kind in the country. He questioned the lack of official records for a comprehensive family survey and reiterated that the BC caste-based census was being conducted correctly. The Chairman also pointed out that a true leader is not defined by caste or religion, but by how closely they connect with the people. He made a critical remark about the BJP's opposition to the BC caste-based survey, underscoring that the decline in respect for institutions is a reality.

MP Etala Rajender Criticizes Revanth Reddy's Government for Failing to Fulfill Promises

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : In Mahabubabad district, BJP MP Etala Rajender took part in the campaign for the upcoming MLC elections and delivered a strong critique of the Congress government under Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. He accused the government of failing to deliver on the promises made during the election campaign, stating that the Congress party had promised various reforms but had been unable to fulfill them.



He observed that while there was no significant disillusionment with KCR's government for nearly nine years, the public had already started growing frustrated with the Congress government within just nine months. Regarding the MLC elections, Rajender claimed that the BRS had distanced itself from the race, suggesting that whether they won or lost, all the elected members would eventually join the Congress party. He also stated that the Congress needed to be taught a lesson in the Graduate MLC elections. Lastly, Rajender emphasized that there was growing opposition among the people regarding the caste enumeration process, indicating a potential backlash against the Congress on this issue.

Rajender also criticized the Congress for not conducting caste enumeration in a proper manner, claiming that it had been mishandled. He further pointed out that the Congress had shown no genuine intent or commitment toward the welfare of the Backward Classes (BCs), calling it a "sham." Additionally, the BJP leader took aim at former Chief Minister KCR, accusing him of deceiving government employees with the 317 GO, which he claimed had betrayed them. Rajender also highlighted the failure of the Congress to act on the promise of scrapping the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS).

Mahesh Goud Says Congress Government Is Committed to Fulfilling Promises



TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Mahesh Kumar Goud, a senior leader of the Congress party, has stated that the Congress government in Telangana is working diligently to fulfill all the promises made in the election manifesto. He emphasized that they are determined to implement every commitment made to the people of the state. Reflecting on the past, Goud recalled that in 2008, former Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy brought a government order (GO) for RMP (Registered Medical Practitioners) doctors, ensuring that healthcare practices were scientifically grounded. He pointed out that some doctors were engaging in over-treatment, leading to unfortunate fatalities, and that such practices must be stopped. He also highlighted the ongoing efforts to improve the state's healthcare system, mentioning that the primary healthcare services were revamped over the past decade. Goud explained

that they are cleaning up and modernizing health facilities from primary health centers to NIMS (National Institute of Medical Sciences). The government is also providing quality healthcare through programs like Rajiv Arogyasri, and they have cleared nearly 30,000 checks under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF). Goud acknowledged that the previous government did not provide an opportunity to discuss people's concerns for over ten years. However, he assured that the Congress government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, along with leaders like himself and Kodandaram, will work together to take effective decisions for the betterment of the state. Discussing the state's financial situation, Goud stated that despite facing challenges like large debts and interest payments, the government is striving to strengthen the state and work for the welfare of its people. He stressed that Telangana is the first state in the country to carry out a caste-based survey, a significant initiative to understand and cater to the needs of various communities. Goud concluded by reaffirming Congress's commitment to serving the people and ensuring justice for them. He assured that they will take appropriate actions after discussing any issues with Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, focusing on legality and ensuring that people get their due benefits.

Minister Jupally Forgets Revanth Reddy's Name, Refers to KTR as Chief Minister

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : In a recent statement, Telangana Minister Jupally Krishna Rao mistakenly referred to KTR as the Chief Minister instead of Revanth Reddy, creating a stir in political circles. This incident occurred while he was addressing the state's progress on promises made during the 2023 elections. In December 2023, Congress leader Revanth Reddy took office as the Chief Minister, and one of the key promises was to implement six guarantees, including providing 1 tola of gold for weddings under the Kalyanalakshmi scheme and Rs. 2,500 per month to women. However, Jupally, while dis-



cussing the status of these promises, fumbled and mistakenly said that it was under Chief Minister KTR's leadership that they were working on the implementation. He quickly corrected

himself and referred to Revanth Reddy. In his comments, Jupally admitted that the promises, including the gold scheme and pensions, had been delayed, acknowledging that the full implementation had not yet occurred. His slip of the tongue, referring to KTR as the Chief Minister instead of Revanth Reddy, has become a subject of discussion and surprise. Additionally, Congress leader Jagga Reddy also seemed to forget Revanth Reddy's name and mistakenly referred to former Chief Minister Kiran Kumar Reddy in a separate instance, further fueling the political chatter.

G.O on Ramzan is Incorrect, Says BJP MLA Raja Singh

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : BJP MLA Raja Singh has criticized the Telangana Congress government's decision regarding the Ramzan festival, calling the issued Government Order (G.O.) incorrect. The government had released a circular allowing government employees to work only until 4 PM during Ramzan. Singh questioned Chief Minister Revanth Reddy about the reason behind such a decision, particularly in light of the fact that the government did not issue similar orders during major Hindu festivals like Navaratri, which is considered one of the biggest Hindu festivals. Raja Singh pointed out that during Navaratri, there were restrictions placed on religious activities, and even for sound systems used during

Hindu festivals like Ram Navami, the police had warned that legal action would be taken. He accused the government of showing neglect towards Hindu festivals, citing incidents where the police commissioner had threatened legal action against sound systems during Hindu celebrations. Singh further criticized the Congress government for its alleged bias in favor of Muslim votes, saying that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy only seemed to recognize Ramzan and other Muslim observances. He pointed out that the Hindu population in Telangana is significant, and such policies would negatively impact the public's perception of the government in the upcoming elections. The BJP leader warned that the gov-



ernment's current approach could have consequences similar to what happened in Karnataka, where he claimed Hindu festivals and practices were unfairly targeted. Singh also implied that the mistakes made by the government would be reflected in the results of future elections.

KTR Criticizes CM Revanth Reddy, Slams His Comments on Bureaucracy

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : BRS Working President and former minister KTR has once again made strong remarks against Telangana CM Revanth Reddy. He posted on social media, criticizing the CM's attitude toward bureaucrats. KTR remarked that someone who has engaged in wrongdoings would naturally assume others do the same, alluding to allegations that Revanth Reddy has been involved in "settlement" and "blackmailing" activities. He particularly expressed disapproval of CM Revanth's recent comments on IAS and IPS officers, calling them disrespectful and damaging to the integrity of the bureaucratic system. KTR stated that bureaucrats, such as IAS and IPS officers, are the backbone of democracy and that CM Revanth's words belittle their efforts. He condemned the CM's ongoing attempts to undermine the bureaucratic structure. Additionally, KTR pointed out that CM Revanth Reddy had issued directives to district collectors and SPs to regularly visit and understand field-level issues. However, he accused the CM of not following through on these directives and not addressing critical problems, especially those faced by gurukuls (residential schools). KTR emphasized the importance of regular inspections and direct involvement in problem-solving for effective governance.



MLC Kavitha Accuses Congress and BJP of Creating Distractions Over BC Census

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : In a strong critique, MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha accused the Congress and BJP of playing "drama" to distract the public from the ongoing debate surrounding the BC (Backward Classes) census in Telangana. She alleged that the BJP and Congress parties were attempting to divert attention from the errors in the BC census by raising irrelevant discussions, such as whether Prime Minister Modi is from a BC community. She pointed out that this was orchestrated by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who initiated the controversial conversation on BC census statistics. Kavitha specifically criticized BJP leader Bandi Sanjay for his attempts to question the religious background of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, further fueling the diversion. According to Kavitha, both Congress and BJP are not genuinely concerned with the people's issues but instead are engaging in political theatrics. She questioned why there is no attention to the correct counting of BC populations and reiterated that their demand is for an accurate enumeration of BCs. She called on the Congress to table a bill in the Telangana Assembly with precise figures and urged the BJP to approve it at the central level. Additionally, Kavitha stressed the importance of passing a BC reservation bill that would be legally sound and protect it from any potential court challenges.



Bandaru Shobharani Criticizes BRS Leadership, Questions BC and Dalit Representation

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : At a meeting held at Gandhi Bhavan, Bandaru Shobharani, Chairperson of the Women's Finance Corporation, addressed several issues regarding the representation of backward classes (BCs) and Dalits in the current BRS government. She acknowledged the positive impact of the Chief Minister's BC caste enumeration in the state, which has provided new opportunities for marginalized communities. However, she expressed concerns that despite these efforts, the BRS has failed to meet the expectations of BCs and Dalits, with no proper representation of BC leaders within the party. Shobharani raised questions about the leadership within the BRS, accusing KCR of betraying the Dalits and

BCs by failing to implement promised reforms. She also pointed out the lack of any BC leader who could speak on behalf of the community in the party, and criticized Kavitha for jumping on the BC bandwagon only for political gain. She questioned whether Kavitha or BRS could ever appoint a BC leader as president of the party, considering the lack of representation for BCs within the leadership. Additionally, Shobharani criticized Bandi Sanjay for his leadership, describing him as ineffective and controlled by his party, and accused KTR of having no credibility on farmer issues. She also claimed that KTR, who had once treated IAS officers poorly, now lacked the authority to speak about them, further undermining his credibility.



Shobharani concluded by questioning KTR's attempts to present himself as a champion of farmers, stating that even farmers would not trust him due to his previous actions. She also suggested that the BRS is using distractions to hide internal family issues and political failures.

Priyanka Arul Mohan Unveils the Grand Pattu Cheera Collection at Xiti Weaves

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Xiti Weaves, a premium brand specializing in designer sarees, is all set to unveil its much-awaited Grand Pattu Cheera Collection on February 18, 2025, at their showroom located on Road No. 45, Jubilee Hills. The grand launch event will feature popular actress Priyanka Arul Mohan, who will showcase the new collection alongside Xiti Weaves' Managing Directors, Soujanya, Bobby Tikka, and T. Srinivas. The brand, known for its exquisite saree offerings, is committed to its tagline, "Saree for Every Reason, Saree for Every Season." Priyanka Arul Mohan spoke about the brand's ethos, saying, "Sarees are an integral part of Indian culture, symbolizing tradition and elegance. The best saree brands



offer a blend of rich heritage, intricate designs, and top-notch sarees that cater to the diverse tastes of saree lovers. Xiti Weaves offers a one-stop solution for designer wear sarees, including organza, georgette, chiffons, handlooms, and traditional styles." Xiti

Weaves, founded just two years ago, has quickly gained recognition, amassing over 250,000 organic Instagram followers. The brand draws inspiration from Indian weaver folklore, indigenous craftsmanship, and traditional designs. Xiti Weaves has earned a reputation



for its vibrant colors and intricate designs, making it a favorite among saree enthusiasts. Soujanya, one of the managing directors, added, "We've earned a strong reputation for our intricate designs and vibrant colors. Whether it's for a wedding or formal event, Xiti

Weaves provides the perfect saree to enhance your elegance. We source sarees from every part of India." The collections at Xiti Weaves are carefully curated, blending timeless elegance with modern allure for Indian women. Each saree is crafted with utmost precision

and care to reflect the rich heritage of Indian sarees. Soujanya shared, "I put in immense effort to curate every saree without compromising on quality. We work closely with our weavers to create sarees that reflect both tradition and the changing trends of modern times." **About Xiti Weaves:**
• Xiti Weaves is renowned for its fusion saree collections, redefining the art of saree weaving with a contemporary twist.
• The brand's commitment to quality ensures each saree is crafted with precision, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of Indian weaving traditions.
• Xiti Weaves offers a wide variety of sarees for every occasion, catering to every generation and continuously evolving to keep up with the latest trends in the saree world.

Rangareddy Court Sends Mastan Sai to 14-Day Remand



TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : Mastan Sai, originally from Guntur district, has been remanded to 14 days in police custody by the Rangareddy court. Mastan Sai, whose full name is Ravi Mastan Sai, completed his B.Tech and worked as a software engineer for a year in Hyderabad. However, during this time, he became addicted to drugs and eventually turned it into a business. He established connections with several people in the Tollywood industry, and used social media platforms like Instagram to target young women aspiring to work in movies. He reportedly used to contact women who posted attractive photos on Instagram, offering them drugs through cool drinks and chocolates, and later blackmailing them with secretly recorded footage of their sexual encounters. These serious accusations have led to his arrest. The police have also turned their attention to drug parties at Mastan Sai's residence, where several individuals seen in videos are currently on the run. Special teams have been formed to track down those involved in the illicit activities.

Senior Lawyer Collapses and Dies While Arguing Case in Telangana High Court



TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : A senior lawyer, Vengopal Rao, tragically passed away after collapsing while presenting arguments in a case at the Telangana High Court. The incident took place in Court Hall 21, where Rao suddenly collapsed while discussing the details of the case. Fellow lawyers and court staff rushed to his aid and immediately transported him to Osmania Hospital. However, doctors at the hospital confirmed his death. The shocking event left fellow lawyers and those present at the hearing in deep shock. In response to the tragedy, the presiding judge in Court Hall 21 suspended the proceedings, and the hearings in the other courtrooms were also adjourned as a mark of respect. The unexpected incident has left the legal community grieving, with many expressing their condolences to the family of the deceased lawyer.

Hefty Accident Averted at Shamshabad Airport: Emergency Landing Successful

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : A major accident was averted at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Shamshabad, Hyderabad, this morning. A Blue Dart cargo plane coming from Chennai encountered a landing gear issue. The pilot promptly alerted the airport authorities and requested permission for an emergency landing. The airport authorities took immediate action, halting the landings and takeoffs of other international flights to ensure safety. The pilot successfully landed the aircraft on the runway without any incidents. At the time of the issue, there were six crew members aboard the cargo flight, and fortunately, no one was injured. The incident caused temporary panic at the airport, but the technical experts are currently examining the landing gear problem to prevent further issues.



In another separate incident, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officers apprehended a passenger, Ameer Ahmed, who was traveling from Hyderabad to Dubai. They found 22.75 lakh worth of foreign currency in his possession without the proper permits. The authorities have filed a case and are continuing their investigation into the matter.

Youth Congress Training Camp Concludes Successfully with Key Leaders' Participation



TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : The Youth Congress Training Camp, organized under the leadership of State Youth Congress President Jakkidi Shiva Charan Reddy, successfully concluded today at Smt. Soniyamma Kuteeram. The event saw prominent leaders addressing the participants and guiding them for future action. As the camp concluded, special guests, including AICC Secretary and Mahabubnagar Parliament In-charge Challa Vamsi Chander Reddy, TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman and Former MP Madhuyashki Goud, AICC Member Dr. Kota Neelima, Sports Authority Chairman Shiva Sena Reddy, Fishermen's Corporation Chairman Mettu Sai Mudiraj, and Badangpet Municipality Mayor Chigurinta Paritha Narasimha Reddy, were present and honored at the event.

In his address, State Youth Congress President Jakkidi Shiva Charan Reddy thanked all the leaders who attended the training camp over the past two days. He urged the Youth Congress workers to function as soldiers for the Congress party, sharing the knowledge gained from the camp with lower-level leaders. He emphasized that the Youth Congress should play a pivotal role in the upcoming local body elections, working as a bridge between the people and the government, and supporting Chief Minister Sri Enumul Revanth Reddy in implementing welfare schemes to strengthen the party. He also called on every Youth Congress leader and activist to continue their disciplined efforts in their respective constituencies and districts, ensuring the party's victory in the upcoming elections.

Fake Education Certificates Gang Busted in Hyderabad

TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : In Hyderabad, a gang involved in the production of fake education certificates has been busted. The gang was manufacturing counterfeit degree and diploma certificates, using the names of various universities. Some individuals had even used these fake certificates to travel abroad. The gang was arrested within the Film Nagar Police Station jurisdiction. Task Force DCP Sudhindra explained that they had successfully apprehended a group involved in producing fake certificates. The gang consisted of 8 members, including two from Uttar Pradesh. Authorities seized numerous certificates from various universities during



the arrest. The police were monitoring the group, and the gang had planned to leave the city, which led them to meet near the Secunderabad Railway Station. The kingpin of the gang, Wajahat Ali, had four previous cases registered against him and is from Nizamabad. The gang mainly targeted individuals who were unemployed or unmarried and were using fake certificates for fraudulent purposes, including securing jobs. The police have warned that such activities will not be tolerated and that strict action will be taken against the culprits.

Harish Rao: A Historic Day, 11 Years of Telangana Formation



TPN , Correspondent
Hyderabad , Feb 19 : On the occasion of the 11th anniversary of Telangana's formation, BRS senior MLA Harish Rao reminisced about the day when the Telangana Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on February 18, 2014. He recalled how Telangana fought for its separate statehood through a vigorous movement, and how, on this very day, a new chapter of history was written. Harish Rao acknowledged the tireless efforts of Chief Minister KCR and the aspirations of the Telangana people that were finally realized with the passage of the bill in Parliament. He celebrated this day as a momentous one, marking the fulfillment of the long-held dreams of the people of Telangana. He took to 'X' (formerly Twitter) to share the historic moment and also posted a picture from the celebrations that took place under KCR's leadership after the bill was passed.

District Collector Komathi Reddy Reviews Measures for Summer Water Supply in Nalgonda

TPN , Correspondent
Nalgonda, Feb 19 : District Collector Komathi Reddy emphasized the importance of proactive measures to avoid water shortages during the upcoming summer season. On Tuesday, she held a review meeting at the Nalgonda Municipal Office, addressing key issues related to drinking water, electricity, sanitation, and development projects within the Nalgonda Municipality.

As the summer season approaches, the Collector directed the ward officers to ensure that residents do not face drinking water issues. She suggested providing water through tankers if necessary and highlighted the importance of ensuring a continuous supply based on last year's demand patterns. She also instructed the maintenance of overhead tanks and drinking water tanks, ensuring they are cleaned regularly with bleaching powder to prevent contamination.

The Collector emphasized the need for adequate preparation to avoid disruptions in drinking water supply, especially in the event of electricity outages. She urged that plans be in place to address any power disruptions that might affect water supply, and for ward officers to immediately in-



form the Municipal Commissioner if any such issues arise.

She also discussed the need for energy-saving measures in street lighting, advising that lights be used only when necessary and energy-efficient practices be implemented to reduce power consumption. Additionally, she stressed the importance of providing water to plants planted under the Vanamahotsav initiative to prevent them from drying out due to the heat. On the progress of drinking water tank construction within the Nalgonda Municipal limits, the Collector instructed that the work be completed at the earliest possible time. She also reviewed sanitation issues such as wet and dry waste collec-

tion, vermi-composting, and other related activities, providing specific guidance for improvement.

Additional Collector J. Srinivas, Municipal Commissioner Syed Musab Ahmed, and various other officials including members from the Mission Bhagiratha, Electricity, and Municipal departments attended the meeting.

Following the review, the Collector visited several ongoing water tank construction sites, including locations at Akkachelimaggutta behind Komathi Reddy Junior College, Marriguda Bypass, and Munugodu Road near Swargapuri Hindupur Vaikuntha Dhamam, to oversee the progress of the work.

MLC Kavitha Attends Lingamanthula Swamy Jathara in Suryapet District



TPN , Correspondent

Suryapet, Feb 19 : MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha participated in the grand celebration of the Lingamanthula Swamy Jathara at Pedagattu in Suryapet district. As part of the ritual, Kavitha performed the bonam offering to Choudamma, a significant gesture in the cultural practices surrounding the festival.

During the event, she was accompanied by prominent political figures such as former Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav, former MP Lingayya Yadav, and other leaders including former MLAs and former Corporation Chairpersons.

Speaking at the event, MLC Kavitha expressed her best wishes for the festival, stating, "I consider it my privilege to offer the Bonam to the Swami." She highlighted the significance of the Lingamanthula Jathara, calling it the second-largest fair in the region, following the Samuk Sarrak Jathara.

Kavitha also spoke about the importance of such events in preserving Telangana's traditions and culture, saying, "The Lingamanthula Jathara is a testament to the rich culture and traditions of Telangana."

She further mentioned the government's support, stating that under Chief Minister KCR's leadership, the state allocated ₹14 crore for the development of the temple and its surroundings. Kavitha emphasized that the temple had seen comprehensive development and expressed hope that the present government would continue to make arrangements that cater to the growing number of devotees.

Her remarks underscored the state's commitment to preserving Telangana's cultural heritage while ensuring the smooth conduct of such important religious events.

5 Telangana Government Officials Arrested Over Bribe Demands in Separate Cases

ACB Cracks Down on Corruption with Multiple Arrests Across Different Departments

TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad, Feb 19 : In a series of corruption busts, five Telangana government officials have been arrested in two separate cases by the Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on charges of accepting bribes.

The first case involved two forest officials from Bhadradi Kothagudem district. The accused were identified as Uday Kumar, the Forest Range Officer of Komararam Range, and Nunavath Harilal, the Forest Beat Officer of Ellandu Division. On Tuesday, February 18, they were arrested for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 30,000.

According to the complainant, the accused demanded the bribe in exchange for permitting the transportation of gravel from patta land for road construction. ACB officials apprehended the two officers red-handed, and a chemical test confirmed traces of the tainted money on

their hands. An investigation is ongoing. In the second case, three police officials from Makthal in Narayanpet district were arrested by ACB officials for accepting a bribe. The accused were identified as Gundemoni Chandra Shekar, Circle Inspector of Telangana Police, and two police constables, Singasani Shiva and Kurva Nar-simhulu.

Reports suggest that the three officers initially demanded Rs 40,000 from the complainant to reduce the severity of charges in an ongoing case at the Makthal police station. However, they were caught while accepting Rs 20,000 as part of the bribe. Further investigation is underway.

Earlier, on February 14, Satish Kumar, an employee working in the Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana (TGS-PDCL) at the Gachibowli sub-division, was arrested for accepting a bribe of Rs 50,000. Kumar allegedly demanded Rs 75,000



from a complainant to process an already approved work completion report for a transformer and CT meter installation at an apartment, along with an additional bribe for approving another report for a separate project.

These arrests mark a significant crackdown on corruption within the Telangana state administration, with ACB officials vowing to continue their investigations.

Students Panic After 'Black Magic' Items Found at Telangana School

Villagers Alert Police; Authorities Ensure Safety and Clean-Up

TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad, Feb 19 : Students at the Tribal Welfare Government Primary School in Balikunta, Kothagudem district, were left shaken after discovering what appeared to be items associated with black magic rituals on the school grounds. The items included a rangoli design, turmeric, and other materials commonly used in occult practices.

Panic spread quickly among the students, prompting them to inform their families. Villagers rushed to the school upon hearing the news and alerted the police. Authorities responded swiftly and ensured

the area was cleaned, following official instructions, and the classes resumed as usual.

Local residents expressed their concern over the incident and have urged the authorities to take preventive measures, including the installation of CCTV cameras or the appointment of a watchman to monitor the premises. This, they believe, would help deter any future occurrences of such alarming incidents.

The investigation is ongoing, and authorities have reassured the public that they are taking steps to ensure the safety and security of the school environment.



Empowering Entrepreneurs

Venu Bhagavan Addresses MSME Development Program in Hyd



TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad, Feb 19 :

Venu Bhagavan, renowned motivational speaker and entrepreneur, addressed the Entrepreneurship Development Program organized by the Ministry of MSME and the State Bank of India, SMEBU, at Balanagar, Hyderabad. The event aimed to foster entrepreneurship, providing valuable insights to both aspiring and seasoned business owners. In his inspiring speech, Bhagavan emphasized the importance of blending life, mindset, and the core principles necessary for building and sustaining a business. His talk was designed to guide attendees on the entrepreneurial journey, offering practical advice and motivation to succeed in the long run.

Bhagavan also highlighted the increasing participation of women in entrepreneurship. He noted the untapped potential of women, who possess skills in managing homes, finances, and people—traits that can be effectively leveraged in business. However, he stressed the need for a mindset shift to overcome cultural limitations and fully embrace entrepreneurship. Reflecting on the event, Bhagavan expressed his delight at witnessing a growing number of individuals seeking clarity to unlock their authentic selves and create meaningful lives through entrepreneurship. His message resonated deeply with the attendees, encouraging them to take bold steps towards their entrepreneurial dreams.



Massive Crowd At pedha Gattu Festival in Suryapet District

Devotees Flock to Lingamathula Swami's Big Gattu Fair in Telangana

TPN , Correspondent

Suryapet, Feb 19 : The Lingamathula Swami Big Gattu Jathara in Durajpally, near Chivvela in Suryapet district, Telangana, witnessed an overwhelming crowd of devotees on Sunday night, and the rush continued into the following day. Thousands of devotees arrived to offer "bonams" (ritualistic offerings) to the deity, marking a significant religious event in the region.

The festival, which began around midnight, saw devotees forming long queues to pay their respects to Lingamathula Swami and Choudamma Thalli, who are the central figures of this revered fair. Devotees from across Telangana, as well as from neighboring states like Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, thronged the site.

On the third day of the event, the temple

department is all set to organize a grand wedding ceremony for the deity with the tradition of "Chandrapatnam" being performed. This is the second-largest festival in Telangana, following the Malkaram Jatara.

The authorities have ensured all necessary arrangements for the smooth conduct of the festival, and devotees are continuing to flock to the venue for the divine darshan of the deity.

India's Paradox: Booming Economy, But Where Are The Jobs?



India, with the world's largest youth population, is at a critical juncture. While it stands as Asia's fastest-growing economy, it faces a severe employment crisis that remains unique to its socio-economic context.

The real paradox lies not in the absence of jobs but in the lack of skilled professionals who meet industry demands. An alarming 83% of India's unemployed workforce is between 15 and 29 years old, highlighting a mismatch between education and employability. Although India produces 50 lakh graduates annually, nearly half of them are unemployable—not due to lack of knowledge, but because of essential skill deficiencies, including communication, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills.

This skills gap is further exacerbated by low youth workforce participation, leading to rising frustration among young professionals and deepening economic strain for families that invest heavily in education, only to see their children unable to secure stable jobs. The inability of the job market to absorb this growing unemployable workforce, particularly in fields like research and development, hampers innovation and productivity, which are vital to sustaining India's economic growth.

Efforts like the National Education Policy (NEP) and skill development programs are commendable but haven't fully addressed the skills gap. These initiatives encourage alignment between academia and industry needs, yet many graduates remain

unemployable due to deficiencies in real-world skills.

Additionally, rural youth face a further disadvantage, with limited English proficiency hindering their entry into urban job markets, where English fluency is often a requirement for multinational companies. For India to continue its growth trajectory, it must bridge this skills gap to ensure that economic expansion translates into equitable job creation. The solution lies in realigning education with industry needs, fostering lifelong learning, and investing in skills development. If done correctly, India's demographic dividend can become a major economic asset, transforming its youth into a powerhouse of innovation and progress. The time for reform is now.

Trump's Blunt 'No' To Europe Could Change Everything



A new phase in the Ukraine war is unfolding, as the Trump administration seeks to engage Russia without involving Ukraine or Europe. The Saudis are stepping in as mediators, with key figures like US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, Trump's Middle East special envoy Steve Witkoff, and National Security Adviser Mike Waltz playing central roles. This shift marks a dramatic departure from the US's policy of the past three years and leaves Europe scrambling to respond.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has strongly opposed any deals made without Ukraine's involvement, but the US seems ready to walk away from its commitment to European security. US officials, including Vice-President JD Vance, have emphasized that Europe must take on a greater role in its own defense, with US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth stating that Ukraine returning to its pre-2014 borders is unrealistic, while also downplaying Ukraine's NATO aspirations.

The Trump administration's stance represents a fundamental rethink of the US-Europe partnership. In Paris, European leaders are urgently discussing how to respond to this shift, with UK leader Keir Starmer and Germany suggesting peace-keeping troops for Ukraine. However, many fear that Trump's pursuit of peace with Putin could put Europe at a long-term disadvantage.

As the US shifts its focus to the Indo-Pacific, Europe must confront the reality that its security is no longer a top priority for Washington. The task now is for European leaders to bolster their defense commitments and ensure that they have a say in the future of transatlantic relations. Trump's bold moves could disrupt the global order, with Europe left to reconsider its place in the new world order.

Beyond Deportation: Joint Efforts a Must to Curb Illegal Immigration

India is facing a serious challenge in the form of illegal immigration, particularly with planeloads of deported Indian migrants arriving from the United States. The individuals involved are primarily Indian citizens, and their deportation not only reflects poorly on the states they originated from but also on the nation as a whole. Political finger-pointing over the matter does little to address the deeper issues at play. Successive governments at both the central and state levels have failed these citizens to such an extent that they risked their lives seeking opportunities abroad.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his recent visit to Washington, pledged to accept any verified Indian migrant deported from the United States and to intensify efforts to combat human trafficking. His call to move beyond mere repatriation and to address the root causes of illegal immigration is a positive step. However, this effort cannot be the responsibility of the Indian government alone. Tackling illegal immigration requires coordinated action from both the Union and state governments, as well as collaboration with civil society and the general public. All these stakeholders are key to formulating a sustainable solution to this pressing issue.

The situation is particularly dire in Punjab, which has experienced an alarming exodus of its residents seeking better prospects in the US. Over the past 15 years, the state has been ruled by various political parties, including the Akali-BJP alliance, the Con-

gress, and the Aam Aadmi Party. Despite the change in leadership, the problem persists. The tendency to shift blame between political factions has failed to yield any real solutions. It is crucial for all political parties to put aside differences and prioritize the long-term interests of the state, addressing the root causes of illegal immigration in a unified manner.

The treatment of deportees has been another point of contention, with many arriving in India still shackled despite the country's protests to the US authorities. Additionally, the fact that nearly all deportations are being routed through Amritsar raises further concerns. While these issues cannot be ignored, they should not divert attention from the larger challenge at hand. A key task for both the central and state governments moving forward will be to prevent deported individuals from resorting to similar illegal attempts to migrate again. Equally important is to dissuade potential migrants from taking dangerous and desperate measures in pursuit of the elusive "American dream." To truly curb illegal immigration, it is essential for India to adopt a holistic and collaborative approach. Rather than focusing solely on deportation, efforts must be directed toward addressing the socio-economic factors that drive people to take such drastic steps. Only through coordinated action across all levels of government, along with the involvement of civil society, can India hope to solve this pressing issue and prevent further harm to its citizens.

Failure of Planning: Will Vaishnav Take Blame for Stampede?



The tragic stampede at New Delhi station, which claimed 18 lives during the Maha Kumbh Mela rush, was not merely an accident. It was a catastrophic failure of planning, foresight, and accountability by the authorities. As thousands of pilgrims descended on the station to board trains to Prayagraj, the lack of preparation to manage the massive influx of passengers became tragically apparent. The event's scale was not unexpected—such large gatherings have long been part of the Mela, and the resulting strain on railway infrastructure is well-documented. The fact that authorities failed to anticipate and implement proper crowd control measures is a glaring oversight that ultimately led to the deaths of innocent people.

Former Railway Minister Pawan Kumar Bansal was blunt in his assessment of the situation,

asserting that the ultimate responsibility lay with the current Railway Minister, Ashwini Vaishnav. While the government hastily announced compensation for the victims' families—Rs 10 lakh for each deceased and Rs 2.5 lakh for the seriously injured—ethical concerns arose when reports emerged of cash being distributed at the station. The distribution of money in violation of the 2023 compensation guidelines, which limit cash payouts to Rs 50,000, only served to highlight the government's inability to address systemic issues properly. The optics of handing out large wads of cash amid chaos seemed insensitive and inadequate in the face of such a preventable tragedy. The demand for Vaishnav's resignation is gaining momentum, especially after the government initially dismissed the stampede as a "rumor." Such deflection of responsibility highlights a deep-

er reluctance to acknowledge the failure in managing the situation. Historically, railway ministers such as Lal Bahadur Shastri and Nitish Kumar demonstrated moral responsibility by resigning following similar disasters. This raises the question: will Vaishnav follow suit and take accountability for the loss of life under his watch?

While resignations might offer a symbolic gesture of responsibility, what is needed now is not just individual accountability but a comprehensive overhaul of the railway system. Effective crowd management protocols must be instituted, especially during major religious and festival events. It is time to put in place robust systems that prioritize passenger safety, preventing such disasters from occurring in the future. Without this, no amount of compensation will be able to undo the damage done.



India, Qatar Elevate Ties To 'Strategic Partnership' As Emir Meets PM Modi

- India and Qatar upgrade ties to a strategic partnership.
- Discussions focus on trade, energy, and investment growth.
- Leaders explore a free trade deal and fiscal cooperation.



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

India and Qatar have officially agreed to elevate their bilateral relationship to a strategic partnership, marking a significant milestone in their diplomatic ties. The agreement was finalized following a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, in New Delhi.

The leaders engaged in extensive discussions at Hyderabad House, focusing on key areas such as trade, investment, technology,

energy, food security, culture, and people-to-people exchanges. One of the highlights of the talks was a potential free trade agreement, with both nations aiming to double bilateral trade to \$28 billion over the next five years.

Energy security also featured prominently in the discussions, with both sides exploring ways to broaden their cooperation in this sector. Additionally, the two countries agreed on measures to prevent fiscal evasion and avoid double taxation concerning income taxes. An agreement on this front was also exchanged.

Both leaders also touched upon regional and global issues of mutual interest during their talks, reinforcing the strong partnership between the two nations. The Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, shared details of the discussions on social media, emphasizing the breadth of cooperation envisioned across various sectors, including innovation and technology.

In a rare diplomatic gesture, Prime Minister Modi personally received the Emir at the airport,

offering a warm handshake and a hug, underscoring the importance of the visit. The Emir's visit, which began on Monday evening, follows Prime Minister Modi's trip to Qatar in February 2024.

During the visit, the Emir was given a ceremonial guard of honour at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, where he was warmly welcomed by President Droupadi Murmu. Accompanying the Emir is a high-level delegation, including ministers, senior officials, and business leaders, further strengthening ties between the two nations.



Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Formation Of 6th Finance Commission

TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

In a significant move, the Maharashtra Cabinet has approved the establishment of a Sixth State Finance Commission to assess the financial position of panchayats and municipalities and recommend necessary financial measures. The Cabinet authorized Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to propose the names of the Chairman and members of the Commission to the state Governor, C.P. Radhakrishnan. Additionally, an officer with at least a Junior Administrative Grade Officer rank will be appointed as the Member Secretary of the Commission.

The Finance Commission will be responsible for reviewing the financial status of local government bodies and recommending the allocation of state revenue from taxes, duties, tolls, and fees among panchayats and municipalities. The Commission will also suggest the principles for the distribution of grants-in-aid and measures to improve the financial health of local bodies. The recommendations will be based on the 2011 Census population data to determine the fair share of taxes and subsidies. The Commission's work will be supported by necessary resources, including office space and a dedicated budget for recurring and non-recurring expenses.

In addition to the Finance Commission approval, the Cabinet greenlit a major solar power project for the Mysal Lift Irrigation Scheme under the Krishna-Koyana Lift Irrigation Project. This energy-efficient initiative, with a budget of Rs 1,594 crore, aims to meet the annual electricity needs of approximately 398 million units for the scheme. The project will benefit drought-prone areas in Sangli and Solapur districts by providing irrigation water to over 1 lakh hectares.

Furthermore, the Cabinet approved the revised budget of Rs 1,275.78 crore for the Varkhede Londhe Barrage project in Jalgaon. Another notable decision was the establishment of an anti-drug task force, with 346 posts created to strengthen efforts in combating substance abuse in the state.

Gyanesh Kumar appointed as CEC; Vivek Joshi election commissioner

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

On Monday, Gyanesh Kumar was appointed as the next Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), according to the law ministry. Kumar's appointment marks a significant moment as he becomes the first CEC to be appointed under the new law that governs the appointment of members to the Election Commission (EC). His term will extend until January 26, 2029, just before the expected announcement of the schedule for the next Lok Sabha election.

Vivek Joshi, a 1989-batch Haryana-cadre Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, was also appointed as an Election Commissioner. Joshi, born on May 21, 1966, will serve in this role until 2031, in line with the law stipulating that CECs and ECs retire at the age of 65 or serve for a six-year term.



Before his appointment, Sushil Chandra had resigned from his position as the Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) to become an Election Commissioner. Joshi, a former Haryana Chief Secretary, had been on central deputation since January 2019.

During his tenure as CEC, Kumar will oversee several crucial state elections, including the Bihar Assembly elections later this year, as well as the Kerala and Puducherry Assembly elections in 2026. He will also supervise the Assembly elections in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, which are scheduled for 2026.

Kumar, a 1988-batch Kerala-cadre IAS officer, played a vital role in implementing decisions related to the abrogation of Article 370 during his tenure in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. He took over as Election Commissioner on March 15, 2024.

Indian Embassy Assures Investigation into Nepalese Student's Alleged Suicide at KIIT

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Indian Embassy in Nepal has promised a thorough investigation into the alleged suicide of Nepalese student Prakriti Lamsal at Odisha's Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT). The third-year B Tech student was found dead in her hostel room on Sunday, triggering protests on the KIIT campus where nearly 1,000 Nepali students are enrolled.

In response to the incident, students took to the streets, blocking roads and staging protests against the administration. Demonstrations also took place in front of the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, with students demanding a comprehensive probe into the matter.

The embassy issued a statement urging Nepali students to return to campus and continue their studies. It highlighted that Nepali students form a crucial part of the educational and cultural ties between India and Nepal. The statement further reassured that the Indian government would



continue taking necessary measures to ensure the safety and well-being of Nepali students in India.

The protests escalated on campus, leading to some Nepali students being evicted from their hostel by the authorities. KIIT clarified that extensive counseling efforts had

been made for over 10 hours to manage the situation. However, certain protesters had disrupted the process, blocking roads and creating tensions. As a result, the university advised students to return to their homes until the investigation is complete, with assurances that their academic progress would not be affected.

Meanwhile, Nepal's Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli intervened, dispatching officials to counsel students and provide them with the option of returning to their homes or staying in the hostel. State education ministers also instructed KIIT to ensure the safe return of Nepali students to Bhubaneswar by special buses.

Former UK PM Rishi Sunak and Family Visit India's Parliament House

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, accompanied by his wife Akshata Murty, visited the Parliament House in India on Tuesday, February 18, 2025. The family, including their two daughters, Krishna and Anoushka, was welcomed by the Lok Sabha Secretary General, Utpal Kumar Singh, during their visit to the iconic political landmark.

In a video shared by news agency ANI, Sunak can be seen arriving at the Parliament with his family. The warm reception marked a special moment for the Sunak family during their trip to India. In addition to his immediate family, Sunak's mother-in-law, Sudha Murty, who is a Member of the Rajya Sabha, was also present



at the Parliament House on the same day. Sudha Murty is known for her extensive philanthropic work and as the chairperson of Infosys Foundation.

Rishi Sunak's visit comes amid a series of engagements in India that have included cultural and

official events. The former UK PM, who made history as the first person of Indian descent to hold the position of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, continues to maintain close ties with India, where his in-laws are prominent figures in the business and philanthropic spheres.

The visit was an opportunity for Sunak and his family to experience India's legislative heart and engage with Indian political leaders. The family's connection to India has always been a subject of interest, especially considering Sunak's background, with both of his parents being of Indian origin.

This trip also highlights the strengthening of ties between the UK and India, two nations with historical, political, and cultural bonds. As Sunak and his family toured the Parliament, the occasion symbolized a moment of personal and professional significance for the former Prime Minister, alongside his continued support for fostering UK-India relations.

Tesla Begins Hiring In India After PM Modi-Elon Musk Meet In US

- Tesla begins hiring in India, signaling market entry plans
- Job listings in Mumbai and Delhi hint at service expansion
- India's EV sector set for increased competition with Tesla's arrival



TPN Correspondent | Riyadh

Tesla has initiated recruitment efforts in India, signaling its upcoming entry into the country's burgeoning electric vehicle (EV) market. This development follows a recent meeting between Tesla CEO Elon Musk and Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his trip to the United States, highlighting growing ties between the two nations in the tech and defense sectors.

A LinkedIn job post from Tesla revealed that the company is looking to fill 13 positions across Mumbai and Delhi. The roles range from customer-facing positions to back-end roles, including service technicians, customer engagement managers, delivery operations specialists, and advi-

sory positions. This recruitment drive is seen as a clear indication that Tesla is laying the groundwork for its expansion into India's EV market.

Tesla's potential entry into India is significant, given the country's increasing focus on clean energy and sustainability. With its strong brand recognition and innovative electric vehicles, Tesla could play a pivotal role in shaping India's transition to electric mobility. The company's recruitment efforts suggest that it plans to offer a range of services, including customer support and after-sales services, to ensure a smooth experience for Indian consumers.

The move also follows ongoing discussions between India and the US aimed at

reducing trade imbalances and increasing cooperation in key sectors, including military sales. As US President Donald Trump mentioned during his tenure, the US was keen on increasing military exports to India, including potential deals for advanced fighter jets like the F-35. These talks further strengthen the economic and strategic partnership between the two nations, providing a favorable backdrop for Tesla's entry into the Indian market. As Tesla continues to expand globally, its foray into India is expected to spark increased competition in the country's electric vehicle industry, which is experiencing rapid growth. Tesla's entry could further boost India's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint and promote sustainable transportation solutions.

Netanyahu Orders Immediate Enforcement of UNRWA Law, Ending Operations in Israel

TPN Correspondent | Tel Aviv

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has directed the immediate enforcement of the UNRWA law, following the Knesset's passage of the legislation with broad support. The law mandates the cessation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) operations within Israeli territory, including East Jerusalem.

The law, passed in October 2024, prohibits Israeli authorities from engaging with UNRWA and calls for the agency to vacate all premises in occupied East Jerusalem by January 30, 2025. Israel's Prime Minister's Office (PMO) confirmed the directive in a post on social media, stating there are no restrictions on its implementation. UNRWA, a vital relief and human development agency, was established in 1949 to provide services to Palestinian refugees who lost their homes and livelihoods in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. For decades, the agency has provided essential humanitarian aid, including health facilities, schools, and vocational training, primarily in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Knesset's decision to end UNRWA's operations in Israeli-controlled areas has drawn international criticism. UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed concern, warning that the effective ban could have devastating consequences for Palestinian refugees. Joyce Msuya, the acting head of the UN aid coordination office, called the move "dangerous and outrageous." UNRWA's Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini also condemned the decision, claiming that the legislation would increase suffering among Palestinians and amounted to "collective punishment." Earlier this month, U.S. President Donald Trump also signed executive orders to cut U.S. funding to UNRWA, further isolating the agency. As tensions surrounding the issue continue to rise, the implementation of the UNRWA law reflects Israel's stance on the ongoing Palestinian refugee situation and its efforts to limit the agency's influence in the region.



Vatican cancels Pope's weekend engagements as he battles 'complex' infection

TPN Correspondent | Vatican City

Pope Francis, who is currently in the hospital for a "complex" respiratory infection, will not participate in this weekend's Holy Year events, the Vatican announced on Tuesday. The 88-year-old pontiff has been suffering from the infection for over a week and was admitted to Rome's Gemelli hospital on Friday.

As a result of his health condition, the Vatican confirmed that a public papal audience scheduled for Saturday has been canceled. However, a papal mass set for Sunday will still be held but will be led by a senior Vatican official in place of the Pope.

On Monday, the Vatican shared that doctors had modified the Pope's medication for the second time during his hospitalization in an attempt to address his "complex clinical situation." The infection is described as a "polymicrobial" one, which can involve a combination of viruses, bacteria, and fungi affecting the respiratory tract.

Pope Francis, who has faced various health challenges over the past two years, including bouts with influenza, continues to receive medical care. Despite these ongoing health struggles, his condition is described as stable, although his public engagements are being reduced for now to ensure his recovery.



Russian Delegation Arrives in Saudi Arabia for High-Level Talks with US Officials

TPN Correspondent | Moscow

The US and Russian delegations have agreed to address ongoing tensions in their bilateral relationship, according to a statement from US State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce following talks in Riyadh on Tuesday. The discussions, which focused on the Ukraine conflict and future economic cooperation, marked a significant step toward improving relations between the two countries.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who participated in the meeting, revealed that both sides had agreed to form a 'high-level team' tasked with negotiating peace in Ukraine and fostering economic cooperation. The aim, he said, was to find a sustainable, enduring solution to the conflict that would be acceptable to all parties involved.

Bruce emphasized that the US is committed to finding a resolution to the war in Ukraine "as soon as possible," while ensuring that the solution is long-lasting and acceptable to all sides. However, despite the discussions, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed concerns about the talks, warning that Ukraine would not accept any agreements made about the country's future without its direct participation.

The meeting, which was hosted by Saudi Arabia, was significant for its lack of Ukrainian representation at the table, highlighting the complexities of the peace process. Zelensky's statement underscored the importance of Ukraine's involvement in any discussions related to its sovereignty and future.

In addition to the peace talks, Bruce noted that the US and Russia would explore opportunities for future cooperation on matters of mutual geopolitical interest. This includes potential economic and investment opportunities that could arise from a successful resolution to the conflict in Ukraine.

Secretary Rubio acknowledged the complexity of the process, calling the Riyadh talks "the first step of a long and difficult journey." He also hinted that the European Union (EU), which has imposed sanctions on Russia, would likely need to be involved in future negotiations. Rubio suggested that EU involvement would be crucial to reaching a comprehensive and lasting peace agreement.



Hasina vows to return, blames Yunus for 'terrorism and lawlessness' in Bangladesh

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

In a strong condemnation of the interim government in Bangladesh, former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has blamed Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus for causing "terrorism and lawlessness" in the country. Speaking virtually to her supporters from exile in India, Hasina, who was ousted from power in August 2024, accused Yunus of destroying Bangladesh's social fabric and allowing terrorists to wreak havoc on the population.

Hasina's remarks came as she criticized Yunus for his silence during violent student-led protests last year, which saw dozens of police officers killed. She accused Yunus' administration of being ineffective and unable to manage the country, particularly in terms of addressing the violence and civil unrest that erupted during her government's downfall.

"He has no experience in running a government. He dissolved all inquiry committees and unleashed terrorists to butcher people. They are destroying Bangladesh," Hasina said. She vowed to return to Bangladesh and promised that the perpetrators of the violence would be held accountable for their actions.

Hasina's comments were aimed at rallying support for her political party, the Awami League, which she leads. She pledged that her return would be marked by justice for those who had suffered under Yunus' leadership, adding, "Inshallah, we will oust this government of terrorists. The killers will face justice in Bangladesh."

About Ukraine, Without Ukraine": Zelensky Slams US-Russia Talks

TPN Correspondent | Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has voiced strong opposition to the ongoing discussions between the United States and Russia regarding the war in Ukraine, highlighting that these talks are being held without Ukraine's participation. The talks, which are taking place in Saudi Arabia, involve high-level officials from both the US and Russia, but Zelensky expressed his frustration over Ukraine's exclusion from these crucial conversations.



Speaking during his official visit to Turkey, Zelensky criticized the discussions, stating, "Talks are taking place between representatives of Russia and representatives of the United States of America. About Ukraine – about Ukraine again – and without Ukraine." His comments reflect grow-

ing dissatisfaction in Kyiv over the fact that decisions regarding Ukraine's future are being made without the country having a seat at the table.

Zelensky's remarks underscore Ukraine's longstanding position that any peace talks or negotiations involving the country must

include direct Ukrainian participation. Ukraine has consistently maintained that it should have the opportunity to actively engage in any diplomatic conversations related to the war, especially considering the profound impact these discussions have on the nation's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and security.

The ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia, which began in February 2022, has led to significant loss of life, displacement, and destruction. As international efforts to mediate the conflict continue, Zelensky's comments reflect his belief that Ukraine's involvement is essential in shaping the outcome of any discussions. He has repeatedly emphasized the importance of Ukraine determining its own future and security, rather than having decisions made by outside powers.



Intraday Rebound Falls Short

Markets Slip Amid FII Outflows and Global Uncertainty

Domestic stock markets were in turmoil on Tuesday. The trend of benchmark indices is not clear due to lack of proper direction. Nifty lost 140 points in the morning due to mixed signals from global markets and FIIs leaving. Sensex also followed the same path. After the afternoon, it recovered after finding support at the crucial 22800 level. Investors recovered intraday losses as they bought IT, pharma, oil and gas shares. Overall, Nifty lost 14 points and Sensex lost 29 points.



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a strong brand presence, robust distribution network, and is expanding in premium product categories. Rising demand in housing and infrastructure. Expanding premium product lines. Strong brand recall and distribution network.

2. Sundaram Finance

Sundaram Finance is a leading non-bank-



SUNDARAM FINANCE
Enduring values. New age thinking.

ing financial company (NBFC) specializing in commercial vehicle and auto financing. The company has a strong presence in South India and a history of conservative lending. Rising demand for vehicle financing. Expansion in rural and used vehicle finance. Strong capital adequacy ratio.

3. Tech Mahindra

Tech Mahindra is one of India's top IT services companies, with a strong focus on telecom, BFSI, healthcare, and digital transformation. The company has been expanding in



AI, cloud computing, and cybersecurity services. Strong order book in telecom and BFSI segments. Expansion in AI and cloud solutions. Increasing digital transformation projects. Slowdown in IT spending by global clients. Margin pressure due to wage hikes and competition.

4. Axis Bank

Axis Bank is one of India's largest private sector



banks, offering retail, corporate, and investment banking services. The bank has a strong digital presence and a growing loan book. Expanding retail and digital banking services. Strong loan growth across sectors. Low non-performing assets (NPA).

5. NLC India

NLC India is a public sector company engaged in coal mining and power generation. It is expanding into renewable energy, particularly solar and wind power projects. Government push for renewable energy projects. Stable coal-based power demand. Expansion in solar and wind energy.



The BSE Sensex, which closed at 75,996 in the previous session, opened at 76,073 on Tuesday. It touched an intraday low of 75,531. It reached an intraday high of 76,091. Finally, it closed at 75,967, down 29 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 22,963, touched a low of 22,801 and a high of 22,992. It closed at 22,945, down 14 points. The Nifty Bank lost 171 points and settled at 49,087.

In the Nifty50, 18 companies gained while 32 lost. NTPC, Tech Mahindra, Wipro, ONGC and Apollo Hospitals were the top gainers. IndusInd Bank, Trent, BEL, UltraTech Cement and Mahindra & Mahindra were the biggest losers. IT, Oil & Gas indices rose. Realty, Metal and Finance indices ended flat. Bank, auto, FMCG, media, pharma, consumer durables stocks were volatile.

Market breadth on NSE today turned in favor of sellers. Out of a total of 2928 stocks traded, 720 gained and 2128 lost. 14 stocks touched 52-week highs. 652 stocks touched 52-week lows.

Rupee weakened by 7 paise to settle at 86.94 against dollar. Morgan Stanley has given an overweight rating to Deepak Nitrate with a target price of Rs 3000. CLSA has given an underperform rating to Nazara Technologies with a target price of Rs 665. Quality Power Electrical received a response of 1.16 times by noon on the third day. Shares of Mahanagar Gas rose after the Mumbai Municipal Commission ordered roadside vendors and restaurants to switch to clean energy. CLSA gave Tech Mahindra an Outperform rating at Rs 2030. 16 lakh shares changed hands in GAIL. Reliance Infra is looking to enter the renewable energy manufacturing industry. Shares of Rate Gain Travel Technologies fell to an 18-month low after successive cuts in its FY2025 guidance. JPMorgan gave Persistent Systems an Outperform rating with a target price of Rs 7200.

1. Berger Paints

Berger Paints is India's second-largest paint manufacturer, offering decorative and industrial paints. The company has



India's Fiscal Deficit Target for FY2026 Set at 4.5%, Focus on Capital Expenditure Growth



India's fiscal deficit target for FY2026 is projected to be set at 4.5% of the country's GDP, marking a reduction of 25-30 basis points compared to the anticipated fiscal deficit of 4.8% in FY2025. This follows the government's efforts to rein in fiscal deficits while continuing to support economic growth through infrastructure and capital spending.

lakh crore, which accounts for 46% of the budgeted target of ₹11.11 lakh crore. Nayar stressed that a large capex shortfall is expected for the current fiscal year, and for FY2026, maintaining a fiscal deficit target of 4.5% of GDP would be realistic. This would enable a capex allocation of ₹11 trillion, marking an 11-12% growth compared to FY2025's feasible capex figure.

Domestic credit rating agency ICRA has emphasized the need for the government to prioritize capital expenditure (capex), estimating that the target for Budget 2025 should be ₹11 lakh crore. ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar highlighted that the current year's budgeted capex of ₹11.11 lakh crore is likely to fall short by around ₹1.4 lakh crore, and next year's capex target should align with the previous year's level to stay within borrowing limits. Nayar also noted that the capex spending for FY2025 is currently trailing the required run rate, indicating a potential shortfall.

Nayar also warned that setting a higher capex target could be "imprudent," as larger borrowing and a higher fiscal deficit would increase yields. Over the past few years, India has ramped up its capex spending to stimulate the economy, with increases from ₹4.39 lakh crore in 2020-21 to ₹10 lakh crore in FY2023-24. This push has been vital in stimulating economic growth and generating a positive cycle that benefits other sectors.

In conclusion, while India aims to reduce its fiscal deficit in FY2026, prioritizing capital expenditure remains crucial to sustaining economic momentum and supporting infrastructure development.

Between April and November 2024, the government's capex spending amounted to ₹5.13

Samsung Electronics to Cancel \$2.01 Billion in Treasury Shares as Part of Buyback Plan



Samsung Electronics announced on Tuesday that it will cancel 3 trillion won (\$2.01 billion) worth of treasury stocks as part of its ongoing buyback initiative aimed at enhancing shareholder value. The company will retire approximately 50.1 million common shares and 6.9 million preferred shares, according to a regulatory filing.

In related news, Samsung Electronics Chairman Lee Jae-yong emerged as the top dividend earner in South Korea last year. According to a survey by corporate data tracker Leaders Index, Lee received 346.5 billion won in dividends for 2024, marking a 7.1% increase from the previous year. The survey, which covered 560 companies, revealed that these firms collectively distributed 40.7 trillion won (US\$28.2 billion) in dividends, reflecting a 10.4% increase from 2023.

Hyundai Motor Group's Honorary Chairman Chung Mong-koo and Executive Chair Euisun Chung ranked second and third for dividends, receiving 189.2 billion won and 174.7 billion won, respectively. Meanwhile, SK Group Chairman Chey Tae-won ranked seventh, receiving 91 billion won in dividends. Among the surveyed companies, 285 increased their dividends, 94 maintained the same level as in 2023, and 181 reduced their payouts.

This move follows a decision made by the Samsung board in November 2024 to repurchase a total of 10 trillion won worth of shares over the course of the upcoming year. The initial phase will involve the buyback of 3 trillion won worth of shares within three months, which will then be fully canceled. By reducing the number of outstanding shares, Samsung aims to improve its earnings per share (EPS) and support its stock price, ultimately benefiting its investors.

SK hynix, a key affiliate of SK Group, saw its dividends nearly double following record earnings driven by high demand for artificial intelligence (AI) chips. This trend of increasing dividends reflects a strong performance by major corporations in South Korea.

3rd in a row: Goods exports shrink 2.4%



India's merchandise exports saw a decline for the third consecutive month in January 2025, with exports falling to \$36.43 billion, representing a 2.38% drop compared to the same month last year. The dip in exports has raised concerns about the country's trade performance as global demand remains sluggish.

The merchandise trade deficit also widened, reaching \$22.99 billion in January, an increase from \$16.56 billion in January 2024 and \$21.94 billion in December 2024. This growing trade gap highlights the challenges faced by India's export sector, which has been struggling to recover from various global and domestic economic pressures.

Several factors have contributed to the

decline in exports, including weakening demand from major trading partners and the global slowdown in economic growth. Key export sectors, including petroleum products, gems and jewelry, and engineering goods, have seen reduced demand. This trend is in line with broader global economic conditions, which have been characterized by lower consumer spending and slower growth in both advanced and emerging economies.

The widening trade deficit is a cause for concern as it could exert pressure on India's foreign exchange reserves and contribute to the depreciation of the rupee. As India continues to grapple with challenges in the global market, experts suggest that there is a need for increased

focus on diversifying export markets and enhancing the competitiveness of Indian goods.

Despite these challenges, the Indian government has emphasized its commitment to boosting exports and addressing structural issues in the trade sector. Measures to improve logistics, enhance export credit availability, and provide incentives for export-oriented industries are expected to play a role in supporting India's long-term trade growth.

The outlook for India's export sector remains uncertain, but officials remain hopeful that recovery will take place with the right policy measures and favorable global conditions in the near future.



China Approves Deep-Sea Research Facility to Boost Marine Exploration



China has officially approved the construction of a deep-sea research facility in the South China Sea, a move that could significantly advance marine exploration and bolster Beijing's geopolitical influence in the region. After years of planning and technical evaluations, the approval marks a major milestone in the country's deep-sea scientific pursuits. The facility, located at a depth of 2,000

meters (6,560 feet) in the resource-rich and strategically important South China Sea, will focus on studying "cold seep" ecosystems, areas where cold methane and hydrogen-rich fluids seep from the seabed. The research station will be equipped to support up to six scientists for missions lasting up to a month. To endure the extreme conditions of the deep sea, the facility will feature an advanced life-support sys-

tem and be designed for long-term operation.

The research facility will also incorporate cutting-edge technologies, including a four-dimensional surveillance grid that integrates surface ships, unmanned submersibles, and seabed observatories. This network will enhance data collection, enabling comprehensive deep-sea exploration and research. The new facility is expected to be part of a broader infrastructure project, including a vast fibre-optic communication system on the seabed and the drilling ship "Mengxiang". The latter will be tasked with exploring the Earth's mantle and investigating deep-sea resources, adding another layer of capability to China's growing marine exploration ambitions.

This deep-sea station will not only advance scientific knowledge but also give China greater control over one of the world's most contested and resource-abundant maritime regions, further strengthening its strategic influence in the South China Sea.

The Great London Beer Flood: When Beer Became a Tsunami

On October 17, 1814, London witnessed one of the most bizarre disasters in history: the Great London Beer Flood. Instead of rain, the streets of St Giles Rookery were flooded with beer, creating a chaotic scene that would forever be etched in the annals of odd historical events.

It all began at the Meux & Co Horse Shoe Brewery, located in the bustling Tottenham Court Road area. At around 4:30 PM, one of the brewery's massive wooden fermentation tanks, holding over 3,500 barrels of fermenting porter beer, suddenly gave way. The iron rings holding the tank together snapped, causing a catastrophic chain reaction. Within minutes, the rupture unleashed between 128,000 and 323,000 gallons (4.85 lakh - 12.2 lakh liters) of beer onto the streets. A 15-foot wave of alcohol surged through the densely populated slum, tearing down houses and claiming the lives of eight people.

As the beer flooded the streets, locals, in a bizarre twist, rushed to scoop up the "free beer," with some even drinking it straight from the ground. Sadly, a ninth victim succumbed to alcohol poisoning



days after the event, highlighting the dangers of such an unexpected deluge. The aftermath of the flood was both tragic and surreal. The stench of beer lingered in the air for months, while reports of more casualties surfaced, including one involving a collapsed floor at an Irish wake, plunging visitors into a beer-soaked cellar.

The brewery faced legal consequences, but was ultimately absolved after the event was deemed an "act of God." How-

ever, Meux & Co suffered significant financial losses, nearly bankrupting the company. The disaster did, however, result in the implementation of new safety regulations for breweries, replacing wooden casks with safer materials like concrete.

The Great Beer Flood became a source of humor and inspiration in art and literature, reminding us that even in the most chaotic moments, there's always room for a laugh.

Pizza Hut Hong Kong Introduces Snake Meat Pizza: A Bold Culinary Experiment



Pizza lovers around the world are used to seeing all sorts of quirky toppings on their favorite pies, from pineapple to seafood. However, Pizza Hut in Hong Kong has taken the concept of unusual pizza toppings to a whole new level by introducing a truly shocking ingredient: snake meat.

In collaboration with Ser Wong Fun, a restaurant that has been serving traditional Chinese cuisine for over 100 years, Pizza Hut has created a unique pizza that features shredded snake meat as its star topping. The nine-inch pizza, which is available until November 22, also includes black mushrooms, Chinese

dried ham, and is topped with an abalone sauce base, replacing the usual tomato sauce.

According to CNN, this experimental pizza is designed to challenge the conventional notion of what a pizza should be and offers a bold departure from traditional Italian

flavors. Pizza Hut Hong Kong believes that the addition of snake meat, paired with cheese and diced chicken, enriches the flavor profile and offers a new taste experience that also ties into health-conscious eating. They described the dish as not just an exciting culinary adventure but also a way to rethink the relationship between food and well-being.

For those brave enough to try it, the snake meat pizza combines rich flavors and textures, with the tender snake meat complementing the savory cheese and unique abalone sauce. While it may sound strange to some, it's a part of a growing trend where restaurants around the world are pushing the boundaries of what ingredients belong on a pizza.

Pizza Hut's snake meat pizza may not be for everyone, but it's certainly a conversation starter. Whether you're an adventurous foodie or simply curious about unusual global dishes, this pizza is one way to experience an entirely new take on a classic comfort food.

Italian Woman Undergoes 20 Body Modifications to Become a Human Cat



Chiara Dell'Abate, an Italian woman who goes by the name Aydin Mod, has revealed that she is on a unique quest to transform herself into a "human cat." At just 22 years old, Dell'Abate has undergone an astonishing 20 body modifications to achieve her dream, including over 72 piercings, subdermal implants, and even cosmetic surgery.

Her journey into body modification began at the young age of 11 when she got her first ear piercing and started stretching her ears. Over the years, her transformation has grown more extreme, with her most recent changes including split tongue procedures, punched nostrils, and multiple piercings on her lips and inner labia. She also underwent blepharoplasty, a surgery that removes excess skin or fat from the eyelids, to further enhance her cat-like appearance. Dell'Abate's modifications don't stop there. She has added 10 subdermal implants on both her hands, which give her a more unique, otherworldly look. Ad-

ditionally, her transformation includes eyeball tattoos, pointed ears, permanent eyeliner, and even claw-like nails to complete her feline-inspired aesthetic.

In a TikTok video that has gone viral with over 65 million views, Dell'Abate shows off her split tongue as it flicks through two holes above her lips, further showcasing her dedication to becoming a human cat. Despite being criticized and labeled as "psychotic" by some, Dell'Abate remains confident and unapologetic about her lifestyle choice. When asked about her transformation, she explained, "I'm thinking that I would be a pretty cool cat lady." Embracing her distinctive look, she continues to document her body modifications and share them on social media platforms, where she has attracted a large following.

While her extreme modifications may be shocking to some, Dell'Abate sees her unique appearance as an expression of her true self and an example of the possibilities of body modification.

Man Calls Mumbai "Chaotic and Unlivable," Compares it to Dubai in Viral Reddit Post



In a viral Reddit post, a man from Mumbai shared his recent experiences comparing his hometown to Dubai, calling Mumbai "chaotic and unlivable." Despite spending over 40 years in Mumbai, the Reddit user, identified as Mr. Yash, expressed that his trip to Dubai made him acutely aware of the glaring differences between the two cities.

Yash highlighted that Dubai, being a developed city, has a significant edge over Mumbai in various aspects, including infrastructure, traffic management, and civic sense. "I just came back from a week-long trip to Dubai. When you are back from a developed country, you can see just how far behind we are," he wrote. While not his first visit to a developed country, he not-

ed that this time, the contrasts were more apparent.

He pointed out several frustrations he has with Mumbai, such as its "non-existent infrastructure" and the lack of road discipline, which he believes worsens traffic congestion. "Main roads that have no lanes, construction and debris everywhere," he complained. Yash also mentioned the city's ongoing pollution issues, saying it "burns your throat." The overwhelming presence of trash and rubble, coupled with chaotic traffic, left him feeling disillusioned with his home city.

In contrast, Yash praised Dubai's organization and cleanliness. He observed that Dubai's roads were clearly marked, with separate lanes and designated truck routes that avoided congestion. He was also impressed by the disciplined traffic flow in Dubai, where vehicles stop at signals, and drivers do not cut in front of each other, unlike the situation in Mumbai.

While Yash confessed his love for Mumbai, he ultimately concluded that the city, which serves as India's financial capital, is becoming increasingly unlivable. He urged for better infrastructure and a more organized approach to urban planning, which he believes could help Mumbai catch up with cities like Dubai.

FIH Hockey Pro League: Germany Defeats India 4-1 with Dominant Performance



minute. From the very beginning, both teams showcased their competitive spirit, with the game producing fast-paced, thrilling action. While India enjoyed greater possession in the early minutes, Germany's tactical brilliance paid off in the 7th minute, as Florian Sperling finished a superb assist from Eric Kleinlein to open the scoring. India quickly responded in the 13th minute, when Rajinder Singh set up Gurjant Singh with a well-executed cross to equalize. However, Germany took control again in the 14th minute, when Thies Prinz scored a dramatic goal, extending their lead to 2-1 despite a defensive hit on Manpreet Singh. The second quarter saw India push for an equalizer, with young forwards creating several chances. Nilakanta Sharma's brilliant pass to Abhishek in the 17th minute came close, but Abhishek failed to control it. Another opportunity arrived when Gurjant Singh missed a deflection attempt in the 20th minute. Suraj Karkera, who replaced Krishan Pathak

in the second quarter, was key in goal, making a brilliant save after India lost possession. India also had chances, with Dilpreet's unconventional shot on goal failing to find the mark. The third quarter was intense, with India earning a penalty corner in the 38th minute. Jugraj Singh, filling in for the rested Harmanpreet Singh, attempted a flick but failed to execute it successfully. India's defense remained strong, but a crucial moment arrived in the 50th minute when Michel Struthoff capitalized on a rebound to score, extending Germany's lead to 3-1. With a growing deficit, India intensified their search for goals, but to their dismay, Germany sealed their victory with a fourth goal from Raphael Hartkopf in the 55th minute, ending the match 4-1 in favor of the World Champions. Despite a spirited performance, India couldn't overcome the German side's dominance, leaving them with a bitter defeat in this high-stakes encounter.

The reigning World Champions, Germany, put on a stellar display to secure a comprehensive 4-1 win over India in a thrilling encounter at the FIH Hockey Pro League 2024-25 at the iconic Kalinga Hockey Stadium on Tuesday. Germany's goals came from Florian Sperling (7'), Thies Prinz (14'), Michel Struthoff (48'), and Raphael Hartkopf (55'), while India's lone goal came from Gurjant Singh in the 13th

Russia, Greece, and India Join Forces to Expand Modern Pythian Games



In a groundbreaking move towards global cultural unity, representatives from the International Delphic Committee (Russia), Ecumenical Delphic Union (Greece), and International Pythian Council (India) have joined hands to strengthen the Modern Pythian Games. The collaboration aims to establish a larger platform for arts, culture, and traditional games, expanding the global reach of this revived cultural movement. The Modern Pythian Games celebrate artistic, cultural, and traditional sports excellence, providing an international platform for artists, performers, and athletes. This partnership marks a new chapter in promoting global cultural exchange, with both online and offline participation opportunities for individuals worldwide. Bijender Goel, Founder of the Modern Pythian Games, emphasized that this collaboration signals a new era of cross-cultural cooperation. Discussions are set to finalize the strategy and framework of this global initiative. In addition, Goel has invited Russia to participate in the upcoming 1st Global Para Pythian Games 2025, hosted by India, which will focus on empowering disabled artists and athletes. This alliance promises to enhance cultural diplomacy, inclusivity, and foster a revolution in sports and the arts by offering a truly global stage for creative expression and talent.

USA Breaks India's 1985 Record for Successfully Defending Lowest Total in ODI

In a remarkable achievement, the USA broke India's long-standing record for successfully defending the lowest total in a full men's ODI. On Tuesday, the USA, after posting a modest 123 runs in their first innings, managed to defend it and defeated Oman by 57 runs in their ICC Men's Cricket World Cup League 2 match. India's previous record was set in 1985 during the Rothmans Four-Nations Cup, when they defended a total of 125 runs against Pakistan in Sharjah. India emerged victorious by 38 runs in that match, which had stood as the lowest total ever defended in an ODI for nearly four decades. The USA-Oman match was a unique encounter, with the entire game being dominated by spin bowling. All nine bowlers used in the match were spinners, marking the first game in ODI history after 4,671 matches in which no pacer bowled a single delivery. This rare scenario added a distinctive flair to the contest. The match also witnessed a record-setting 19 wickets falling, the same number as the ODI between Pakistan and Bangladesh in 2011 in Chattogram, where spinners claimed all the wickets. The combined total score of both teams was just 187 runs



from 61 overs, making it the second-lowest aggregate in ODI history where both teams were dismissed. The lowest aggregate remains a 163-run game between India and Bangladesh in 2014, played in 41 overs. Milind Kumar was the standout performer for the USA, scoring a steady 47* off 82 balls, leading

his team's efforts. Oman's bowlers, particularly Shakeel Ahmad, were impressive, with Ahmad claiming three wickets for just 20 runs. However, despite his efforts, Oman's chase of 123 faltered badly, with Hammad Mirza's 29 off 43 being the only score of note in their reply. USA's Nosthush Kenjige was the

hero with the ball, taking an incredible five-wicket haul. His spell dismantled the Oman batting lineup, which was bowled out for a mere 65 runs, sealing a comfortable 57-run victory for the USA. This game will now be remembered as a historic moment in ODI cricket for the USA.

InBL Pro U25 2025: Gujarat Stallions Edge Past Chennai Heat in Thrilling 74-72 Victory



In a thrilling encounter that kept fans on the edge of their seats, the Gujarat Stallions emerged victorious with a hard-fought 74-72 win over the Chennai Heat at the Thyagraj Indoor Stadium in the InBL Pro U25. Despite the victory, the Stallions remain behind on a head-to-head basis after losing by 8 points to the Heat in their earlier tournament encounter. The match saw multiple lead changes, with standout performances from both teams. Chennai Heat's Arvinder Singh played a key role in the first quarter, leading his team to a 17-13 advantage. Matt Gray followed suit, contributing a couple of crucial three-pointers. The Gujarat Stallions, however, stayed in the contest thanks to Trenderon Hankerson's consistent scoring. The second quarter saw a surge from the Stallions, with Joshua Duach coming off the bench to score nine quick points, and Jock Perry joining the offensive charge. The Stallions ended the first half with a solid 41-29 lead, setting up a tense second half.

FIH Hockey Pro League: India Women's Team Falls Short Against Spain in Thrilling 4-3 Defeat

The India women's hockey team suffered a heartbreaking 4-3 loss to Spain in a thrilling encounter at the FIH Hockey Pro League 2024/25 at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar, on Tuesday. Spain dominated the final moments to edge past India in a high-intensity match. Baljeet Kaur (19'), Sakshi Rana (38'), and Rutaja Dadaso Pisal (45') scored for India, while Estel Petchame (25', 49'), Sofia Rogoski (21'), and captain Lucia Jimenez (52') found the net for Spain. The match began with both teams battling for dominance. India had an early chance when Sharmila Devi's shot narrowly missed the post, while Spain struggled to break India's defensive press. India earned the first penalty corner of the match but failed to capitalize. Spain's defense held firm until India's Baljeet Kaur scored her first senior international goal in the 19th minute. However, Spain responded swiftly, with Sofia Rogoski and Estel Petchame putting



Spain ahead 3-1 by the end of the second quarter. India fought back in the third quarter, with debutant Sakshi Rana equalizing before Rutaja Da-

daso Pisal restored India's lead. Yet, Spain continued to press, with Petchame scoring again and Jimenez netting the winner in the 52nd minute. Despite in-

dia's desperate attempt to equalize by pulling their goalkeeper in the final minutes, Spain maintained their lead to secure the 4-3 victory.



“Hari Hara Veera Mallu” to Release on March 28: Producer AM Ratnam Confirms



Powerstar Pawan Kalyan's upcoming film Hari Hara Veera Mallu is all set to hit the big screens on March 28, as confirmed by the producer, AM Ratnam. In a recent interview, Ratnam reassured fans that there would be no delays and that the film would release on the previously announced date. He also stated that the remaining shoot featuring Pawan Kalyan is currently being completed. On the occasion of Valentine's Day, the movie unit announced a key up-

date: the second single, a romantic track titled “Kollagottindhiro,” will be released on February 24 at 3 PM. Fans are eagerly awaiting the song's release.

Hari Hara Veera Mallu is a period action drama directed by Krish Jagarlamudi, with AM Ratnam's son Jyothi Krishna taking over the remaining portions of direction. Music is by Oscar-winning composer Keeravani. Nidhi Agerwal stars alongside Pawan Kalyan in the film.

Jyothika's New Netflix Crime Thriller “Dabba Cartel” Set to Stream on February 28



Netflix is all set to launch its latest crime thriller series, Dabba Cartel, which revolves around five women involved in a drug trafficking operation. Directed by Hitesh Bhatia, the series features an impressive cast including Shabana Azmi, Jyothika, and Shalini Pandey in pivotal roles. Premiering on February 28, the show is set in the backdrop of Mumbai's suburban areas, known for its thriving ‘dabba’ (lunch delivery) business. The story follows five women who venture into the illicit drug trade through the lunchboxes delivered to customers. Confident in their intel-

lect and skills, they begin their operations with full belief that no one can catch them. However, their journey is filled with unpredictable twists as they face challenges that test their wit and survival instincts. Blending crime with comedy, Dabba Cartel promises to offer a fresh take on the genre. With the rising demand for crime thrillers on OTT platforms, this series is expected to captivate audiences. Fans are eager to see how the show will be received, given its unique premise and star-studded cast.

Sikandar New Poster: All Eyes On Salman Khan Ahead of Release



Salman Khan fans have a reason to celebrate as the superstar recently unveiled a thrilling new poster of his upcoming film, Sikandar, which is set to

release on March 28. The intense poster showcases Salman in a fierce, all-black avatar, sporting a rugged bearded look and an earring. What stands out the most, however, is the fire in his eyes—capturing the essence of his character in a truly captivating way. The poster reveal coincided with the 59th birthday of Sikandar's producer, Sajid Nadiadwala. The film, produced under Nadiadwala Grandson Entertainment, marks the second collaboration between Salman and Sajid, following their successful partnership in the 2014 blockbuster Kick. To make the moment even more special, Salman

shared a heartwarming birthday wish for Sajid, along with the exciting poster announcement on Instagram.

Directed by AR Murugadoss, Sikandar stars Rashmika Mandanna as the female lead, with a supporting cast that includes Kajal Aggarwal, Prateik Babbar, Sharman Joshi, and Sathyaraj. Earlier this year, the much-anticipated teaser was released, giving fans a glimpse of Salman's action-packed role.

With the poster and teaser setting the stage, anticipation is high for Sikandar as it gears up for its big-screen release.

Amid Dating Rumours With Vijay Deverakonda, Rashmika Mandanna Receives Roses From Her “Paapalu”



Rashmika Mandanna, who is basking in the success of her latest film Chhaava, has once again ignited dating rumours with Vijay Deverakonda. The actress posted a cryptic story on Instagram on February 17, sharing a picture of herself holding a beautiful bouquet of red roses. The accompanying note read, “You always know how to put a smile on my face paapalu” (with a red heart emoji), though she did not reveal the sender's identity.

The pair, who starred together in the successful films Geetha Govindam (2018) and Dear Comrade (2019), have long been the subject of relationship speculations. While they have never confirmed their romantic status, their social media posts continue to fuel the rumours. For instance, on February 13, Rashmika shared the poster for Vijay's upcoming film Kingdom, cheerfully endorsing his work and expressing admiration.

In a recent interview with The Hollywood Reporter, Rashmika hinted at having a “partner” in her life, sharing her belief in the importance of home and personal connections. She emphasized how she cherishes her privacy, despite the public attention surrounding her career.

On the work front, Rashmika's Chhaava, which tells the story of Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, hit theaters on February 14, starring alongside Vicky Kaushal.

“Exhuma”: A Chilling Korean Horror Movie Now Streaming on Amazon Prime

The Korean horror movie Exhuma has recently made its way to Amazon Prime, offering a spine-chilling experience for horror fans. Directed by Jang Jae-hyun, the film follows a haunting tale revolving around two coffins. Starring Choi Min-sik, Kim Go-eun, Yoo Hae-jin, and Lee Do-hyun, Exhuma initially hit theaters in February 2024, before its recent streaming release.

The story centers on Park Ji-young, a young man living in the U.S. with his family. When his newborn son cries incessantly, they seek help from a paranormal expert, who believes a vengeful spirit of Park's late grandfather is behind the child's distress. The investigation leads to the discovery of two coffins, with one unleashing a vengeful spirit. As the story unfolds, dark secrets tied to an ancient war between nations come to light.

While the film follows a familiar supernatural premise, the tension escalates when a second coffin is uncovered. The movie combines eerie photography, intense sound



effects, and blood-curdling moments, creating a gripping narrative. However, the gruesome visuals may not be suitable for all viewers. Exhuma scores a 3/5, providing an intriguing horror experience.