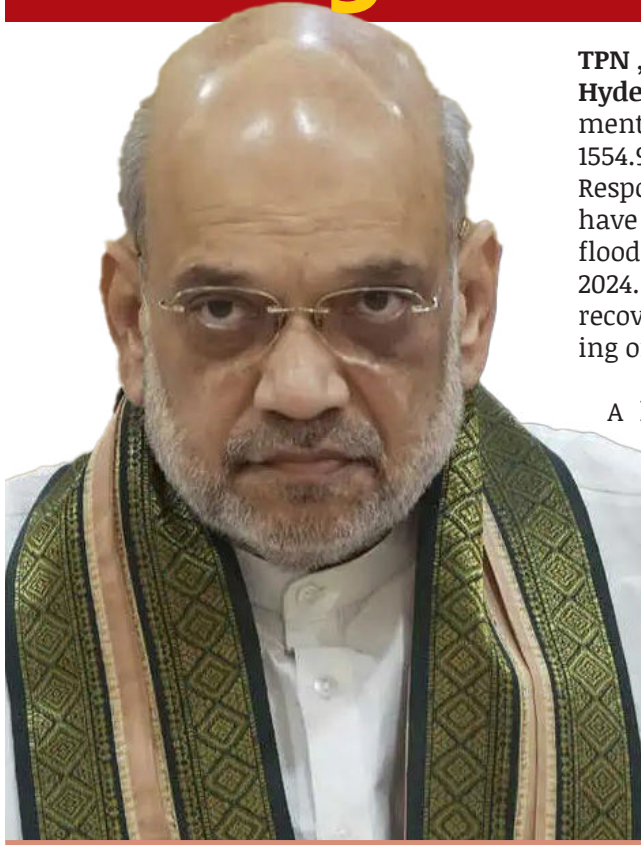




**Weather Forecast**

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

# Center Approves NDRF Funds for Telangana and Four Other States



TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad , Feb 20 : The Union government has sanctioned an additional Rs 1554.99 crore under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) for five states that have been severely affected by floods, flash floods, landslides, and cyclonic storms in 2024. These funds are aimed at aiding the recovery efforts and alleviating the suffering of people in the affected regions.

A high-level committee led by Union Home Minister Amit Shah approved the additional central assistance for the states, including Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Odisha, Telangana, and Tripura. The funds have been allocated as follows:

- **Andhra Pradesh:** Rs 608.08 crore
- **Nagaland:**

Rs 170.99 crore

- **Odisha:** Rs 255.24 crore
- **Telangana:** Rs 231.75 crore
- **Tripura:** Rs 288.93 crore

Amit Shah, in a post on social media platform X, reiterated the Modi government's commitment to standing firmly in support of disaster-affected people, stating, "The Modi government stands like a rock in support of the disaster-affected people. Today, the MHA approved an additional central assistance of Rs 1554.99 crore to Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland, Odisha, Telangana, and Tripura under the NDR fund." This approval is over and above the already allocated Rs 18,322.80 crore released by the Centre to 27 states under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

The NDRF funds will be adjusted with 50% of the opening balance available in the SDRF for

**2 PAGE**



# WE WILL COME BACK

TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad , Feb 20 : Telangana Chief Minister and BRS party leader K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) has made a significant statement, hinting at another public movement in the state. In a meeting with party leaders at the Telangana Bhavan, KCR expressed his confidence that the BRS is the only party capable of fighting for the people's welfare. He called on his party workers to prepare for a new struggle against the Congress, accusing the party of implementing anti-people policies. KCR stated that BRS would undoubtedly come to power in 2028, predicting that Congress's rule would only take Telangana backwards. KCR also shared plans to celebrate BRS's silver jubilee, marking 25 years since the party's formation. He announced that a large public meeting

would be held on April 27 to commemorate the occasion, and year-long celebrations would follow. Additionally, the BRS leader revealed that structural committees would be set up within the party, with Harish Rao appointed as the in-charge. The party's membership registration drive will also begin on April 10 across all district headquarters in Telangana, KCR confirmed. Addressing rumors that the BRS's work was over, KCR dismissed such claims and emphasized that his party is committed to serving the people. He vowed that the BRS would return to power and continue its mission of welfare and development in the state. This marks a new chapter for the party, with KCR rallying support for future struggles and the continuous growth of BRS.

**2 PAGE**

# IF SO STRONG, WHY ESCAPED FROM MLC POLLS?

Telangana's MLC elections are heating up with Congress and BJP in the race, while BRS stays away.

The ruling BRS party's decision to not contest the MLC elections has raised many questions.

Congress has criticized BRS, accusing it of indirectly supporting the BJP in the elections.

BRS's absence from the MLC elections has caused dissatisfaction among its cadre.

KCR's strategy remains unclear, leaving party insiders confused.

Discussions are circulating on how avoiding the elections might impact BRS's image.

TPN , Kishore katta

Hyderabad , Feb 20 : The political scenario in Telangana has become more interesting with the MLC elections approaching. While the Congress and BJP are actively contesting, BRS, the ruling party, has decided to stay out of the race, which has become a subject of much speculation. The party, which has often criticized the Congress government's failures, is now being questioned for not capitalizing on the opportunity. BRS leaders have consistently attacked the Congress for its failure to fulfill promises, leading to growing public discontent. Despite this, the party's decision to not contest the MLC elections remains puzzling. Some speculated that BRS could have used Congress's weakened position to gain an upper hand, yet it has chosen to remain silent on the matter. Internal discussions within the party suggest that the lack of strong candidates for the elections is one reason for BRS's decision. However, some critics have raised concerns that BRS might be supporting BJP indirectly by avoiding the elections. This decision is especially surprising as BRS has historically held strong influence in key



**2 PAGE**

# NO CHANCE FOR BY-ELECTION



TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad , Feb 20 : Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy has countered KCR's recent remarks about upcoming by-elections. Kiran Kumar Reddy stated, "KCR claims by-elections are coming soon, but there's no possibility of by-elections for the next five years. Even in local body elections,

Congress has a strong presence. KCR is merely sending such messages to motivate his workers. He is spreading rumors that Congress is losing ground, but that's not true. If KCR had any sincerity, he would come to the Assembly as the opposition leader

**2 PAGE**

# Harish Rao Gets Relief in Phone Tapping Case from High Court

Harish Rao files petition in High Court to quash case registered at Punjagutta Police Station.

Court issues stay on further investigation into the phone tapping case.

The case involves allegations by real estate businessman Chakradhar who claims his phone was tapped.

TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad , Feb 20 : In a major development in the phone tapping case, Telangana's senior leader and former minister Harish Rao has received relief from the Telangana High Court. The case was registered at the Punjagutta Police Station following a complaint by Chakradhar, a real estate businessman, who alleged that his



**2 PAGE**

# Telangana CS Facing Criticism from Secretariat Employees

TPN , Correspondent

Hyderabad , Feb 20 :Telangana Chief Secretary Shanti Kumari is facing strong criticism from Secretariat employees due to recent allegations regarding the handling of transfers. Employees claim that she did not maintain fairness in the process, with accusations that she applied different rules for her close associates and other employees.

transfers, employees who had been working in the same position for years were relocated. However, the criticism centers around the fact that those who are close to the Chief Secretary were given preferred postings, while others were transferred to less favorable locations.

This perceived favoritism has caused significant unrest among

It has been reported that, in recent

**2 PAGE**





## Telangana Minister Secures Assurance from Union Minister on Water Issues and Irrigation Projects

TPN , Correspondent  
Hyderabad , Feb 20 : Telangana Irrigation Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy has secured a firm assurance from Union Minister for Jal Shakti, CR Patil, regarding the Centre's intervention in addressing the state's ongoing water issues. The minister sought immediate action on water disputes with Andhra Pradesh and faster approvals for key irrigation projects during the second All India State Water Ministers' Conference held in Udaipur.

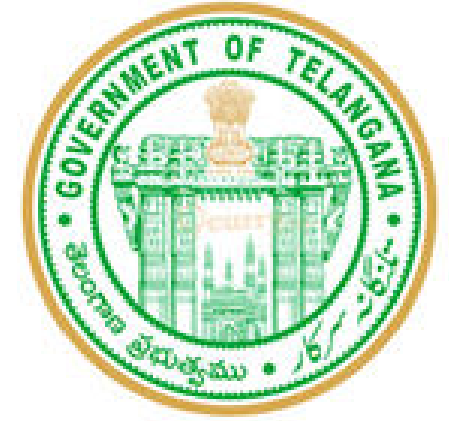


In a discussion with Debashree Mukherjee, Secretary of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Uttam raised concerns over Andhra Pradesh allegedly drawing excess water illegally from the backwaters of the Srisailem Dam and the Nagarjuna Sagar Project during

the current Rabi season. The Telangana government is worried about the impact on crops in the Nalgonda and Khammam districts. The Union Minister assured that the Government of India would take immediate action

to ensure fair water distribution between the two states and prevent unauthorized withdrawals. Uttam Kumar Reddy also emphasized the installation of telemetry systems at 35 points along the Krishna River to provide real-time data on water usage, ensuring adherence to allocated quotas. Additionally, the Telangana minister urged the Centre to expedite the proceedings of the Krishna Water Disputes Tribunal-II (KWDT-II) and sanction critical irrigation projects, including the Palamuru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme, Sitarama Sagar Project, and Sammakka Sagar Project. The Centre's intervention is seen as crucial to resolving the long-standing water sharing dispute between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

## Telangana to Allocate Sufficient Funds for Aarogyasri Scheme in 2025-26 Budget: Deputy CM



### AAROGYASRI Health Care Trust

TPN , Correspondent  
Hyderabad , Feb 20 : Telangana Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, assured that the state government will allocate adequate funds for the Aarogyasri scheme in the upcoming 2025-26 Budget to further strengthen the health sector.

During a pre-Budget meeting with Health Minister Damodar Rajanarasimha and senior officials from the Health, Science, and Technology departments, Vikramarka emphasized the effective utilization of Union government funds under Centrally Sponsored Schemes. He also confirmed that the construction of new medical colleges and government hospitals would be completed within the next year. Furthermore, the Telangana government plans to establish science and technology planetariums across various districts to promote scientific knowledge. Criticizing the previous BRS government for neglecting the Drug and Food Safety Authority and the Medical Education Wing, the Deputy CM highlighted that the current government is working towards strengthening both bodies for better service delivery. The meeting was attended by senior officials, including Special Chief Secretary of the Finance Department, K. Ramakrishna Rao, and Principal Secretary of the Health Department, Christina Z. Chongthu, who discussed strategies to improve health infrastructure and services across the state.

1st Page Cont..

## Center Approves NDRF Funds for Telangana and Four Other States

the year. The funds released by the Centre are essential to support the recovery and rehabilitation processes, especially for states that have faced significant damage from natural disasters.

In total, during the financial year 2024-25, the Centre has released substantial financial assistance across different funds: Rs 18,322.80 crore from SDRF to 27 states, Rs 4,808.30 crore from NDRF to 18 states, and additional funds from both the State and National Disaster Mitigation Funds (SDMF and NDMF).

## IF SO STRONG, WHY ESCAPED FROM MLC POLLS?

regions where these elections are taking place. The loss in the Warangal MLC by-election has already caused some damage to BRS's image, and another defeat in the upcoming elections could have an even greater impact. Party leadership, including KCR, has indicated that if the results are close, it could significantly affect the party's credibility. As the situation unfolds, the reasons behind BRS's decision to skip the MLC elections remain unclear, fueling ongoing political debates.

## NO CHANCE FOR BY-ELECTION

and discuss the people's problems instead of making baseless statements from his farmhouse." This comes after a meeting chaired by KCR at the Telangana Bhavan, where the BRS president addressed party workers. KCR hinted that by-elections might be coming soon, and while emphasizing the importance of their Silver Jubilee celebrations, he remarked, "In this government's term, state revenues have declined. Soon, by-elections will be here, and we will regain power. Be ready, and you will again be the MLAs."

## Harish Rao Gets Relief in Phone Tapping Case from High Court

phone was tapped. The police had arrested a computer operator in connection with the case, who had previously worked with Harish Rao. Harish Rao and Radhakishan Rao filed a petition in the High Court seeking to quash the case registered against them. The court, in a significant ruling, issued an interim stay on the investigation and instructed that no action should be taken in this matter until the next hearing. The complainant, Chakradhar, had filed a complaint claiming that his phone was tapped, which led to the case being registered under various sections. Harish Rao, in his petition, argued that the case was baseless, and the court had earlier passed interim orders directing that he should not be arrested in connection with the case. The government informed the court that lawyer Siddharth Luthra would be representing them for the arguments. However, Luthra, who is engaged in another case, requested more time. The High Court then postponed the next hearing of the case to March 3.

## Telangana CS Facing Criticism from Secretariat Employees

employees, who feel that the transfer process was not conducted impartially. In response to these grievances, it is understood that several employees have filed complaints with the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), seeking a review of the matter. The issue continues to create tension within the Secretariat as employees demand more transparency and fairness in the decision-making process.

## MP Chamal Kiran Kumar Reddy's Counter to DK Aruna on Ration Cards

TPN , Correspondent  
Hyderabad , Feb 20 : Yadadri Bhuvanagiri Congress MP Chamal Kiran Kumar Reddy has countered the comments made by BJP MP DK Aruna of Mahabubnagar, who suggested that Prime Minister Modi's photo should be placed on ration cards. Kiran Kumar Reddy emphasized that if the Modi photo is to be included on the ration cards, then the central government must provide rice for all 90 lakh ration cardholders in Telangana.



He pointed out that currently, the state is providing 5 kg of rice to 54 lakh ration cardholders, while the remaining 34 lakh cardholders are supported by the state government with an additional 1 kg per card. The Telangana government spends about ₹352 crores every month for the additional rice distribution, which is beyond the central government's allocation.

Kiran Kumar Reddy further clarified that if the central government is willing to supply rice to all 90 lakh ration cards, then the state government would consider including Modi's photo. This statement was a direct response to the BJP's push for Modi's image on ration cards, highlighting the contribution of the state government in the rice distribution process.

## Telangana Surpasses 16,000 MW Power Demand Milestone

TPN , Correspondent  
Hyderabad , Feb 20 : Telangana has reached a significant milestone in electricity consumption, with the state surpassing a record demand of 16,000 MW for the first time. On February 19, 2025, at 7:55 AM, the electricity demand peaked at 16,058 MW, surpassing the previous record set just days earlier on February 10, which was 15,998 MW. Notably, this demand also exceeds the record of 15,623 MW set on March 8 of the previous year, with the February 5, 2025 figure already surpassing it.



In response to this surge in demand, Telangana's Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka reviewed the power supply situation with the Chief Managing Directors (CMDs) of various power

corporations. He emphasized the need for continuous monitoring and assured the public that the government is fully committed to ensuring an uninterrupted

supply of electricity across the state. The officials were instructed to take all necessary precautions to prevent any shortages and to ensure the smooth operation of the electricity grid. Despite the increase in demand, which is expected to continue growing, the government has taken steps to ensure that there are no disruptions in power supply. Bhatti Vikramarka's directive to officials to closely monitor the supply and distribution systems aims to maintain a stable and reliable power supply for consumers, regardless of the rising demand. The government's preparedness in managing these challenges reflects its commitment to providing continuous power to meet the needs of the people of Telangana.

## Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy Announces Fast Implementation of Bhubharati Act

TPN , Correspondent  
Hyderabad , Feb 20 : Minister for Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, has announced that the Telangana government will implement the Bhubharati Act as soon as possible. Speaking at a two-day workshop at the MCHRD, attended by collectors and senior officials, the minister emphasized that the draft procedures for the Bhubharati Act should be prepared thoroughly, carefully, and without room for mistakes. The Minister highlighted the importance of land as not just an asset but a livelihood for people, particularly farmers. "Land is the foundation for the livelihood and survival of farmers, not just a mere property. Although Telangana has faced numerous land-related issues, the previous government's mismanagement left these problems unresolved. The in-



roduction of the Dharani portal only worsened the situation, causing farmers to lose their land," he said. He further criticized the previous government for making hasty decisions that led to the corruption of the revenue system, distancing the general public from essential revenue services. To resolve these issues, the Telangana government introduced the Bhubharati Act. This Act aims to provide security for farmers' land and preserve land records. The minister assured that the govern-

ment is committed to protecting farmers and ensuring that any land-related issues can be resolved through the revenue offices. "The government will protect the hard-working farmers who rely on land for their livelihood, and we will work towards providing accessible revenue services for the common people," he affirmed. The meeting also saw the participation of Revenue Secretary Naveen Mittal, land law expert Sunil, CCLA PD, and other senior officials.

# Power is Not Our Ultimate Goal, People's Welfare is Our Priority

**KTR Asserts People's Welfare is BRS's Primary Goal  
BRS to Celebrate Rajatotsav as Public Festival Focused on Telangana's Pride  
KTR Highlights Telangana's Struggles and Future Party Directions**

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) asserted that the party does not view power as the ultimate goal, but rather as a means to serve the people and work for their welfare. Speaking to the media after a meeting of the party's executive committee led by party president K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR), KTR emphasized the importance of people's well-being and Telangana's existence.



KTR stated that the BRS party's decision is to celebrate the party's 25th anniversary (Rajatotsav) as a public

festival, focusing on the state's pride and the struggles for Telangana's formation. He reminded that Telan-

gana's foundation was built through public movements and revolutionary struggles, with countless sacrifices. He also mentioned that KCR has outlined the future direction for party programs during the meeting. He clarified that the BRS party remains committed to the welfare of Telangana and its people, and emphasized that the party will not focus solely on power. KTR added that the celebrations for the Rajatotsav would continue for a year, and committees under the leadership of senior leaders will soon be formed to manage the events.

## Minister Ponnam Prabhakar's Key Comments on Caste Survey



**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Minister Ponnam Prabhakar made important comments regarding the caste survey in Telangana. He explained that intellectuals, leaders of marginalized communities, and professors from various levels of society had requested to register for the caste survey, and the government has now granted them another opportunity. He mentioned that those who missed the initial registration from the 16th to the 28th of the month

should now enroll in the survey. Ponnam Prabhakar further stated that three methods were provided for people to give their information in the caste survey. He appealed to every individual in Telangana to register and provide their details, especially those who had not done so earlier. He urged intellectuals and critics of the caste survey to encourage those who missed the opportunity to participate and become part of this important initiative. Additionally, he addressed the opposition parties, particularly requesting them to take a responsible stance by actively participating in the survey. He emphasized that prominent leaders like KTR and Harish Rao should lead by example, participating in the survey to show their support for the welfare of marginalized communities and the state's overall development.

## Congress Will Pay the Interest on the Loan Taken by BRS

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud criticized the BRS party, stating that the Congress party will "pay the interest" on the loan taken by BRS. He remarked that the current elections in the state resemble those of a "feast" for the rich, with the ruling party focused more on benefiting the KCR family than the state's welfare. He emphasized that the credit for providing 56,000 jobs in the past goes to the Congress party, not BRS. Goud also stated that Congress, under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, will fill all vacant job positions across various departments. He accused BRS and BJP of forming an unholy alliance that undermines the state's interests. He criticized BJP's 8 MPs and 2 ministers, claiming they have brought no real benefit to the state.



Focusing on the welfare of BCs (Backward Classes), Mahesh Goud expressed that Congress will continue to fight for the rights and opportunities of BCs, asserting that only Congress can ensure a brighter future for BC children. He concluded by stating that Congress's goal is to transform the state into a model of development and welfare, leading Telangana toward prosperity.

## Minister Komatireddy's Comments on Unity and Welfare

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Minister Komatireddy Venkata Reddy expressed his congratulations to the Dharma Karthas and colony residents for constructing the Kashi Vishwanath temple in the Boduppall area. He prayed for the well-being of the people of Telangana, wishing them peace, prosperity, and abundant harvests, invoking the blessings of Lord Vishwanath and Goddess Annapurna. Regarding infrastructure, Komatireddy assured that the Uppal Ghat-Keesara flyover would be completed within the next 18 months, easing



traffic difficulties for the people of Boduppall. He also highlighted that it had been nearly a decade since the government initiated housing programs for the poor in Hyderabad, but under the current public

government, they would provide homes for the underprivileged. Further, the minister emphasized that the government follows a secular approach and considers all festivals equally important. He criticized the BJP for dividing the country for votes and stated that they had no right to speak about his party. He confidently asserted that Congress would hold power in the state for the next 20 years. Komatireddy also mocked the BJP's claims of appointing a BC or Dalit CM, pointing out that Telangana's people voted in favor of the BRS for their inclusive governance and leadership.

## Telangana CM Conducting Caste Census for Political Gain: BJP MP Eatala Rajender



**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** BJP MP Eatala Rajender has strongly criticized Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for conducting a caste census, accusing him of doing so for political gain without any legal or scientific backing. Speaking in Khammam and Mahabubabad on February 18, Rajender argued that the state government's caste census lacks credibility, particularly questioning the reported 46% BC (Backward Classes) population in the survey. He urged the govern-

ment to establish a proper legal commission to conduct the census scientifically, citing the examples of Tamil Nadu and Bihar. Rajender also took aim at the Congress-led government for failing to appoint a BC leader as CM despite ruling for nearly 45 years. He compared the public opposition faced by Revanth Reddy's administration with that of the previous KCR government, claiming that Revanth's government had already faced significant opposition within just nine months in office. Furthermore, Rajender called out the chief minister for making inappropriate remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's caste, and also suggested that the Telangana government should focus on implementing the Bayyaram steel industry project, with financial support from the Centre.



**KCR's Frustrations Reflect Political Setbacks, Says Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy**

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Telangana's Revenue, Housing, and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy has slammed Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) for his political behavior after stepping down from power. He accused KCR of harboring political frustrations as he tries to regain power, despite being out of touch with the people and neglecting the state's development.

Reddy emphasized that KCR, who has remained absent for 14 months, failed to notice or act on significant issues, such as floods, heavy rainfall, and public welfare, especially when Telangana faced severe challenges. He pointed out that KCR was not present in important legislative matters, including critical resolutions on caste census, land reforms, or tributes for former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The minister further questioned the Congress government's impact on development in Telangana, claiming that KCR, a "seasonal politician," only returns to the public during elections. He added that KCR's failure to address his own shortcomings during his tenure was evident, and despite efforts to destabilize the political landscape, the Congress government was moving forward with tangible development. Ponguleti also criticized KCR's handling of the state's finances, accusing him of excessive borrowing that burdened the state's economy. He claimed that Telangana's people would never forgive KCR for his mismanagement and irresponsible decisions during his decade-long rule.

## BJP Has No Right to Ask for Votes After Doing Injustice in the Budget

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Minister Jupally Krishna Rao emphasized the importance of treating the MLC elections as prestigious. He congratulated PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud and expressed confidence in his victory as the candidate for the Graduates MLC seat. He stated that the Congress government will continue to implement welfare schemes and ensure the success of the 6 guarantees promised to the people. Minister Jupally further emphasized the need for dedicated work from the cadre and leaders at the grassroots level to ensure the victory of Congress candidates. He stressed that if Congress wins the MLC election, it would set the stage for a significant victory in local body elections as well.



Referring to the recent Union Budget, Jupally criticized the BJP for neglecting to allocate funds for Telangana, which he described as an injustice. He pointed out that with 8 MPs and 8 MLAs from BJP in the state, they have achieved nothing substantial. As a result, he argued that the BJP has lost the moral right to ask for votes in the upcoming elections.

## BJP Silent on Ramzan Timings for Muslims in AP, Says Telangana Congress

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Telangana Congress has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of hypocrisy over the state government's Ramzan leave order, which allows Muslim employees to leave at 4 p.m. during the holy month. TPCC spokesperson Syed Nizamuddin criticized the BJP's selective outrage, noting that while the party remains silent in Andhra

Pradesh, where the same order is issued, it opposes it in Telangana. He pointed out that both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have followed the Ramzan leave tradition for nearly five decades, with similar orders issued every year, including during Chandrababu Naidu's rule. "Why is BJP silent on the Andhra government's order?" Nizamuddin asked. Meanwhile, BJP MP Bandi Sanjay

raised concerns over the issue, questioning the Congress party's Hindu credentials. He demanded that the state government grant similar permissions for Ayyappa devotees in the mala and Shiva mala, likening their religious practices to those of Muslims during Ramzan. The debate continues to fuel political tensions, with each side accusing the other of religious favoritism.



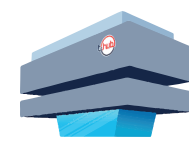
## Telangana Govt Forms Advisory Committee for Development Planning

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** The Telangana government has established an advisory committee for the Telangana Development Planning Society (TGDPs) to enhance the state's development strategies. The committee, chaired by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, consists of eight experts from diverse fields, aiming to create comprehensive development plans for the state. The committee's key objectives include disaster prevention, analyzing climate change impacts, ad-



ressing economic and social sector gaps, and conducting research to guide policy decisions. Its analyses will inform both short-term and long-term planning for Telangana.

The expert panel includes Kancha Ilaiah, a professor and writer; Shantha Sinha, a Ramon Magsaysay Award recipient for her work in child labor; Himanshu, an expert in poverty and inequality; and other distinguished members like Bhukya, Purushotham Reddy, Dr. Sukhadev Thorat, Nikhil Dev, and Praveen Chakravarthy. The government is confident that the committee's expertise will provide crucial insights to shape Telangana's future development, driving progress across various sectors.



## Pathsetter AI Revolutionizes Business Intelligence with AI-Powered Decision-Making

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Pathsetter AI, a leader in AI-driven business analytics, is reshaping how businesses harness data to fuel growth, efficiency, and profitability. By leveraging state-of-the-art AI, Pathsetter is moving companies beyond traditional reporting, offering real-time, predictive, and prescriptive insights that empower better decision-making. "In today's data-driven world, businesses need not just more information, but the right intelligence to make impactful decisions," said Sridhar Raju Gadhi, Co-Founder of Pathsetter AI. "At Pathsetter AI, we amplify decision-making power by helping leaders anticipate market trends, optimize operations, and create sustainable competitive advantages."

Sridhar Raju Gadhi, a prominent entrepreneur from Hyderabad, has a legacy of pioneering technology-driven enterprises. Before founding Pathsetter AI, he established Quantela, a global leader in smart city and urban infrastructure solutions, which enabled governments and businesses to harness data for smarter city planning and efficient resource management. To accelerate AI-driven transformation, Pathsetter AI has partnered with Practus to launch DisruptIQ, an advanced suite of business analytics solutions. DisruptIQ integrates Pathsetter's AI intelligence with Practus' expertise, helping businesses boost revenue and profitability through real-time, data-backed insights. Pathsetter AI's AI-powered



Hyderabad-based Pathsetter AI is transforming the future of business intelligence by enabling organizations to make smarter, faster, and more confident decisions using advanced artificial intelligence (AI).

solutions serve diverse industries, enabling businesses to optimize financial performance, operational efficiency, and strategic planning.

By integrating AI into decision-making, businesses can unlock new levels of agility and resilience in an ever-changing market.

## Telangana High Court Rules Sub-Registrars Cannot Register Assigned Lands

**TPN , Correspondent**

**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** The Telangana High Court has clarified that sub-registrars do not have the authority to register assigned lands, emphasizing that such actions are illegal under the Assigned Lands Act. The court has directed the Rangareddy Collector to thoroughly investigate a land dispute involving assigned land in Aziznagar, Moinabad Mandal, Rangareddy district, and file criminal charges against the sub-registrar and any individuals involved if the land is confirmed to be assigned. The dispute revolves around 33 Guntas of assigned land belonging to Anantharam Laxmaiah. After a conflict among heirs, the land was converted to non-agricultural use and sold, with some heirs alleging the assigned status of the land was concealed during the sale. Justice CV Bhaskar Reddy's bench highlighted that the illegal registration of assigned land could result in six months of imprisonment, a fine of Rs 10,000, or both. In another case, the court directed the Mancherial district collector to investigate a sub-registrar for unauthorized registrations of assigned lands. The court has granted the collector four weeks to submit a report and take appropriate action against those responsible. The decision reaffirms the legal restrictions on the registration of assigned lands and calls for strict enforcement of the law.



## Telangana DCA Seizes Illegally Stocked Drugs Worth Rs 6.70 Lakh in Hyderabad



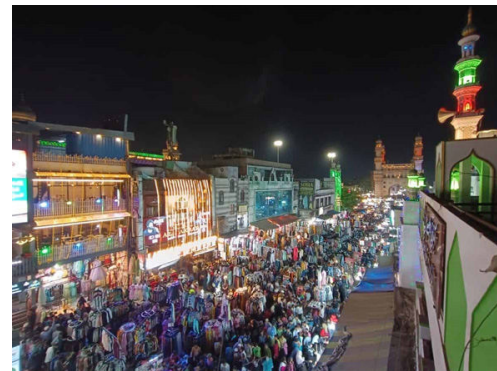
**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** The Telangana Drugs Control Administration (DCA) conducted a raid on February 18, uncovering an illegal stockpile of drugs worth Rs 6.70 lakh at a warehouse in Laxmi Narayana Nagar Colony, Uppal. The raid led to the arrest of Addanki Venkata Suresh Babu, who was found to be storing drugs without a valid license. The seized stock included a variety of medicines, some of which were ex-

pired, such as abortion kits, analgesics, and antihistaminic drugs. DCA officers had acted on a tip-off about the illegal storage of pharmaceuticals, prompting the search and seizure operation. The drugs have been sent for analysis, and the DCA has vowed to continue investigating the matter. The authorities emphasized that stocking drugs without a proper license is a violation of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, which carries severe penalties, including up to five years of imprisonment. The Telangana DCA has issued a stern warning against illegal drug activities and assured that strict action will be taken against offenders, including wholesalers and dealers. They also encouraged the public to report any suspicious activities related to drug manufacturing or illegal storage by calling the toll-free number 1800-599-6969.

## Hyderabad Surpasses Delhi in Population Density as Growth Continues

**TPN , Correspondent**

**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Hyderabad has overtaken Delhi in population density, with the city now home to 18,161 people per square kilometer, compared to Delhi's 11,313 people per square kilometer, according to the Telangana Statistical Abstract (ATLAS)-2024. The surge in population density is largely attributed to Hyderabad's booming IT sector, which has become a magnet for professionals, entrepreneurs, and students from across India. Additionally, the city's rich cultural heritage, robust educational institutions, and expanding infrastructure continue to attract residents, contributing to its growing appeal. Despite this growth, Hyderabad still



lags behind some of the world's most densely populated cities. Manila, Philippines, leads globally with 43,079 people per square kilometer, while Mumbai remains India's most crowded city with 28,508 people per square kilometer.

However, this rapid growth comes with its own set of challenges. Urban planners are grappling with infrastructure strain, housing shortages, and pressure on public services. The rising population is placing additional demands on the city's resources. The Telangana Statistical Abstract (ATLAS)-2024, which is based on 2011 census data, also highlights that while Hyderabad's population density is rising, the overall population density of Telangana remains relatively low at 312 people per square kilometer. The state's population is projected to reach 3.92 crore by 2031. However, Telangana's share in India's total population is expected to decline slightly from 2.77% in 2021 to 2.66% in 2031.

## Telangana Appoints 8 Academics and Activists to Development Planning Body

**TPN , Correspondent**

**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** In a significant move, the Telangana government has appointed eight civil society members to the Telangana Development Planning Society (TDPS), marking the first time since the state's formation that academics and activists have been included in an advisory body. The newly appointed members of the TDPS Advisory Committee, led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, include noted writer Prof Kancha Ilaiah, activist Nikhil Dey, Prof Bhangya Bhukhya, Prof Shanta Sinha, Prof Himanshu, Sukhdeo Thorat, Praveen Chakravarthy, and Prof Purshotham Reddy. The committee's primary role will be to conduct a comprehensive gap and growth analysis of the state's econom-

ic and social sectors.

This development marks a departure from the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government, which faced criticism for sidelining civil society voices and stifling dissent. The new appointments reflect a more inclusive approach toward governance and development.

Nikhil Dey is a renowned activist involved in the Right to Information, MNREGA, and Right to Food campaigns, while Prof Sinha is known for her leadership in child rights advocacy. The committee's formation is also reminiscent of the National Advisory Council (NAC) established by the UPA government, which brought together civil society leaders to advise on national policy matters.



This move by the Telangana government highlights its intention to strengthen development planning through the engagement of experts and activists from diverse fields.

## Hyderabad Police Rescue 2-Year-Old Toddler from Kidnappers

**TPN , Correspondent**

**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** On February 19, Afzalgunj police successfully rescued a 2-year-old boy, Prem Kumar, who was kidnapped from the Central Bus Station (CBS) in Gowliguda on Saturday. The police have arrested three individuals in connection with the crime and returned the child to his mother.



The accused have been identified as Shaik Amer alias Tara (25), Majida Begum (26), and Mohammedi Begum (48). Another suspect, Abdul Salman, is currently on the run. The investigation began after the child's mother, Bandela Devi, reported her son missing on Sunday. Devi, who had traveled to Hyderabad from Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh, was forced to sleep on the footpath after losing contact with her sister and her mobile phone. On Saturday, while Bandela Devi slept from 11 am to 2 pm due to intoxication, she woke up to find her son gone.

Afzalgunj police, after registering a case, formed three teams and scrutinized over 100 CCTV cameras. The visuals revealed a middle-aged man abducting the child and leaving in an autorickshaw. Tracing the vehicle led to the arrests of the three suspects. The trio confessed that they had kidnapped the child to sell him either to the begging mafia or to childless couples seeking children. Police are continuing their efforts to locate the fourth accused, Abdul Salman.

## Telangana to Host 72<sup>nd</sup> Edition of Miss World Pageant from May 7 to 31



**TPN , Correspondent**

**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** Telangana will host the 72nd edition

of the prestigious Miss World pageant from May 7 to 31, 2025, as announced by

Julia Morley, chairperson and CEO of Miss World Ltd, along with Smita Sabharwal, principal secretary to tourism, culture, heritage, and youth affairs. The event will kick off with a grand opening ceremony in Hyderabad, with the grand finale also held in the city. Other events will take place at various destinations across the state.

The new winner of the Miss World crown will be crowned by Krystyna Pyszkova, the winner of the 71st edition of the pageant held in 2024. The pageant will feature participants from over 120 countries, competing for the coveted title while promoting the Miss World Organisation's mission of

'Beauty with a Purpose.'

Julia Morley praised Telangana's rapid development, highlighting its robust infrastructure, excellent connectivity, and thriving sectors such as IT, pharmaceuticals, and the film industry. Smita Sabharwal emphasized that the event will showcase the state's rich cultural heritage, handloom legacy, delicious cuisine, and timeless art forms.

Nandini Gupta, the winner of Femina Miss India World 2023, will represent India in the competition. Telangana invites the world with the tagline "Telangana, Zarur Aana," celebrating its spirit, warmth, and boundless potential.

## HYDRAA Demolishes Wall Blocking Dalits' Access to Colony in Shamirpet

**TPN , Correspondent**

**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** A four-decade-long struggle came to an end for Dalits in Devarayamjal, Shamirpet, as the Hyderabad Disaster Response Assets Monitoring and Protection Agency (HYDRAA) demolished a boundary wall blocking access to their colony. The operation took place on February 19, when HYDRAA's Disaster Response Force (DRF) team tore down the wall constructed by Tirumala Colony Ventures in 1985. The wall had closed off all entry and exit points for the Dalit community,

leaving them with no proper access to their homes. Despite seeking help from the SC/ST Commission in February 2022, their complaints had not been addressed. Residents had to navigate a narrow path on two-wheelers, and emergency vehicles like ambulances and fire engines could not reach the colony. Following a complaint during HYDRAA's Prajavani program on February 17, the agency's commissioner directed immediate action to ensure unobstructed access, bringing relief to the affected community.

## TGSRTC Announces Discounts on Hyderabad-Vijayawada Bus Fares

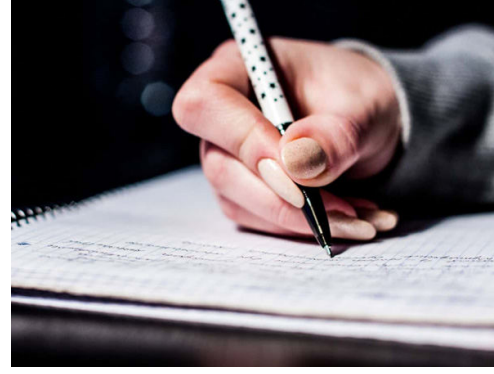


**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TGSRTC) has announced discounts for travelers on buses operating between Hyderabad and Vijayawada. The new offer provides a 10 percent discount on fares for non-AC Lahari luxury buses (sleeper cum seater super luxury buses) and an 8 percent discount on Rajdhani AC bus fares. This move aims to make travel more affordable for commuters on this popular route. Additionally, TGSRTC has also introduced a 10 percent discount on all buses running from Telangana to Bengaluru, which is another high-demand route. According to TGSRTC Managing Director VC Sajjanar, the discounts

will save passengers between Rs 100 and Rs 160 per journey. For advanced bookings, travelers can visit the official website, [www.tgsrtc-bus.in](http://www.tgsrtc-bus.in). In a related development, TGSRTC has announced special buses for Maha Shivratri, ensuring safe travel for devotees heading to temples in Vemulawada, Srisailem, Edupayala, and Keesara Palakurthi. To address expected congestion, Telangana Transport Minister Ponnampallabharathi instructed officials to appoint special RTC officers to ensure smooth operations during the festival. TGSRTC is also expanding its infrastructure with the approval of several new bus depots and stations across the state.

## TG BIE Implements Free Roll Corrections, Enhances Exam Security for 2025

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** The Telangana Board of Intermediate Education (TG BIE) has directed all government and private colleges to provide free corrections of nominal rolls and address student grievances promptly in preparation for the upcoming 2025 Intermediate Public Examinations. In a Zoom meeting with District Examination Committee (DEC) members, Board Secretary Krishna Aditya S reviewed the preparations and instructed officials to coordinate with District Collectors to ensure the availability of adequate infrastructure at



exam centers, minimizing student inconvenience. The board has also outlined key directives to ensure smooth and secure conduct of exams. These include de-

ploying experienced staff for examination duties, installing CCTV surveillance at all centers, and verifying staff details to prevent errors. Strict protocols for the secure storage and distribution of question papers have been put in place, with custodians and officers appointed to oversee security at the district level. Further, district-wise inspections of exam centers and question paper security will be conducted. The TG BIE is confident that these measures will ensure a fair, transparent, and efficient examination process for the 2025 Intermediate exams.

## Class 10 Girl Dies Trying to Save Father in Telangana Attack

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** A tragic incident occurred in Zaheerabad district, Telangana, where a Class 10 girl, Aliya Begum, lost her life while attempting to save her father from an attack. The incident took place on February 11, when Aliya's father, Mohammed Ismail, was attacked by two men, Veera and Vijay Reddy, after he was seen urinating near their residence in Antharam village. Enraged by Ismail's actions, Veera and Vijay Reddy reportedly attacked him. In a bid to protect her father,

Aliya rushed to the scene, only to be attacked herself. Despite being immediately rushed to the hospital, Aliya succumbed to her injuries on February 15. In the wake of this heartbreaking loss, AIMIM MLA Kausar Mohiuddin visited the village to meet with the bereaved family. He also held a meeting with the district's superintendent of police to discuss the case. Additionally, the All India Milli Council of Telangana extended legal aid to the grieving family. The incident has deeply shocked the



community, and authorities are taking steps to ensure justice for the young girl and her family.

## District Collector Suggests Nutritious Diet for Girls' Physical and Mental Health



**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Nalgonda , Feb 20 :** District Collector I. Ila Tripathi on Wednesday emphasized the importance of a nutritious diet for girls to maintain both physical and mental health. She was speaking at a program organized by the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) under the "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" initiative, held at the Miryalaguda MPDO office conference hall in Nalgonda district. The session was focused on menstruation and personal care, targeted at adolescent girls. Addressing the gathering, the Collector highlighted the significance of a regular menstrual cycle for women's health and growth. She explained that the health and nutrition of girls play a key role in maintaining a healthy menstrual cycle, which in turn is essential for their overall development. She urged the girls to avoid junk food and processed snacks, emphasizing the need for wholesome, nutritious meals. She also urged the participants to discard the mindset that girls are inferior to boys, stressing that women are equal to men in every aspect. District Welfare Officer Krishna Veni, along with other officials from the CDPO, attended the event.

## Farmers Protest in Bank, Demand Release of Their Funds

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Adilabad , Feb 20 :** In a dramatic protest, farmers in Adilabad took to the streets, staging a half-naked demonstration inside a local bank, demanding the release of their funds. The farmers, hailing from various villages, are seeking access to the money in their bank accounts that they believe was withheld unfairly. The protest was triggered by a long-standing issue. District farmer Jillela Mohan, from Vadur village in Beempur Mandal, is demanding Rs. 1 lakh from his account, while Nall Vilas from Yapalguda village and Nakkal Jagadeesh from Adilabad are asking for Rs. 76,000 and Rs. 2 lakh, respectively. The issue traces back to the previous year when the government had deposited money related to cotton crop compensation into their post office accounts. However, the farmers allege that former Post Office Manager Vijay Yadav embezzled



the funds, leading to their money being trapped in a Delhi bank's hold. While some farmers were compensated after an intervention from then-Collector Rajarshi Shah, many others still await their dues. The protest took place at the State Bank of India (SBI) branch in Punjab Chowk, Adilabad, where farmers stripped off their shirts and sat on the floor in protest, demanding that their rightful funds be released. The farmers are resolute in their demand for immediate action and are calling for a resolution to their financial plight.

## HMDA Demolishes Poor Families' Homes, Ignoring Their Pleas

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** In a heart-wrenching incident, the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) officials demolished homes of poor families in the government land area in Medchal, despite the residents' desperate pleas. On Wednesday morning, under heavy police security, HMDA officials demolished 15 houses in Arundhathi Nagar, located in the 16th ward of Jawahar Nagar Municipal Corporation. The residents, who had been living there for many years, were devastated. Women wept uncontrollably, pleading with the authorities, asking, "What will happen to us if our poor homes are demolished, sir?"

The incident has caused immense distress among the families, as many of them have nowhere else to go. Two individuals have reportedly filed cases related to the incident. Meanwhile, a video showing the demolition of the houses by the HMDA officials has gone viral on social media, drawing attention to the plight of the affected families. Despite the emotional appeals from the residents, the authorities proceeded with the demolitions, leaving the families devastated.



## Fake Taskforce Officer Dupes Software Engineer of ₹2.82 Lakh at Hyderabad's Command Control Center



**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** In a shocking incident, an unidentified individual entered the highly-secured Command Control Center in Hyderabad, posing as a Taskforce police officer. The impostor managed to visit the center three times under tight security and even swindled a man of ₹2.82 lakh. According to reports, the accused met software engineer Gnanasai Prasad, a resident of Kukatpally, at the Nilofar Cafe, located opposite the ICCC. The fraudster introduced himself as a

Taskforce constable named Harijan Govardhan and convinced Prasad of his false identity. The accused, claiming that there were profits to be made in the hotel business, managed to collect ₹2.82 lakh from Prasad. Having seen the man leave the ICCC multiple times, Prasad was convinced that the individual was indeed a Taskforce officer and fell for the scam. It was only later, after realizing the deception, that Prasad lodged a complaint with the Banjara Hills Police. Authorities have registered a case and are actively searching for the culprit.

## Telangana Govt Plans Special Assembly Session in March First Week

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Hyderabad , Feb 20 :** The Telangana government has announced plans to hold a special session of the state assembly from March 1 to 5. During this session, the government intends to introduce key bills on providing reservations for Backward Classes (BCs) and on the categorization of Scheduled Castes (SCs). The special session is expected to address these crucial issues aimed at enhancing social justice and ensuring equitable development for marginalized communities. Reports suggest that the government could also hold the state budget session in the last week of March, which would include discussions on financial allocations and plans for the upcoming fiscal year. The move is expected to spark significant political



debate and public interest, particularly regarding the implications for reservation policies in the state.

## Cockfighting Birds Auctioned for Rs. 19,000 Each in Court

**TPN , Correspondent**  
**Rangareddy , Feb 20 :** A court auction was held at the Rajendranagar Court premises on Monday for the cockfighting birds seized during a raid on a farmhouse in the Toalakkatta village of Moinabad Mandal, Rangareddy district. The farmhouse reportedly belonged to MLC Pochampally Srinivas Reddy. The birds, which were seized on the 11th of this month, attracted significant attention, with around 73 people coming for-



ward to bid. A total of 84 birds were auctioned off in nine rounds, fetching a total of Rs. 16.65 lakh. The price per bird averaged Rs. 19,821. The auction had a strict

rule that all payments had to be made within 10 minutes of the bidding, leading the participants to arrive at the court with bags of cash to ensure compliance. The auction drew considerable attention, highlighting the high stakes involved in illegal cockfighting activities. Despite the controversy surrounding cockfighting, which is illegal in many places, the high demand for these birds led to substantial bids during the auction.

# Green Buildings: Redefining Urban Sustainability and Cutting Carbon Footprints



**Dr. Peteti Seshabala**  
(Environmental Expert)

Did you know that buildings account for nearly 40% of global energy use and a third of greenhouse gas emissions? While they symbolize modernity and progress, our towering malls, corporate offices, and high-rise complexes come with a hidden cost: massive energy consumption and environmental degradation. India, as one of the fastest-urbanizing nations, stands at a critical juncture. How we choose to design and build will determine whether our cities thrive sustainably or crumble under their ecological footprint. The solution? Green buildings. These structures are not just eco-friendly—they are transformative, reducing carbon footprints while redefining how we coexist with nature.

## Green Buildings: A Sustainable Alternative

Green buildings are more than just environmentally conscious structures. They create healthier, cost-effective, and energy-efficient spaces without compromising aesthetics or comfort. Here's how they achieve this:

### 1. Energy Efficiency: Cutting Carbon, Saving Costs

**Smart Design:** Green buildings maximize natural ventilation and daylight, minimizing the need for air conditioning and artificial lighting.

**Efficient Systems:** With advanced HVAC systems, LED lighting, and automated energy controls, these buildings cut energy consumption by up to 30%, significantly reducing carbon emissions.

### 2. Harnessing Nature: Powering Buildings Sustainably

**Solar Power:** Rooftop solar panels generate clean energy, reducing electricity demand. For instance, a green office building in Bangalore offsets 40% of its energy needs through rooftop solar alone.

**Geothermal and Wind Energy:** Innovative systems tap into renewable sources to power operations sustainably, cutting reliance on fossil fuels.

### 3. Eco-Friendly Materials: Building Responsibly

**Low-Carbon Alternatives:** Mate-

rials like recycled steel, bamboo, and fly ash bricks drastically reduce emissions compared to conventional options. **Durability and Affordability:** These materials are not only sustainable but also cost-effective in the long run, making them ideal for large-scale adoption.

### 4. Natural Carbon Sequestration: Turning Buildings into Carbon Sinks

**Green Roofs and Vertical Gardens:** These features absorb CO<sub>2</sub>, cool the air, and mitigate urban heat, creating healthier environments for city dwellers.

**Landscaping:** Thoughtful tree planting enhances air quality and establishes cooler microclimates around buildings.

### 5. Waste and Water Management: Closing the Loop

**Rainwater Harvesting:** Green buildings capture and store rainwater, reducing dependency on municipal supplies.

**Greywater Recycling:** Treated wastewater is reused for irrigation and cleaning, slashing water waste by up to 50%.

### Corporate Sustainability and ESG: The Added Value

Green buildings are not just an environmental necessity; they are also a strategic advantage in the age of ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance).

**LEED Certification:** Globally recognized, LEED certification enhances a building's marketability while improving energy efficiency and lowering operational costs.

**GRI Ratings:** The Global Reporting Initiative framework provides transparency in sustainability efforts, building investor trust.

**Demand in ESG Roles:** As corporations prioritize sustainability, the demand for experts in ESG compliance, green building design, and sustainable urban planning has surged.

**Business Benefits:** Companies with green buildings report lower utility costs, improved employee productivity, and stronger reputations among eco-conscious consumers. By integrating sustainability into business models, organizations

not only fulfill environmental obligations but also strengthen their long-term profitability.

### India's Role in the Green Building Movement

India is already showcasing its potential in sustainable construction. Iconic projects such as the ITC Green Center in Gurgaon, Infosys campuses, and the CII-Sohrabji Godrej Green Business Centre are leading the charge, demonstrating that sustainability and innovation go hand in hand.

However, the scale of adoption is still limited. To realize the true potential of green architecture, India must:

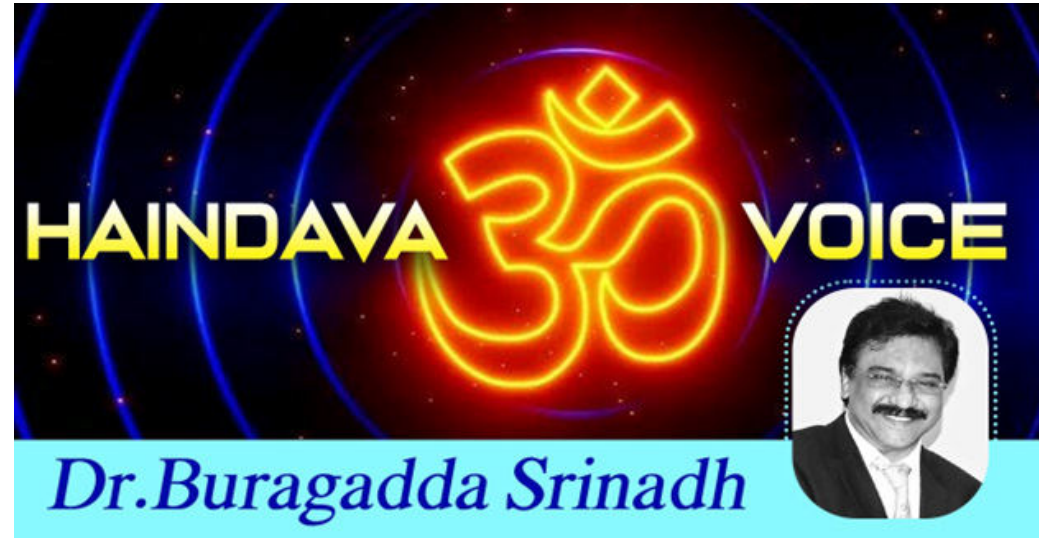
- **Incentivize Green Practices:** Governments can encourage adoption through tax benefits, subsidies, and low-interest loans for green construction projects.
- **Strengthen Building Codes:** Enforce the Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) to ensure all new constructions meet green standards.
- **Raise Awareness:** Educate builders, architects, and homeowners about the environmental and economic advantages of green buildings.

### A Call to Action

Every building constructed today is an opportunity to combat climate change. By choosing green architecture, we can create urban spaces that are energy-efficient, resource-conscious, and environmentally friendly.

Imagine a city where buildings produce more energy than they consume, where green rooftops cool the air, and where clean water flows freely through innovative recycling systems. This vision is not a distant dream—it is a tangible future we can create together.

As India races toward modernization, green buildings offer a path to sustainable urban growth. They are not just structures; they are commitments to a healthier planet. The time to act is now. By prioritizing sustainable practices, we ensure a legacy of progress that benefits both people and the planet.



## Reviving Heritage: Embrace Religious Tourism in the Himalayas

The Himalayas, often referred to as both a divine gift and a natural marvel, stand as a profound source of spirituality and inspiration. This majestic mountain range, known for its towering peaks, lush valleys, and serene rivers, is not only a geographical wonder but also a spiritual sanctuary. Home to numerous sacred sites, each steeped in history and reverence, the Himalayas serve as a treasure trove of cultural heritage. It is indeed a privilege for India to have such a magnificent landscape, offering solace and divine inspiration to countless pilgrims and travelers alike.

Despite its unparalleled beauty and spiritual significance, the potential of religious tourism in the Himalayas has been largely overlooked, especially since India's independence. Successive governments, particularly during Jawaharlal Nehru's tenure, downplayed the importance of temple and religious tourism, prioritizing pseudo-secular ideologies over the rich spiritual heritage of the country. The immense potential of sacred sites for promoting economic growth through religious tourism has been largely ignored, depriving the hill regions of vital development and recognition.

Now, it is time to reclaim our cultural heritage and actively promote religious tourism. This would not only honor India's traditions but also generate economic benefits for the region. By fostering temple tourism, the local communities in the hill regions can benefit through job creation, improved livelihoods, and infrastructure development. The Uttarakhand government has a unique opportunity to take the lead in this initiative, starting with the upcoming Saraswati Pushkaralu event, which is set to take place from May 15 to 26, 2025, in Mana village, near the revered Badrinath.

The Saraswati Pushkaralu, celebrated once every 12 years, honors the Saraswati River, revered as the goddess of knowledge, wisdom, and the arts. Devotees believe that bathing in the river's sacred waters during the festival cleanses sins and brings divine blessings. The festival holds immense spiritual significance, as it provides a chance for pilgrims to honor Goddess Saraswati, purify their souls, and seek blessings for knowledge and success. It is also a time for performing prayers, meditation, and sacred rituals, drawing pilgrims from all over India.

To ensure the success of the Saraswati Pushkaralu, the Uttarakhand government must implement a well-structured plan to accommodate the influx of pilgrims. This plan should include improving infrastructure, providing transportation and accommodation options, and ensuring smooth access to pilgrimage sites. Promoting the event through media channels, including newspapers, and establishing dedicated helplines at key travel points like New Delhi railway station and airports will further assist travelers. By taking these steps, the government can ensure a seamless and enriching experience for devotees, while simultaneously boosting religious tourism and the local economy.

With its cultural and spiritual richness, the Himalayas stand as an ideal destination for religious tourism. By embracing and promoting these sacred traditions, India can preserve its heritage, support local communities, and foster spiritual growth for generations to come.

## Graduates' MLC Elections - The Future of the Government Education System!

### A Time for Every Voter to Reflect

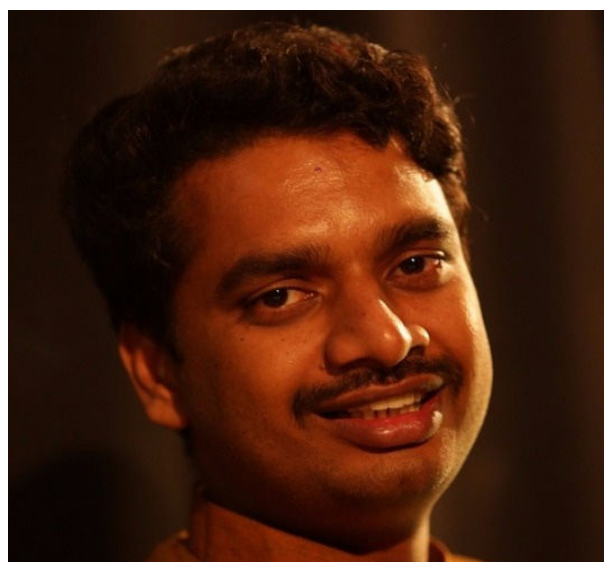
The ongoing Graduates' MLC elections are not just about voting; they are an opportunity to reshape the government's education policy. Over the past decade, governments have spent billions on the education system, yet why do ordinary people still prefer private schools? Why do the children of government officials and public representatives stay away from government schools? Do they not trust government schools themselves?

### The Reality: High Costs – Low Results

**Annual expenditure per student:** It costs around ₹90,000 to ₹1,00,000 per student in government schools.

**Why do parents lack trust?** Quality issues, lack of facilities, doubts over teachers' efficiency – all these factors are pushing people away from government schools.

**Do government officials and public representatives send their children to government schools?**



If an ordinary citizen cannot trust government schools for their children's future, why don't those running the government send their children to these schools?



## Graduates' MLC Elections In Telangana

Does this indicate a lack of confidence in the government education system?

If this continues, the government education system is bound to become ineffective.

### Before voting for candidates in these MLC elections, ask these questions:

- **What is your plan to improve the standard of government schools?**
- **What steps will you take to strengthen**

- **the government education system? Will you make an effort to provide at least private school-level facilities in every government school?**
- **What measures will you take to improve the attendance and teaching quality of government teachers?**
- **What actions will you take to increase trust in government schools?**

### What is our responsibility as graduates?

These elections should not be just about politics; they must shape the future of our children. If we elect incapable leaders again, the government education system will only deteriorate further. If a candidate does not clearly communicate these issues to the public, we should not support their candidacy. This time, graduates must think before casting their votes – let's choose a candidate who will bring change for the future of our children, not just with words, but with actions!



## "If Forced, We Can Be Aggressive Too": Army Chief On Pakistan

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Indian Army Chief General Uday Shankar has stated that India's stance toward Pakistan, particularly along the Line of Control (LoC), has become significantly more assertive since 2014. In an exclusive interview with ANI, General Shankar conveyed that India's communication with Pakistan now makes it clear that any provocation would be met with a robust response.

"We have been clear that we will be assertive in our communication and, if needed, aggressive," General Shankar said, emphasizing India's resolve in protecting its interests. The Army Chief underscored that both sides have understood India's commitment to its security and its intent to act when provoked.

A key point in General Shankar's interview was his assessment of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) following the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019. He noted that the revocation had significantly reduced the number of terrorists and local recruits in the region, while eliminating the confusion among the people about their identity.

"The recruitment has reduced. Local terrorist numbers have gone down," he explained. He further explained how the abrogation helped resolve the identity crisis, with children now clearly identifying as part of India, symbolized by their choice to draw the Indian flag in school.

General Shankar also highlighted the security forces' collaborative efforts, including the theme of "terrorism to tourism," which he sees as having brought success. With over five lakh pilgrims participating in the Amarnath Yatra, a figure previously unheard of, the Army Chief noted that efforts to foster development in the region are yielding positive results.



## In First "Green Budget", Rajasthan Announces 1.25 Lakh Government Jobs

TPN Correspondent | Jaipur

Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister, Diya Kumari, has unveiled the state's first "green budget," placing a strong emphasis on climate change adaptation, environmental sustainability, and large-scale infrastructure development. The budget aims to steer Rajasthan toward becoming a \$350 billion economy by 2030.

In her 138-minute budget speech, Diya Kumari announced several key measures, starting with an ambitious plan to generate employment opportunities. The state plans to recruit 1.25 lakh government jobs in the coming year, with an additional 1.5 lakh jobs expected in the private sector. To further promote youth employment, Rajasthan will implement the Rajasthan Employment Policy 2025.

The budget also sets an estimated revenue receipt of Rs 2,94,536.49 crore for 2025-26, with revenue expenditure projected at Rs 3,25,545 crore, resulting in a revenue deficit of Rs 31,009.41 crore and a fiscal deficit of Rs 84,643 crore, equaling 4.25% of the state's Gross Domestic Product (GSDP).

Infrastructure development is another major focus. The Finance Minister announced the creation of a New Aero City near Kota Airport and the improvement of 29 airstrips across the state. Rs 250 crore has been allocated to improve Jaipur's traffic system, and Rs 12,000 crore has been earmarked for expanding metro services. An ambitious plan for developing 9 GreenField Expressways will receive Rs 60,000 crore in funding.

Rajasthan is also prioritizing renewable energy. Households installing solar plants will receive 150 free electricity units per month, and Rs 250 crore has been allocated for the Green Aravalli Development Project. To enhance energy production, the state will add 6,400 MW in 2025-26 and introduce new agricultural and domestic connections.

Water availability is a key concern, with new water connections planned for 20 lakh households. The budget also includes provisions for the industrial sector, including the establishment of the Rajasthan Mineral Exploration Company and the Center of Excellence for Mines and Minerals.

# Oil-rich Qatar announces \$10 billion investment in India

- \$10 billion investment in India across key sectors
- QIA to open an office in India for smooth execution
- Leaders discuss Free Trade Agreement and condemn terrorism.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Qatar has committed to a significant \$10 billion investment in India, as announced in a joint statement following a high-level meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Qatar's Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani on February 18, 2025, in New Delhi.

The investment, which amounts to approximately Rs 85,000 crore, marks a major step in strengthening the bilateral ties between the two nations. The two leaders also discussed potential collaborations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India and Qatar, signaling a further deepening of economic and trade relations.

The statement highlighted that the investment would be directed towards key sectors including infrastructure, technology, manufacturing, food security, logistics, and hospitality. To ensure smooth execution of these investments, the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) will



open an office in India.

This collaboration is seen as a reflection of the growing economic partnership between the two countries, with Qatar seeking to enhance its

presence in India's rapidly expanding market. Both leaders also condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, underscoring their commitment to regional peace and stability.



## Swara Bhasker Faces Backlash Over 'Fictionalised Torture of Hindus' Tweet on Chhava Film

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Actor Swara Bhasker's recent post comparing the outrage over the fictionalized torture of Hindus in the film Chhava to the response to the Mahakumbh stampede has stirred controversy and invited strong criticism. In her post on X, Bhasker questioned why society seemed more enraged over a dramatized depiction of the torture of Maratha king Sambhaji in the historical film Chhava than the tragic deaths during the stampede at the Mahakumbh Mela in January. The stampede claimed at least 30 lives.

The movie Chhava, directed by Laxman Utekar and produced by Dinesh Vijan, is a historical action film about Sambhaji, Shivaji Maharaj's son. It portrays the brutal torture of Sambhaji by Mughal forces, based on historical accounts of his refusal to surrender forts or convert to Islam. Vicky Kaushal plays the role of Sambhaji, and the film is currently running successfully in theaters.

In her post, Bhasker wrote, A society that is more enraged at the

heavily embellished partly fictionalized filmy torture of Hindus from 500 years ago than they are at the horrendous death by stampede & mismanagement + then alleged JCB bulldozer handling of corpses - is a brain & soul-dead society.

Many social media users, however, found Bhasker's comparison offensive. Journalist Swati Chaturvedi responded, emphasizing that there was nothing fictional about the torture of Sambhaji, a historical event that has been widely documented. Lawyer Jai Anant Dehradai condemned Bhasker's post, accusing her of trivializing Sambhaji's sacrifice and deliberately insulting the sentiments of millions of Indians. Other users, including Rishi Bagree, also criticized Bhasker's post, defending the film's portrayal of historical events and stating that it didn't even capture the full extent of the torture that Sambhaji endured. Bhasker's remarks came at a time when "Chhava" had already been involved in controversy due to a scene featuring a folk dance that was later removed following objections.

## Tamil Nadu Ready For Language War": Udhayanidhi Stalin Amid Row Over Hindi



TPN Correspondent | Chennai

The ongoing battle between Tamil Nadu's ruling DMK and the BJP escalated on Tuesday, fueled by the center's proposed three-language policy and accusations of Hindi imposition. Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin sparked fresh tensions by stating, "States that accept Hindi lose their mother tongue," and declaring that Tamil Nadu was prepared for a "language war" over the issue.

Mr. Stalin's remarks were a direct challenge to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's stance, which had linked the state's eligibility for around Rs 2,400 crore in funding for the Samagra Siksha mission to its adoption of the National Education Policy (NEP), which includes the controversial three-language formula. This policy advocates the teaching of Hindi, along with regional languages and English, in schools across India.

Stalin also reiterated a criticism from Chief Minister MK Stalin, who had earlier accused Pradhan of "blackmail," pointing out that Tamil Nadu is merely seeking its due—both in terms of education funding from the central government and the fair share of tax devolution.

## As Kashmir's Achabal Spring Runs Dry, CM Omar Abdullah Raises Alarm on Water Scarcity

TPN Correspondent | J&K

An emotional video of an elderly woman mourning the drying up of Achabal Spring in Kashmir's Anantnag district has struck a chord with many across social media. In the video, the woman is seen addressing the once vibrant spring, asking, "Oh divine spring, where have you disappeared, my dear?"

Achabal Spring, located in the famous Mughal Garden, was built in the 17th century by Emperor Jahangir's wife, Noor Jahan. For centuries, the spring has been a significant source of water and a symbol of the region's rich heritage. Locals say the spring has never run dry before, making its current condition all the more heartbreaking for those who have lived with its continuous flow.

In the video, the elderly woman cries out to the spring in despair, "Oh divine spring, why have you stopped giving us water? What have we done to you? Come back to life... Oh Allah, let the water gush forth once more." Her heartfelt plea, coupled with her emotional appeal, has resonated with countless people who are saddened by the loss of this natural treasure.

# Trump Signs Executive Order To Expanding Access To IVF Treatments

- Trump expands IVF access with executive order.
- Move faces conservative backlash over embryo Use
- Aims to lower costs and improve availability



TPN Correspondent | Washington

President Donald Trump took a significant step toward increasing access to in vitro fertilization (IVF) by signing an executive order aimed at reducing the cost and improving availability of the treatment. The order directs his advisors to provide recommendations within 90 days on how to protect and expand access to IVF, while also focusing on lowering out-of-pocket and insurance costs for families seeking fertility assistance.

"My Administration recognizes the importance of family formation, and as a nation, our public policy must make it easier for loving and longing mothers and fathers to have children," the order reads. "Americans need reliable access to IVF and more affordable treatment options," it continued.

Trump expressed confidence in the support of families, saying, "I think the women and families, husbands, are very appreciative of it," during a press conference at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. This move is seen as a surprising development from a president whose administration has been aligned with conservative policies on issues like abortion. While Trump made headlines for his role in the Supreme Court's 2022 decision that overturned federal abortion protections, which earned him strong support from the anti-abortion movement, his support for IVF has stirred controversy within conservative circles.

Though IVF is praised by some as a vital tool for family-building, others in the religious right oppose the procedure, as it often involves creating multiple

embryos, some of which may not be used. In the past, many Republicans, including a majority in the Senate, voted against guaranteeing IVF access.

The Supreme Court's 2022 abortion ruling raised concerns among reproductive rights advocates that IVF could be next on the chopping block, particularly after a court in Alabama ruled that frozen embryos could be considered people, leading some clinics to pause treatments temporarily.

With this executive order, Trump seems to be trying to balance his appeal to conservatives with an eye toward addressing broader voter concerns about fertility treatments. However, the move may provoke opposition from those within his own party who view IVF as inconsistent with pro-life principles.

# Poll Gives Zelensky 57% Approval Rating Despite Trump's 4% Claims



TPN Correspondent | Kyiv

A recent poll conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology revealed that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky enjoys an approval rating of 57%, contradicting claims made by former US President Donald Trump, who suggested Zelensky's approval rating was as low as 4%. Trump's comments, made on Tuesday, came amidst his call for presidential elections in Ukraine, a process that is currently banned under the country's martial law.

Trump's assertion that Zelensky's popularity had plummeted to just 4% was widely criticized, as the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology's poll, which surveyed 1,000 people, found that 57% of respondents expressed trust in the Ukrainian leader. Only 37% of those surveyed disapproved, with the remaining respondents being undecided. The poll also indicated a 5% increase in trust for Zelensky compared to December, despite the ongoing military challenges Ukraine faces due to the war with Russia.

Zelensky's approval ratings had skyrocketed to 90% in March 2022, shortly after Russia's invasion, as Ukrainians rallied behind their president during the early stages of the conflict. Despite setbacks, the poll's authors noted that Zelensky continues to retain a relatively high level of trust from the Ukrainian public.

Trump's remarks align with Russian President Vladimir Putin's assertions that Zelensky is not the legitimate president of Ukraine. However, the Ukrainian constitution, while restricting presidents to a five-year term, allows for an extension until a successor is elected, which has led to debates over Zelensky's term during the ongoing war. Zelensky himself has argued that holding elections is currently impractical due to the war, the large number of Ukrainians either fighting or living abroad, and the significant security risks involved.

The authors of the poll noted that most Ukrainians believe elections should be held only after the war concludes. Despite the contrast in approval figures, it remains unclear how Trump arrived at the 4% rating, with Russian political analysts speculating that it reflects Trump's disregard for factual accuracy.

# Mumbai, Kolkata Vulnerable? NASA Says Chances Of 'City-Killer' Asteroid Hitting Earth



TPN Correspondent | Tel Aviv

NASA has increased the likelihood of asteroid 2024 YR4 colliding with Earth to 3.1 percent, tracking its trajectory as the asteroid continues its orbit. While the risk remains low, the potential impact corridor of 2024 YR4 spans several regions, including the eastern Pacific Ocean, northern South America, the Atlantic Ocean, Africa, the Arabian Sea, and South Asia. This trajectory puts some of the world's most popu-

lated cities at risk, including Mumbai, Kolkata, Dhaka, Bogotá, Abidjan, Lagos, and Khartoum, which together house over 110 million people.

Astronomers have labeled 2024 YR4 as a "city-killer" asteroid, meaning that while its impact would not threaten the planet as a whole, it could cause devastating damage to a city. NASA's predictions were updated from an earlier 2.3% chance of collision, with a revised risk probability for a potential

impact on December 22, 2032.

NASA has been monitoring the asteroid using ground-based telescopes from the International Asteroid Warning Network, and while it is visible through April, it will become too faint to observe until around June 2028. The asteroid's size is estimated to be between 130 and 300 feet wide, and its composition appears typical, without rare metals. If it does not hit Earth, experts predict it could explode mid-air with the force of approximately eight megatons of TNT, over 500 times the power of the Hiroshima bomb.

NASA's report noted that while the risk of impact is still extremely low, the asteroid's path will be better understood as more data becomes available. It is also possible that 2024 YR4 could be ruled out as a threat, as many objects in the past have been after further analysis. The asteroid was first identified on December 27, 2024, by the NASA-funded Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System in Chile and quickly made it to NASA's Sentry risk list on December 31, 2024.

# Hamas Proposes Large-Scale Hostage Release for Permanent Ceasefire with Israel

TPN Correspondent | Israel

Hamas has presented a significant proposal in the ongoing ceasefire talks with Israel, offering to release all remaining captives in the Gaza Strip in one large-scale exchange. This proposal is contingent on securing a lasting ceasefire and the complete withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza. Hazem Qassem, a spokesman for Hamas, emphasized the group's commitment to this plan, stating, "We are ready for a second phase in which the prisoners will be exchanged in one go, within the criterion of reaching an agreement that leads to a permanent ceasefire and a complete withdrawal from the Strip."

This offer represents a crucial development in the negotiations, as Hamas seeks not only the release of captives but also the end of Israel's military presence in Gaza. The group, however, rejected Israel's demand for its disar-



mament and removal from Gaza, dismissing such requests as part of a "ridiculous psychological war." Qassem further stressed that the withdrawal or disarmament of Hamas from Gaza is unacceptable.

In a move to demonstrate its commitment to the negotiation process, Hamas has agreed to increase the number of captives to be freed during the next exchange on Saturday, from three to six. The Hostages and Missing

Families Forum welcomed the decision, expressing profound joy at the return of Eliya Cohen, Tal Shoham, Omer Shem Tov, Omer Wenkert, Hisham Al-Sayed, and Avera Mengistu. Hamas made this adjustment in response to requests from mediators and to show their seriousness in upholding the terms of the agreement.

The proposal comes as U.S. President Donald Trump voiced opposition to a phased release of hostages, advocating for all captives to be freed simultaneously, a sentiment echoed by the families of the remaining hostages. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation in Gaza continues to worsen, with the death toll surpassing 61,000, as reported by Gaza's Ministry of Health.

# Elon Musk uncovers 'biggest fraud in (US) history': Is there any truth to it?

TPN Correspondent | Washington

Billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk has once again stirred controversy, claiming that his Department of Government Efficiency (Doge) has uncovered massive fraud within the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA). According to Musk, millions of payments are being made to individuals over 150 years old, which he dubbed "the biggest fraud in history."

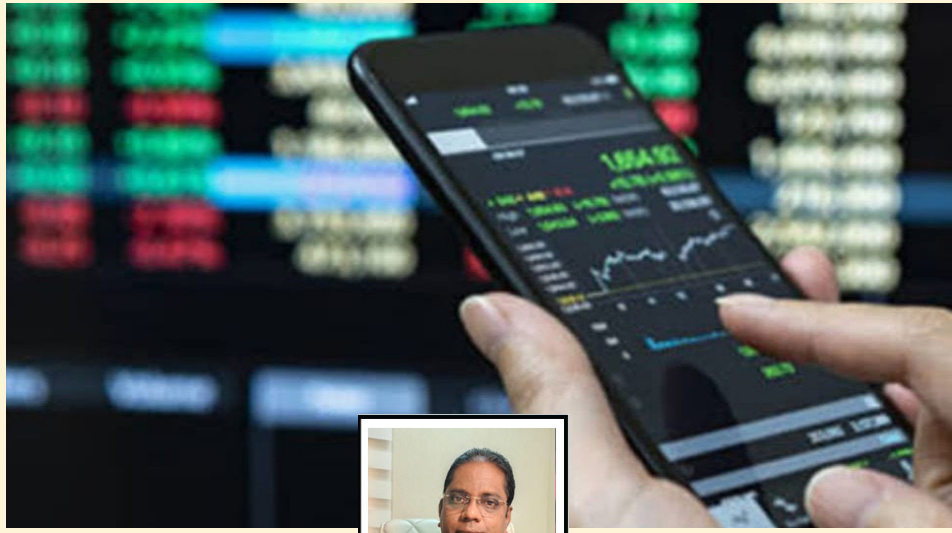
Musk made these claims during a February 11 press conference in the Oval Office, where he stated that a " cursory examination of Social Security" revealed "crazy things." He specifically pointed to records showing individuals who appeared to be 150 years old. "Now, do you know anyone who's 150? I don't, OK. They should be in the Guinness Book of World Records. I think they're probably dead, or they should be very famous," Musk remarked.

His comments quickly went viral on social media, especially on his platform X, but have since been widely questioned by experts. A closer examination of the situation suggests that Musk's interpretation may be based on a misunderstanding of the SSA's aging technology systems.

The core issue lies with the outdated COBOL programming language used by the SSA, which has been in operation for decades. Experts in computer programming explain that COBOL lacks a built-in date type, which can cause errors in the recording of birthdates. Specifically, when SSA records are missing or incomplete, they are often assigned a default reference date of May 20, 1875. This leads to an anomaly where individuals with missing or incorrect birthdates appear to be over 150 years old.



# Flat Close as Recovery Offsets Early Losses; Banking, Finance, and Realty Support Market Stability"



The domestic stock market ended flat today. They recovered for the second consecutive day. The indices, which started with gains in the morning, soon went into heavy losses. They recovered again with better signals from global markets and heavyweights standing firm. Banking, finance, media, metal and realty shares stood firm and ended flat. Nifty may move at 23,000 and Sensex at 75,600 for a few more days.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 75,967 in the previous session, started at 75,787 on Wednesday. It touched an intraday low of 75,581. It reached an intraday high of 76,338. It finally

closed at 75,939, with a loss of 28 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 22,847, touched a low of 22,814 and a high of 23,049. It closed at 22,932, down 12 points. The Nifty Bank rose 482 points to settle at 49,570.

In the Nifty50, 25 companies gained while 25 lost. BEL, Hindalco, Eicher Motors, Axis Bank, LT were the top gainers. Dr. Reddy's, TCS, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, Adani Enterprises lost the most. Bank, finance, media, metal, realty, consumer durables, O&G shares rose. IT, pharma, healthcare shares lost.

Market breadth in NSE today is in

favor of buyers. 2879 stocks traded with gains of 2025. 800 lost. 19 shares hit 52-week highs. 361 shares hit 52-week lows.

Rupee settles at 96.95 against dollar. UPL, Kotak Mahindra shares hit 52-week highs today. StarHealth hits all-time high of Rs. 389. Intense Technologies Intelligence gets patent for data processing efficiency. Gujarat Ambuja Exports completes 25% stake acquisition in Mize Sitchem. Thomas Cook India signs MoU with Korea Tourism Organization. Arham Technologies gets order from Atal Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran. Sadhav Shipping Limited has received an order from Pradeep Port Authority.

### Hindalco Industries

Hindalco remains a key player in India's metals sector, particularly in aluminum production. Despite global volatility and fluctuating commodity prices, the company's diversified product portfolio and operational efficiencies help maintain steady cash flows. Investors are watching input cost trends and global demand, keeping a cautious but moderately positive outlook for the long term.



### ICICI Bank



ICICI Bank continues to be a leader in the private banking sector. It benefits from strong digital initiatives, an expanding retail loan portfolio, and improved asset quality. The bank's consistent profit growth and robust risk management have made it a staple blue-chip in the financial sector, with an optimistic medium-term outlook as credit demand recovers.

### Zomato

Zomato, the leading food delivery platform, has shown robust revenue growth driven by increased market penetration and diversified offerings. However, high operating expenses and intense competition have kept profitability in check. The company's push into quick commerce and technology-driven efficiency improvements are expected to help it overcome short-term challenges, although investor sentiment remains mixed.



### Wipro

Wipro has demonstrated resilience amid global IT spending uncertainties. With a diversified client base and strong execution in digital transformation and cloud services, Wipro continues to record steady revenue growth and improving margins. The company is well-positioned to benefit from the ongoing demand for digital solutions, despite potential short-term headwinds from macroeconomic factors.



### BSE Ltd.

BSE Ltd., the operator of the Bombay Stock Exchange, is a critical bellwether for India's equity market. The company has leveraged technology to boost trading volumes and investor participation, and its strong balance sheet underpins future growth. As market liquidity improves and more investors turn to digital platforms, BSE is poised for stable long-term performance despite short-term market volatility.



## Salaries in India to Increase by 9.2% in 2025 Amid Global Uncertainty



Salaries in India are projected to rise by 9.2% in 2025, showing a slight decline from last year's 9.3%, amid global economic uncertainty and slower growth, according to a report by global professional services firm Aon plc.

Aon's Annual Salary Increase and Turnover Survey 2024-25, which analyzed data from over 1,400 companies across 45 industries, suggests that while global challenges continue, India's economic outlook remains relatively stable. The survey reveals that salary increments in the country are expected to stabilize in 2025.

The report indicates that salary increases have been on a downward trend since 2022, when companies offered an average 10.6% increase, driven by the aftermath of the Great Resigna-

tion. As the economy adjusted, increments moderated in 2023 and are expected to continue at a similar pace in 2025.

In addition, the survey highlights a significant decrease in attrition rates within India's workforce. The attrition rate dropped to 17.7% in 2024, down from 18.7% in 2023 and 21.4% in 2022. This suggests that the talent pool in India is stabilizing, as fewer employees are leaving their jobs, and companies are able to retain workers more effectively than in the past.

The findings also emphasize the larger trend of stability within India Inc., as companies are increasingly able to manage turnover and offer more predictable salary increments, signaling a shift toward more sustainable employment practices in a volatile global economy.



## SBI Research Predicts India's GDP Growth at 6.3% for FY25

SBI Research has revised India's GDP growth forecast for FY25 to 6.3%, slightly below the National Statistical Office's (NSO) projection of 6.4%. According to SBI's analysis, the country saw growth rates of 6.7% and 5.4% in the first and second quarters of FY25, respectively, with Q3 expected to show a growth range of 6.2% to 6.3%.

The research highlights positive momentum in the economy, with the majority of states showing improved capital expenditure (capex) in Q3. This development indicates a broader effort by regional governments to boost infrastructure investments and contribute to the overall economic performance.

SBI's findings also point to encouraging signs in manufacturing, with the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for the sector showing

favorable growth. The bank's own SBI Index, which tracks various economic indicators, also indicates positive trends in both domestic and global contexts.

The growth estimates suggest that while India's economy is on track for moderate expansion, the slightly lower prediction by SBI compared to the official NSO forecast reflects challenges such as external economic pressures and domestic structural adjustments. Nevertheless, the report underscores a generally optimistic outlook, supported by both government spending and industrial growth.

India's economic performance in Q4 will be crucial in determining whether the GDP growth will meet or fall short of the NSO's expectations for FY25.

## Rupee Depreciates 8 Paise to 86.96 Against US Dollar Amid Persistent Outflows



The Indian rupee fell by 8 paise to 86.96 against the US dollar in early trade on Tuesday, primarily due to sustained foreign fund outflows and a weak performance in domestic equities. This marks the ongoing negative trend for the currency, reflecting broader challenges in the domestic market.

Forex traders attribute the rupee's depreciation to persistent selling by foreign investors in the Indian stock market. This has been compounded by a gradual reduction in the support from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Despite the central bank's interventions, the rupee faces pressure as

foreign investors continue to pull out funds.

The rupee opened at 86.94 against the dollar in the interbank foreign exchange market and soon slipped further to 86.96, showing an 8-paise decline from its previous close. Analysts say that while the RBI's actions and the absence of anticipated US tariffs have somewhat eased trade-related concerns, the domestic macroeconomic environment remains fragile.

India's economic outlook faces several hurdles, with exports continuing to decline for the third consecutive month. In January, Indian exports

fell by 2.38% year-on-year, reaching \$36.43 billion, a sign of weakening demand in global markets. Additionally, the trade deficit for the month widened significantly to \$22.99 billion, signaling ongoing challenges in balancing the nation's trade account.

The persistent pressure on the rupee and the macroeconomic issues reflect the complex economic environment in India, which faces rising concerns of capital outflows, trade imbalances, and subdued global demand. Analysts suggest that until there is a shift in these fundamental factors, the rupee is likely to remain under pressure in the near term.



## WhatsApp Faces Stricter Rules Under EU's Digital Services Act After Surge in User Base



WhatsApp could soon face tighter regulations under the European Union's Digital Services Act (DSA) following an increase in its user base. The popular messaging platform, owned by Meta, recently reported a surge in usage, which may lead to the company being subjected to stricter oversight.

Meta's latest filing, dated February 14, reveals that WhatsApp Channels averaged approximately 46.8 million monthly active users in the second half of 2024. WhatsApp Channels function as feeds within the platform, most of which are operated by news outlets, public figures, and organizations to engage with their

audiences.

The surge in WhatsApp Channels' user base puts the platform under closer scrutiny, as the DSA applies more stringent rules to platforms with large user bases. Under the new regulations, companies like Meta are required to take additional measures to ensure user safety, prevent illegal content, and improve transparency, among other provisions. WhatsApp's growing influence, particularly through its Channels feature, signals a potential shift in the platform's role within the digital ecosystem. With increasing use, especially among media and public figures, WhatsApp could soon face higher levels of regulation to maintain its compliance with EU standards. The Digital Services Act, which came into effect in 2022, aims to make the internet safer and more transparent by imposing rigorous responsibilities on major online platforms. WhatsApp, alongside other large digital platforms, will need to navigate these new rules carefully to avoid penalties and ensure it operates in line with EU regulations.

## Uber Ditches Commissions for Auto-Rickshaw Drivers Introduces Subscription Model

Uber has announced a major change for auto-rickshaw drivers in India, eliminating its commission fees and replacing them with a subscription model. In a blog post on Tuesday, February 18, the ride-hailing giant revealed that drivers will now keep 100% of the fares earned through the platform.

Previously, Uber charged a commission on each fare, which resulted in drivers receiving only a portion of the total fare. However, with this new model, drivers will no longer face deductions from Uber. Instead, the company will charge a subscription fee for using the platform, allowing drivers to retain the full fare amount paid by passengers.

The shift to a subscription-based structure is designed to offer more earnings stability for auto-rickshaw drivers, particularly during times of fluctuating demand. Uber's move comes as part of its broader efforts to improve relationships with drivers and enhance the overall driver experience.

Uber's decision to move away from com-



missions is seen as a positive step by many auto-rickshaw drivers who often struggled with the impact of commission deductions on their earnings. Now, they will benefit from a predictable cost structure that allows them to keep the entire fare for their services. The change is expected to have a signifi-

cant impact on Uber's presence in India's auto-rickshaw market, where it competes with local ride-hailing services. By giving drivers greater financial control, Uber hopes to foster better relations with its driver community while ensuring the platform's long-term growth in the Indian market.

## Your Feet Reveal Hidden Health Issues: Expert Insights on Foot Health



Your feet are more than just a means of transportation; they can serve as an important indicator of your overall health. Just as your eyes are considered the mirror of your soul, your feet can reflect underlying health issues that may require immediate at-

tention. Dietitian Nidhi Gupta recently took to Instagram to highlight common health issues that can first be noticed through changes in the feet. Dr. Anup Khatri, senior consultant in orthopedics at Glenagles Hospital, Parel, Mumbai, concurs, emphasizing the

importance of recognizing the first signs of health problems through foot abnormalities. "It is crucial to evaluate the underlying cause of the issue and seek timely treatment," Dr. Khatri said. He further advises that proper attention to diet, coupled with following

prescribed treatment plans, is essential for maintaining healthy feet.

Common foot-related health issues that could signal more serious problems include swelling, discoloration, or pain in the feet, which may point to conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, or circulatory problems. For instance, diabetic patients often experience changes in foot appearance due to nerve damage or poor blood circulation. Additionally, persistent foot pain could indicate issues like flat feet, plantar fasciitis, or even heart and kidney problems. Experts agree that paying attention to the feet and noticing any changes is key to early diagnosis and treatment. It's essential to seek professional advice if unusual symptoms persist. Regular check-ups and maintaining a healthy lifestyle can go a long way in preventing long-term complications related to foot health. In conclusion, while we may often overlook our feet, they provide valuable insights into our health. Paying attention to them can help detect health problems before they escalate.

## Retired IFS Officer Shares Striking Image of Tiger Guarding Anti-Poaching Camp



Big cats have always been a source of fascination for wildlife enthusiasts and social media users alike, thanks to their impressive strength, agility, and majestic presence. From their swift hunting tactics to their regal dominance in the wild, these apex predators never fail to capture the imagination of viewers. Recently, a retired Indian Forest Service (IFS) officer took to social media to share a captivating image of one such tiger, showcasing its natural prowess and unexpected role in the forest ecosystem.

On Tuesday, IFS officer Susanta Nanda shared a striking photo on X (formerly Twitter), featuring a tiger seated calmly at the entrance of an anti-poaching camp in the deep forest. The image shows the tiger in a relaxed yet vigilant stance, seemingly guarding the premises and keeping a watchful eye on its surroundings.

In his post, Nanda humorously referred to the tiger as the "original guard" of the forest, adding a lighthearted touch to the impres-

sive scene. The tiger's presence at the anti-poaching camp is both symbolic and practical—highlighting the role these animals play in maintaining the balance of their ecosystem and in safeguarding their own territories.

This captivating image of the tiger not only drew attention to the beauty and importance of wildlife conservation but also provided a unique glimpse into the often unnoticed interactions between big cats and the work being done to protect them. Nanda's humorous caption added a personal touch to the post, allowing social media users to appreciate the tiger's natural guard-duties while also reflecting on the broader conservation efforts underway in India's forests.

In a world where big cats often become symbols of power and mystery, this image is a reminder of their crucial role in preserving the wild, as well as the ongoing efforts to protect these magnificent creatures from poaching and habitat loss.

## \*\*Cat and Sheep Win "Couple of the Year" Contest At Ukraine Zoo

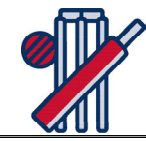


In a heartwarming twist, a cat and a sheep have won the coveted "Couple of the Year" title at the Odessa Zoo in Ukraine, beating out other contenders such as lemurs, tigers, and porcupines. The unexpected pairing of Masazhik, the cat, and Bagel, the lamb, was announced as the winners after a thrilling competition. The finalists were revealed earlier this week on YouTube, but the final victory was shared with the world through a Facebook post by the zoo.

The unique bond between the two animals stood out, with the zoo emphasizing the extraordinary companionship between the two different species. "The contest 'Couple of the Year - 2025' is over. The winners of this year are a pair of lambs, Bagel, and a cat, Masazhik," the zoo posted on

Facebook. "Such a combination of friendly relationships between completely different animals is possible only in the Odessa Zoo." The winners were honored during a special ceremony on Valentine's Day, further highlighting the love and affection that transcends species in the animal kingdom. The zoo's staff invited visitors to celebrate this delightful and unusual partnership, showcasing the beauty of unexpected friendships in nature.

Masazhik the cat and Bagel the lamb have certainly captured the hearts of zoo visitors and animal lovers around the world with their endearing relationship, proving that sometimes the most unlikely duos can form the strongest bonds.



## Pakistan's Poor Start to Champions Trophy: New Zealand Won by 60 Runs



Pakistan's return to hosting an ICC event after almost three decades began with a disappointing 60-run defeat to New Zealand at the National Stadium in Karachi. The Kiwis, powered by centuries from Will Young (107) and Tom Latham (118\*), posted a challenging total of 320/5. A late flourish from Glenn Phillips (61) further bolstered their score. In reply, Pakistan's chase faltered early, and despite a resilient 64 from Babar Azam and 69 from

Khusdil Shah, they were bowled out for 260. The Kiwi bowlers, led by Will O'Rourke (3/47) and Mitchell Santner (3/66), dominated, leaving Pakistan's top order struggling. The defeat marks New Zealand's fourth consecutive win over Pakistan in the Champions Trophy.

The opening ceremony of the tournament was a spectacular affair, marking Pakistan's first ICC global event since 1996.

## India Men's Hockey Team Secures 1-0 Victory Over World Champions Germany in FIH Hockey Pro League



The India men's hockey team bounced back from their previous defeat to Germany with a hard-fought 1-0 victory in the FIH Hockey Pro League 2024-25 season at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium on Wednesday. Gurjant Singh scored the lone goal of the match early in the fourth minute, following a loose ball in Germany's circle after a failed clearance by goalkeeper Alexander Stadler. India played a disciplined defensive game, with captain Harmanpreet Singh leading the charge. Ger-

many threatened multiple times, with Thies Prinz and Gonzalo Peillat coming close to scoring, but Indian goalkeepers Krishan Bahadur Pathak and Suraj Karkera made crucial saves.

India's defense held firm, thwarting multiple German penalty corner attempts in the final minutes to secure the win, and climb to seventh in the standings. This victory marked India's second win of the season after their earlier loss to Germany.

## Bangladeshi Pacer Nahid Rana Eager for India Clash in ICC Champions Trophy



As Bangladesh prepares to face India in their opening match of the ICC Champions Trophy, 22-year-old pacer Nahid Rana is eager to make his mark. Known for his pace, capable of exceeding 150 km/h, Rana is gearing up for his first

ICC tournament with high hopes. Having played six Tests and only three ODIs, Rana is excited to compete against the world's best cricketers. "The opportunity to play against the best is the highest form of inspiration,"

Rana said in an interview with the ICC. Growing up in Rajshahi, known more for its mangoes than sport, Rana took up cricket later in his teens. Despite limited international exposure, he impressed in his Test debut, tak-

ing three wickets in his first innings and five in the match. As he continues to hone his skills, Rana is focused on improving both his bowling and athleticism, understanding that fitness and recovery are key to maintaining his pace.

## Jeevanji Wins Gold in Women's 400m T20 at National Paralympic Athletics Championship



The National Paralympic Athletics Championship, being held at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Chennai, has witnessed remarkable performances from India's top para-athletes. Organized by the Tamil Nadu Sports Development Authority and the Tamil Nadu Paralympic Sports Association, the event brings together 1,476 athletes from 30 states and union territories, competing across 155 events from February 18-20. Paralympics bronze medalist and reigning world champion, Deepthi Jeevanji, triumphed in the women's 400m T20 category, clinching gold with a time of

57.85 seconds. Pooja from Haryana won silver, clocking 1:08.21, while Bhuvni Agrawal of Haryana secured the bronze at 1:09.24. Other standout performances included Soman Rana, who claimed gold in the men's F57 shot put, defeating Paris Paralympics gold medalist Hokato Sema. Haryana's Vikas won gold in the men's long jump T45/T46/T47, while Nishad Kumar from Himachal Pradesh bagged multiple golds in the high jump and long jump events. The ongoing championship highlights the incredible resilience and excellence of India's para-athletes.

## Hyderabad FC and Mumbai City FC Play Out Goalless Draw in ISL 2024-25

Hyderabad FC and Mumbai City FC shared the spoils in a goalless draw at the GMC Balayogi Athletic Stadium on Wednesday in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 season. Mumbai City started strong with Lallianzuala Chhangte coming close to scoring in the ninth minute, but his left-footed shot hit the woodwork. Both teams had several chances, with Chhangte and Jorge Ortiz threatening Hyderabad's defense, but goalkeeper Arshdeep Singh made crucial saves to keep the score level.

In the 36th minute, Hyderabad's Ramhlunchhunga tested Mumbai's keeper Phurba Lachenpa, who made a timely save. The second half saw more missed opportunities, including a saved shot from Mumbai's Jon Toral and Edmilson Correia's attempt for Hyderabad, blocked by the Mumbai defense. Mumbai City absorbed pressure towards the end and counter-attacked, but Chhangte's effort in the 83rd minute missed the target, and both teams had to settle for a 0-0 draw.



## International Masters League 2025 Trophy Unveiled in Mumbai



The International Masters League (IML) revealed its much-anticipated trophy at a special event held at DY Patil University. The event, known as Captains' Day, saw cricket legends like Sachin Tendulkar, Kumar Sangakkara, Brian Lara, Eoin Morgan, Shane Watson, and Jonty Rhodes (representing Jacques Kallis) come together to unveil the trophy for the inaugural edition of the tournament. The IML promises a thrilling experience for cricket fans, featuring global cricket icons leading their respective teams. The opening match of the league will take place on

February 22, 2025, between India Masters and Sri Lanka Masters at the DY Patil Stadium. Cricket legends expressed their excitement for the upcoming tournament. Tendulkar shared his passion for the game, while Brian Lara and others highlighted their eagerness to reignite old rivalries and bring excitement to the fans in India, a nation known for its love for cricket. The tournament's start marks a major celebration of cricket's rich legacy, with global stars competing on Indian soil, setting the stage for an electrifying competition.



## Allu Arjun Receives Rare Honour on Cover of The Hollywood Reporter India



Tollywood icon Allu Arjun has been bestowed with a rare honour, as he graces the cover of the inaugural edition of The Hollywood Reporter India. The popular Hollywood movie news magazine has launched its India edition, and Allu Arjun's striking face graces the cover, making it a significant milestone in his career. The magazine's feature on Allu Arjun is titled "Star of India," highlighting his remarkable achievements in Indian cinema. The cover story also emphasizes his recent film Pushpa-2: The

Rule, directed by Sukumar. The Hollywood Reporter India has recognized the film for rewriting Hindi cinema's history, showcasing Allu Arjun's significant contribution to Indian film. Pushpa-2: The Rule, part of the blockbuster Pushpa franchise, has set a new record by grossing ₹1,871 crore worldwide, marking a new benchmark in Indian cinema. Allu Arjun's groundbreaking success in Pushpa-2 has earned him widespread acclaim, further cementing his status as a global superstar.

## Sudeep's 'Max' Creates Record with OTT Streaming



Kannada superstar Kichcha Sudeep's latest film Max has taken the OTT world by storm, setting a new record. The movie, which was released in theatres in December, began its streaming journey on Zee5 from February 15. Within just four days, Max has achieved unprecedented success on digital platforms, breaking records for the highest revenue in a short period. Directed by Vijay Kartikeya, Max tells the gripping story of a police officer named Max, who takes charge at a new police station. On his first night, the heirs of local political leaders are found dead under suspicious circumstances at the station, and a conspir-

acy unfolds where the police try to cover up the deaths. The film delves into Max's struggle as he uncovers a web of intrigue. Though the film had received average feedback upon its theatrical release, its OTT debut has been a game-changer. In a remarkable feat, Max surpassed the record previously held by the Malayalam movie Mrs. for the highest streaming earnings in its opening days. With this success, Max has firmly established itself as a digital hit and solidified Sudeep's reputation as a versatile actor with a keen choice for intriguing roles.

## Ayesha Khan: From Glamour to Mystery, the Disappearing Beauty!



Ayesha Khan, who made her entry into the film industry with a small role, quickly made her mark with her stunning glamour and beauty. She caught the attention of audiences and soon found herself busy with Bollywood projects. However, her fans are still hoping to see more of her in Telugu films, where she started her career.

In many films, the heroine is the center of attention, with audiences unable to take their eyes off her. But there was one instance when a young woman appeared on screen, so mesmerizing that she overshadowed the heroine completely. That woman was none other than Ayesha Khan.

She made her Telugu film debut with the movie Mukhachitram and later gained popularity for her role as 'Rattalu' in Om Bheem Bush. In this role, her glamorous appeal stole the show. In a film about selling fish, her mesmerizing beauty captivated the young audience, who completely forgot about the plot as they were entranced by her presence.

Even after that, Ayesha's charm and allure left a lasting impact on the audience. Discussions about her beauty and potential as a heroine in Bollywood were widespread. There were talks about her future in item songs as well, with predictions that she would rule the glamour scene for some time.

Currently, Ayesha seems to be focused on her Bollywood career. Fans are left wondering if any new Telugu projects will bring her back to the industry, eagerly waiting for her return to the Telugu screen.

## Rajinikanth's 'Jailer' to Release in Japan on February 21



After a massive success in India, director Nelson's blockbuster film Jailer, featuring Tamil Superstar Rajinikanth in the lead, is now gearing up for its release in Japan. The film will hit the screens on February 21, marking its debut in the land of the rising sun.

Social media has been buzzing with excitement as fans in Japan have been sharing that Jailer will release on a large scale, with additional screens being added across multiple locations. The anticipation for the film's release in Japan is growing, with fans expressing their eagerness to witness the action-packed drama. Jailer was a record-breaking success upon its release, grossing an astounding ₹650 crores worldwide. The film's opening day was particularly strong, with Ayngaran International, the overseas distributor, confirming that it earned ₹33 crores on its first day, setting a new career record for Rajinikanth.

In addition to Rajinikanth, Jailer also featured Malayalam superstar Mohanlal, Kannada superstar Shiva Rajkumar, Bollywood actor Jackie Shroff, Telugu actor Sunil, Ramya Krishnan, Vinayakan, Mirna Menon, Taman-

naah, Vasanth Ravi, Naga Babu, Yogi Babu, Jaffer Sadiq, and Kishore. The film boasted music by Anirudh and cinematography by Vijay Kartik Kannan.

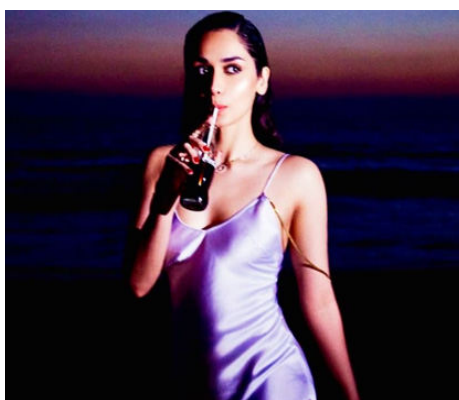
The producers, Sun Pictures, were so pleased with the film's success that they gifted Rajinikanth a BMW X7 and presented director Nelson Dilipkumar and music director Anirudh Ravichander with Porsche cars and cheques for an undisclosed amount. Given the film's extraordinary success, Sun Pictures has also announced a sequel, Jailer 2, with Nelson returning as the director and Anirudh composing the music.

A teaser for Jailer 2 has already been released, offering a glimpse of the intense action and excitement to come. The teaser starts with an announcement about an incoming cyclone, followed by a comedic conversation between Nelson and Anirudh in Goa, where they discuss the plot for the sequel. The teaser quickly escalates into explosive action, with Rajinikanth's iconic entry building the suspense. The sequel promises even more thrilling action, and fans are eagerly awaiting its release.

## From Alia Bhatt to Richa Chadha, Here Are Actresses Who Are Making Waves with Their Own Fashion Labels

Bollywood actresses are not just dominating the silver screen but are also making their mark in the world of fashion with their own unique brands. Balancing successful acting careers with entrepreneurial ventures, these stars are reshaping the fashion industry, bringing flair, creativity, and a sense of purpose. Here's a look at some leading ladies who proudly own their own fashion labels, ranging from sustainable-wear to high-end fashion.

### Island-Inspired Aesthetics



### Kritika Kamra, Cinnabar

Actress Kritika Kamra has ventured into the fashion world with Cinnabar, a brand that supports and empowers artisans from Madhya Pradesh. Launched alongside her mother, Kritika's vision for Cinnabar is to revive the traditional Chanderi handloom craftsmanship, providing local weavers with a platform to showcase their exceptional skills while promoting the region's cultural heritage.

### Empowering Local Artisans

### Richa Chadha, Ehaab

Richa Chadha, along with husband Ali Fazal, co-founded Ehaab, a home-grown fashion brand that celebrates the cultural richness of Lucknow's heritage. The brand promotes handcrafted traditions, empowering local artisans while preserving India's artistic legacy. Ehaab stands as a testament to the craftsmanship that has been handed down through generations in India.

### Passion for Sustainability

