



**Weather Forecast**

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

# Dy CM Shivakumar Responds to Irrigation Projects, Declines Comment on Triveni Sangam Water Quality

**TPN Correspondent/Bengaluru, Feb 20**  
Karnataka's Deputy Chief Minister, D.K. Shivakumar, expressed confidence that the central government would approve the state's irrigation projects during his visit to the All India State Water Resources Ministers' Conference in Udaipur. The Union Hydropower Minister has scheduled a visit on February 25, and Shivakumar assured that a proposal for irrigation projects would be submitted. Shivakumar emphasized his belief that the central government would support projects such as Mahadayi, Meke-datu, and Krishma Upper Bank. He noted that the conference provided an opportunity for state ministers to introduce their best irrigation practices and discuss challenges with the Union Ministry of Hydropower. The main aim of the conference, he explained, was to encourage water conservation and reuse, rather than viewing irrigation projects through a political lens. Further, Shivakumar called on the central government to help resolve inter-state water disputes. He mentioned discussions with the ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana regarding the conservation of Tungabhadra river water. A strategy involving all three states,



he stated, should be developed to maximize the efficient use of the river's water. On the issue of Triveni Sangam's water quality in Prayagraj, which has reportedly been deemed unsuitable for bathing, Shivakumar refrained from commenting. When asked by the media, he responded that he would only address matters pertaining to Karnataka, avoiding involvement in issues concerning other states. As the conference wrapped up, Shivakumar also highlighted the importance of irrigation planning to support farmers, industries, drinking water supply, and urban development. He reiterated the need for a clear national blueprint and more funding for irrigation projects.



# Kumaraswamy Accuses Congress of Political Vendetta Over Land Survey

**TPN Correspondent /Bengaluru, Feb 20**

Former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy has strongly criticized the state Congress government for allegedly targeting him through a land survey in Ketigana-halli near Bidadi, calling it a case of political vendetta. Kumaraswamy, whose land purchase dates back to 1984, has been under investigation since 2012, with authorities repeatedly scrutinizing his property. He accused the Congress government of using the survey as a tool to intimidate him, stating that he is politically helpless and that the matter has been kept alive for over 40 years. In a press conference, Kumaraswamy clarified that he bought the land with money earned as a movie distributor and has always maintained proper documentation. He refuted allegations of land usurpation, highlighting that earlier complaints, including one filed in 1986 by former MLA CM Lingappa and Zilla Panchayat member Ramachandra, did not accuse him of illegal acquisition but merely raised concerns about the land's ownership.

"I have not engaged in any illegal activity. I am simply cultivating the land I purchased," he said. Kumaraswamy also condemned the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) led by IAS officers, calling it a continuation of baseless investigations. He claimed that despite years of scrutiny, nothing illegal has been found. He further criticized the government's efforts to bring forward new complainants at a time when no one had raised concerns for decades. Responding to the SIT's activities, Kumaraswamy said he had contacted the Collector and the Principal Secretary of the Revenue Department, requesting proper notice before conducting any survey. He urged the authorities to bring in global-level surveyors to ensure transparency, reiterating that there was no illegality in his land purchase. The former Chief Minister also took aim at what he perceived as the misuse of constitutional institutions and investigation systems, accusing the Congress government of trying to tarnish his reputation without justification.

# Rekha Gupta to Take Oath as Delhi's New Chief Minister by Today



**TPN Correspondent/New Delhi, Feb, 20**

The tension over who will be the new Chief Minister of Delhi has been resolved, with Rekha Gupta being named as the BJP's choice for the position. Gupta, who won the Shalimar Bagh constituency in the recent Delhi Assembly elections, will take the oath today afternoon at 12:35 PM. The decision was finalized during a Delhi BJP Legislative Party meeting held on Wednesday evening, where Gupta's name was unanimously agreed upon. She previously served as the BJP's state secretary and is a graduate of Delhi University. Despite initial reports suggesting that Parvesh Verma, who famously defeated AAP

chief Arvind Kejriwal in the elections, was a front-runner for the CM post, the BJP high command made a surprise move by selecting Rekha Gupta. In addition to the new Chief Minister, Parvesh Verma will take on the role of Deputy Chief Minister, while Vijayendra Gupta has been appointed as the Speaker of the Delhi Assembly. Along with the oath of the new CM, six cabinet ministers are expected to be sworn in as well. This marks a significant moment for the BJP, as it returns to power in Delhi after a gap of 27 years. The oath-taking ceremony, which will be held in a grand manner, is set to be a pivotal event in the political landscape of the capital.



# BBMP Introduces Online System for Property Accounts in Bengaluru

**BBMP launches online system for new property accounts**

**Avoids physical visits and reduces paperwork**

**Simple 5-step process for applying through the official BBMP website**

**TPN Correspondent /Bengaluru, Feb 20**

The Brihat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has implemented a new online system to help property owners apply for a property account (Khata) digitally. This initiative, introduced following directives from CM Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar, aims to eliminate physical visits to government offices and simplify the process of obtaining property accounts.

BBMP has set a target of issuing 10,000 new accounts across Bengaluru and has urged property owners to utilize this digital service. The application process can be completed in five simple steps through the official BBMP website.

How to Apply Online for a New Property Account (Khata)

- Visit the BBMP website: [BBMP New Khata Portal](#)
- Login using mobile number and OTP.
- Enter property details, including the sales/registration number, which will be verified with the Sub-Registrar's records.
- Complete registration with Aadhaar details and upload necessary documents (Encumbrance Certificate, Bescom ID, and a recent property photo).
- Ensure property tax payments are up to date. Once all details are verified, the account will be created online.

If a property already has a handwritten account, applying for a new account is a criminal offense. Property owners without an existing handwritten account should apply online.

This initiative is expected to streamline property registration and enhance transparency in asset management across Bengaluru.



# Bengaluru Water Crisis: BWSSB Bans Use of Drinking Water for Non-Essential Activities

**TPN Correspondent / Bengaluru, Feb 20**

Amid rising concerns over declining groundwater levels, the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has banned the use of drinking water for non-essential activities, effective immediately. The directive aims to prevent a severe water shortage as the city prepares for summer.

According to the order, housing societies and residential welfare associations (RWAs) are prohibited

**from using potable water for:**

- Gardening and landscaping
  - Vehicle washing
  - Construction work
  - Decorative fountains
  - Cleaning in malls and cinemas
- Violators will be fined ₹5,000, and repeat offenders will be charged ₹500 per day under Sections 33 and 34 of the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Act, 1964. Residents are encouraged to report violations by calling the BWSSB helpline at 1916. The authorities have urged

people to use Cauvery water responsibly and explore alternative water conservation methods to mitigate the crisis. Recent studies indicate a sharp decline in Bengaluru's groundwater levels, raising alarms about long-term water security. The BWSSB's measures aim to ensure sustainable water use and prevent a repeat of last year's severe shortages. Authorities have warned that strict enforcement will continue in the coming weeks to protect the city's water resources.





# Siddaramaiah, Family Get Clean Chit in MUDA Site Allotment Case

Siddaramaiah, his wife, and two others cleared of allegations

Lokayukta to submit the final report to the special court

Investigation into other MUDA allotments from 2016-2024 to continue

**TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20**  
 Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his wife B M Parvathy, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy, and land seller J Devaraju have been given a clean chit in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) alternate site allotment case, following an investigation by the Lokayukta Police of Mysuru.

In a notice issued on Wednesday, Lokayukta Police informed complainant Snehamayi Krishna that the allegations against Siddaramaiah and the three others could not be proven due to a lack of evidence. The Lokayukta will submit the final report to the special court in Bengaluru, which handles cases involving elected representatives.

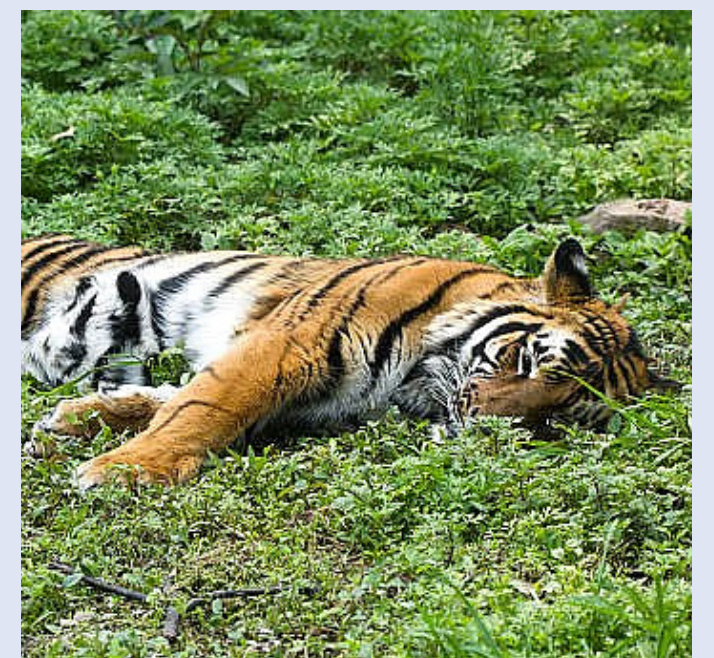
However, the Lokayukta has stated that other individuals involved in MUDA's alternate site allotments between 2016 and 2024 will continue to be investigated. As per Section 173(8) of the CrPC, an additional final report will be submitted after further inquiries.

The case was initiated following an FIR filed



against Siddaramaiah and others on September 27, 2024. Earlier, on September 25, the special court in Bengaluru directed the jurisdictional Lokayukta Police in Mysuru to investigate the complaint filed by RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna. The land in question was originally sold by J Devaraju to Mallikarjuna Swamy on August 25, 2004, and later converted from agricultural to non-agricultural use. On October 6, 2010, Swamy gifted the land to his sister, B M Parvathy, who later sought compensation from the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) from 2014 onwards for the acquired

land. Following her request, on December 12, 2021, then MUDA Commissioner D B Natesh allotted 14 alternate sites in a developed area under a 50:50 compensation scheme. However, in a significant development, Parvathy returned all the allotted sites to MUDA on October 3, 2024, effectively withdrawing her claim. With the clean chit from the Lokayukta Police, Siddaramaiah and his family have been legally cleared of any wrongdoing in this case. However, the ongoing probe into MUDA's broader alternate site allotments is expected to reveal further details about the allocation process in the coming months.



## Tiger Death in Shivamogga

Tiger carcass discovered in Ambaligola reservoir backwaters

Possible bullet injury reported; authorities to verify the claim

Locals suspect the tiger was killed elsewhere and dumped in the area

**TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20**

Karnataka's Minister for Forest, Ecology, and Environment, Eshwar Khandre, has directed officials to conduct a detailed investigation into the death of a seven to eight-year-old male tiger, whose carcass was found in the backwaters of the Ambaligola reservoir near Byrapura in Shivamogga district. In a note addressed to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden on February 18, the Minister cited pictorial media reports suggesting that the tiger had a possible bullet (pellet) injury. He has instructed officials to verify the authenticity of these reports and submit a factual report within 10 days. Additionally, concerns have been raised by local residents, who suspect that the tiger was killed elsewhere and later dumped at the reservoir. Their suspicion stems from the fact that the area where the carcass was discovered is not known to have a tiger presence. The Minister has directed officials to examine this angle as well and determine whether the tiger's death was due to poaching or any other foul play. The discovery of the carcass has sparked discussions on wildlife protection and conservation efforts in Karnataka. The state, known for its significant tiger population, has been actively working on conservation measures, and any suspected case of illegal wildlife activity is taken seriously. Forest department officials are expected to conduct a thorough examination of the carcass, including forensic analysis, to determine the cause of death. The results of this investigation will help authorities decide on further legal or conservation measures. As the probe continues, wildlife activists and conservationists have urged authorities to ensure that any illegal activity related to the tiger's death is uncovered and addressed promptly. The incident underscores the importance of strict anti-poaching laws and enhanced monitoring of wildlife habitats to prevent such occurrences in the future. The department's findings, expected within the stipulated time frame, will provide clarity on the circumstances surrounding the tiger's death, ensuring accountability and reinforcing efforts to protect Karnataka's wildlife.

## Karnataka Tourism Policy Aims for 10 Mega Coastal Projects in 5 Years

**TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20**

The Karnataka Tourism Policy 2024-29 aims to develop 20 mega projects, including 10 in coastal areas, over the next five years, according to Dr. Rajendra K V, Director of the Department of Tourism. Speaking at the Coastal Karnataka Tourism Workshop in Mangalore, he emphasized that even one major project per year would be a significant achievement. The policy also envisions the development of 40 coastal tourism stretches, incorporating multiple integrated coastal tourism zones to boost Karnataka's coastal tourism sector. To streamline investment and ensure structured growth, the state will establish a Coastal Tourism Development Board, responsible for guiding investors and drafting a coastal master plan. This board will play a key role in planning and executing tourism projects along Karnataka's 321 km coastline. As part of its global outreach, Karnataka will host the Karnataka International Travel Expo in Bengaluru from February 26 to 28, where 120 foreign tour operators are expected to participate. Dr. Rajendra encouraged stakeholders from coastal regions to showcase their tourism products at the expo. Additionally, Karnataka is developing a digital infrastructure platform to provide tourists with detailed information about destinations, tour oper-



ators, accommodations, and curated travel plans. An interactive tourism website is also in the pipeline to further enhance accessibility and engagement. Under the One-TAC Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) initiative, Karnataka aims to connect local guides, artists, and cultural institutions with visitors, fostering a more immersive and culturally rich tourism experience. The initiative is designed to enhance the discoverability of local tourism-related stakeholders and create a more integrated tourism ecosystem. To promote experiential tourism, the government is preparing a calendar of annual festivals and regional events, including Kambala and Bhoothakola, ensuring tourists can expe-

rience Karnataka's unique cultural heritage. The urban development department has also revised its taxation structure for homestays, introducing non-commercial tax rates for owner-occupied homestays and commercial tax rates for bed-and-breakfast establishments where the owner does not reside. The policy also focuses on Karnataka's global presence and heritage conservation, aiming to showcase the state at 50 international tourism events and support the preservation of 1,000 heritage monuments. Furthermore, 650 acres of land will be monetized to facilitate tourism-related infrastructure development. The Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) has identified several beaches for tourism development, including Uchila-Batapady, Someshwara, Ullal, Bengre, Tannirbavi, Panambur, Chitrapura, Hosabettu, Idya, Surathkal, and Sasihihlu. In total, 25 tourism themes and 44 projects have been earmarked for government support. Emphasizing sustainable tourism development, Tourism Department Secretary Salma Fahim highlighted the need to balance tourism expansion with environmental conservation. With strategic investments, global outreach, and digital transformation, Karnataka aims to position itself as a leading tourism destination in the coming years.

## Karnataka to Resume Additional 5 kg Rice Supply Under Anna Bhagya Scheme

Beneficiaries to receive 10 kg of rice monthly from February

State to procure rice from FCI at ₹22.5 per kg

Scheme expected to cost ₹536.71 crore per month

**TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20**

The Karnataka government will begin providing an additional 5 kg of rice per month to each Below Poverty Line beneficiary under the Anna Bhagya scheme from February, State Minister K H Muniyappa announced on Wednesday. The Congress government had promised to supply 10 kg of rice per beneficiary every month, including 5 kg provided by the Centre under the National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA). However, due to an insufficient supply



of food grains, the state government had been transferring ₹170 per person to beneficiaries' bank accounts instead of the additional rice. This practice, which continued until January, will now be discontinued. The Congress had accused the Central government of attempting to sabotage the scheme by withholding rice stocks, despite ample reserves in the Food Corporation of India (FCI) warehouses. Muniyappa confirmed that after negotiations with Union Food and Civil Sup-

plies Minister Pralhad Joshi, the state has secured an agreement to procure 2.1 lakh tonnes of rice per month at a rate of ₹22.5 per kg. "The Centre has assured us of a consistent rice supply for the next two years. From February, we will distribute 5 kg of rice per person per month instead of providing Direct Benefit Transfers," Muniyappa stated. The implementation of the scheme will require an estimated ₹536.71 crore per month. Muniyappa also noted that the Centre procures rice at ₹40 per kg, including transportation costs, and distributes it under the NFSA. The Anna Bhagya scheme was one of the five key guarantees made by the Congress in the run-up to the Karnataka Assembly elections in May 2023. With the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the revival of direct rice distribution is expected to bolster the party's support among BPL families.

## Infosys Denies Intimidation in Trainee Layoffs, Assures Cooperation with Labour Authorities

**TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20**

Infosys has refuted allegations of using force or intimidation tactics when terminating over 300 trainees at its Mysuru campus due to performance issues. Chief Human Resources Officer Shaji Mathew stated that the company has been transparent with the Karnataka Labour Department, explaining the circumstances surrounding the layoffs. While acknowledging that failure rates in assessments were slightly higher than usual, Mathew denied claims that the tests were designed to fail trainees. He emphasized that Infosys has a vested interest in seeing trainees succeed, as the company invests in their selection, training, and salary payments. Following the termina-

tions, India's Ministry of Labour and Employment directed the Karnataka Labour Department to investigate. Reports suggest that officials visited Infosys campuses in Bengaluru and Mysuru to evaluate the situation. Mathew confirmed Infosys' full cooperation, stating that authorities have been briefed on the company's training process, assessment criteria, and talent development approach. According to him, the department has been supportive and raised no further demands, including reinstating the terminated trainees. The layoffs sparked criticism from the IT employees' union NITES, which accused Infosys of forcing trainees to sign 'mutual separation' agreements. The union urged govern-

ment intervention, claiming that Infosys engaged in unethical termination practices. Mathew firmly dismissed allegations that bouncers were used to intimidate trainees. "We never considered such an approach. These are our trainees, and we respect them," he asserted. He also clarified that trainees who wished to stay on campus post-termination were allowed to do so. In response to concerns over high failure rates, Infosys has postponed upcoming internal assessments for another batch of 800 trainees by a week to allow them more preparation time. Mathew stressed that the company wants all trainees to succeed and is providing extra support, including counselling services.





## BWSSB Collects ₹21 Lakh in Fines for Water Misuse in 2024

BWSSB collected ₹21 lakh in fines for violations in 2024.

Renewed ban on potable water for non-essential purposes.

₹5,000 penalty per offence announced ahead of summer.

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru, Feb 20

With Bengaluru continuing to grapple with a severe water crisis, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has once again imposed strict restrictions on the use of potable water for non-essential purposes. In 2024, the board booked over 400 cases and collected ₹21 lakh in fines for violations. This crackdown was introduced after a drought-stricken 2023 led to an acute shortage of water in the city. On February 17, BWSSB reaffirmed that potable water should not be used for activities such as gardening, washing vehicles, construction, fountains, and road works. To ensure compliance, a fine of ₹5,000 per offence has been introduced. The decision comes as authorities prepare for an intense summer season, aiming to conserve water resources and promote sustainable usage. Citizens can report any violations of the water usage ban through the dedicated 1916 helpline set up by BWSSB. To promote the use of treated water, the board has launched the 'Parisara Snehi' app, allowing easy procurement for non-essential activities such as construction. Additionally, BWSSB has collaborated with various government and private Sewage Treatment



Plants (STPs) to ensure a steady supply of treated water to builders, reducing dependency on potable water and encouraging sustainable water management. In an effort to streamline enforcement, BWSSB has set up a dedicated helpline (1916) for citizens to report any misuse of water. Additionally, the board has introduced the 'Parisara Snehi' app, which allows builders and contractors to procure treated water for construction purposes. Officials believe these measures will make it easier to implement the ban this year, reducing dependency on potable water for non-essential needs. BWSSB Chairman Ram Prasath Manohar emphasized that the construction sector is one of the largest consumers of water. To address this, the board has partnered with both government and private Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) to provide treated water. "Builders can now book water online through the Parisara Snehi app, ensuring a smooth transition to sustainable alternatives," Manohar said. CREDAI has raised concerns over logistical constraints in implementing the shift to treated water, highlighting chal-

lenges related to transportation and the overall feasibility of the supply chain. Developers worry about the availability, distance, and smooth delivery of treated water to construction sites. In response, BWSSB has assured continued monitoring and support to address these challenges, working closely with stakeholders to streamline the process and ensure an efficient water distribution system. Despite BWSSB's initiatives, the Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) has expressed concerns over the feasibility of using treated water. Suresh Hari, Secretary of CREDAI Karnataka, highlighted logistical challenges, including transportation and accessibility. "A proper supply chain must be in place to make this initiative viable. We support the move, but practical challenges need to be addressed," he said. BWSSB has assured builders that they will work closely with industry stakeholders, including the Bangalore Apartment Federation, to resolve any procurement issues. With stricter enforcement, authorities hope to ensure Bengaluru's water security amid rising demand and limited supply.

## Bengaluru Man Wins Case Against PVR INOX Over Excessive Advertisements

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru, Feb 20

A Bengaluru man, Abhishek MR, has won a consumer case against PVR INOX after filing a complaint about excessive advertisements before a movie screening. The case, filed in 2023 after he went to watch Sam Bahadur, highlighted how 25-minute-long ads delayed the film, disrupting his schedule. The district consumer forum ruled in favor of Abhishek, stating that PVR INOX cannot "engage in unfair practices and waste moviegoers' time by showing long commercial ads during the time slot meant for the movie itself." The court directed the theater chain to clearly mention the actual start time of the movie on tickets instead of when advertisements begin. This ruling ensures that customers are better informed and not misled by vague showtimes. As part of the judgment, the court also awarded Abhishek a total of ₹1.28 lakh in compensation. This includes ₹20,000 for mental distress caused by the excessive advertisements, ₹8,000 to cover his legal expenses, and ₹1 lakh in punitive damages for unfair trade practices. Additionally, the court instructed PVR INOX to discontinue playing ads beyond the permitted duration. While the theater chain argued that government regulations mandate the screening of public service announcements (PSAs) before

movies, the court pointed out that such advertisements are limited to a maximum of 10 minutes. The court also ruled that BookMyShow, an online ticketing platform named in the case, cannot be held responsible since it does not control the screening schedule or the duration of advertisements. During the proceedings, Abhishek provided video recordings as evidence to prove the duration of the ads. In response, PVR INOX claimed that recording content inside the theater violated anti-piracy laws. However, the court dismissed this argument, clarifying that Abhishek had only recorded the advertisements and not the movie itself. It further noted that the complaint was made in the public interest, as prolonged ads affect all moviegoers. The judgment establishes a significant precedent by ensuring greater transparency in cinema scheduling and protecting consumers' rights. With this ruling, movie theatres' must now adhere to stricter guidelines regarding advertisements and ensure that viewers are given accurate information about showtimes. This decision highlights the importance of consumer rights and sends a strong message against unfair trade practices. The case is expected to influence future regulations on movie screenings and could lead to further reforms in the industry.

## Family Drug Smuggling Racket Busted in Chikkaballapur

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru, Feb 20

In a major crackdown on drug trafficking, the Chikkaballapur Cyber Station police have arrested a family of three—father, daughter, and grandson—who were illegally transporting ganja. The accused, identified as Marappa, his daughter Devamma, and her son Anji, hail from Garigereddipalya in Bagepalli taluk of Chikkaballapur district. Instead of earning a livelihood through legitimate means, the family had resorted to smuggling ganja in an attempt to get rich quickly. However, their illegal activities came to an abrupt halt when they were apprehended near Madikere

Cross in Chintamani Nagar while transporting 35 kg of ganja valued at ₹17.5 lakh. Along with the family, two other individuals, Adinarayana and Venkataraman, who were also in the vehicle during the smuggling attempt, were arrested. Preliminary investigations have revealed that the trio has a long history of drug-related offenses, with cases registered against them in multiple districts, including Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Bangalore Rural, and Tumkur. Despite repeated arrests, the accused continued their illegal activities, using a network to distribute the contraband. Authorities state that they had turned

drug trafficking into a family business, operating without fear of the law and often securing bail to resume their trade. The police have now intensified their investigation to trace the wider network involved in the smuggling operations. Officials emphasize that strict action will be taken to ensure that repeat offenders like these are held accountable and prevented from continuing such illegal activities. This latest bust is part of Karnataka's broader crackdown on narcotics, as law enforcement agencies work towards curbing drug trafficking and ensuring public safety.

## Google Unveils Ananta Campus, Its Largest Office in India

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru, Feb 20

Google has officially opened its largest office in India, the Ananta campus, in Bengaluru's Mahadevapura. Spanning 1.6 million square feet, the state-of-the-art facility is among the company's biggest offices worldwide. The inauguration, held on February 19, 2025, was led by ISRO Chairman V Narayanan and senior Google executives. The new campus is a testament to Google's long-term vision for India, focusing on artificial intelligence (AI), sustainability, and digital transformation. The Ananta campus has been designed with eco-friendly principles at its core. It boasts a 100% wastewater recycling system and a dedicated rainwater harvesting facility. The building also features smart electro-chromic glass to minimize electricity consumption, aligning with Google's global sustainability goals. Additionally, the interiors have been crafted using locally sourced materials, emphasizing sustainable architecture. The company has also integrated accessible design elements, including tactile flooring and braille signage, to support visually impaired employees. Beyond its infrastructure, the campus prioritizes employee well-being. It includes a dedicated daycare center for chil-



dren aged six months to six years, ensuring working parents have the necessary support. Wellness spaces have been incorporated to promote mental health, alongside a fully equipped gym spanning over 1,000 square feet. Employees also have access to multiple sports facilities, including courts for badminton, pickleball, volleyball, and cricket.

Taking inspiration from Bengaluru's "Garden City" reputation, the campus features walking and jogging paths, landscaped gardens, and vibrant seating areas for relaxation and informal discussions. Google's investment in India extends far beyond infrastructure. The company continues to deepen its AI initiatives in crucial sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, and sustainability. In 2024, Google introduced the Agricultural Landscape Understanding (ALU) Research API to startups and government agencies, help-

ing optimize farming practices. It also licensed its AI-powered diabetic retinopathy model to Indian healthcare providers Forus Health and AuroLab, aiding in early disease detection. Furthermore, Google's CircularNet AI model was provided to Saahas Zero Waste, a Bengaluru-based environmental enterprise, to enhance waste management solutions. Preeti Lobana, Vice President and Country Manager of Google India, emphasized the significance of the Ananta campus. "This campus marks a pivotal moment in our journey, as AI reshapes industries globally. Our focus remains on ensuring AI reaches critical areas like agriculture, health, and fintech while collaborating with India's thriving research and startup ecosystem," she said. With the Ananta campus, Google reinforces its commitment to fostering technological innovation, sustainability, and economic growth in India.

## Heritage Maritime Museum to come up in Bengaluru

The Karnataka Maritime Board (KMB) has announced plans to establish a heritage Maritime Museum near the historic lighthouse in Hoigebazar, Mangaluru. Speaking at the Coastal Karnataka Tourism workshop, KMB CEO Jayaram Raipura stated that a detailed project report (DPR) has been prepared, and the Board is awaiting funding approval from the state government. "We are hopeful of a budgetary allocation in the upcoming state budget," he added. Highlighting the importance of the project, Raipura noted that Karnataka is the only coastal state in India without a maritime museum. The proposed museum will preserve the region's rich maritime heritage and will be developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, with KMB constructing the permanent infrastructure. In an effort to improve water transport, the KMB has proposed a Water Metro project on the Gurupura River in Mangaluru, modeled after the Kochi Water Metro. The first phase of the project envisions 17 jetties, 10 boats, and 20 buses for last-mile connectivity. It aims to enhance shore-to-shore transportation, daily commuting, and tourism. The second phase will expand the project by linking the Swarna, Nethravathi, and Gurupura rivers. The KMB is also working towards setting up a dedicated Lakshadweep jetty in Mangaluru to facilitate better connectivity with the island territory. Additionally, water dromes' have been proposed at Ganesh Gudi, Linganamakki, Kabini River, and Nethravathi River to boost water-based tourism and trans-



port. To position Mangaluru as a key player in international cruise tourism, the KMB has proposed an international cruise and tourism port at Battappady in Someshwara with an 18-metre draft. A pre-feasibility report has been completed, and IIT Madras is currently preparing the DPR. The project will be open for private partnerships soon and will initially include a container terminal, later transitioning into a full-fledged cruise port connecting to Sri Lanka, Mauritius, the Gulf, and Europe. Several leading cruise operators have already shown interest in the project. In a major push for coastal tourism, seven islands in Uttara Kannada, including Kurumgad, Madhyalingad, Kangiguda, and Hog Island, have been identified for development, subject to Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) regulations. Meanwhile, islands in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts are being studied for similar development. As part of the Shoreline Management Plan, a DPR is being prepared for each coastal district to address sea erosion.



# Muslims should have left Bharat during Partition : M P Prathap Simha

BJP leader and former MP Prathap Simha makes controversial remarks on Partition and Muslim rulers.

Comments made in context of Udayagiri police station attack case.

Opposition parties condemn statement, demand action.

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20

BJP leader and former Member of Parliament (MP) Prathap Simha has sparked controversy with his remarks on Muslims while addressing the media regarding the recent attack on Udayagiri Police Station in Mysuru. His comments have drawn sharp criticism from various quarters, with opposition leaders demanding action against him. Speaking about the incident, Simha stated that "Muslims should have left Bharat during Partition" and alleged that those who stayed back were only focused on increasing their population. His remarks have been widely criticized as divisive and inflammatory. Further, responding to a question, he claimed that Muslim rulers in history were "not courageous, but barbaric" and accused them of resorting to violence rather than bravery. His statements come at a time when tensions are already high following the attack on Udayagiri Police Station, where a mob reportedly vandalized public



property. Simha also accused the Congress-led Karnataka government of being lenient toward alleged perpetrators of violence. Drawing a comparison with Uttar Pradesh, he questioned whether Chief Minister Siddaramaiah or Home Minister G. Parameashwara would implement strict measures similar to those of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who is known for his 'bulldozer policy' against illegal encroachments. His comments have triggered strong reactions from political leaders and civil society groups, who have condemned them

as communal and irresponsible. Several organizations have urged law enforcement authorities to take action against the former MP for making provocative statements. Meanwhile, the Congress government in Karnataka has not officially responded to Simha's remarks. However, party leaders have accused the BJP of attempting to incite communal tension in the state. The incident has once again brought the issue of political rhetoric and communal statements into focus, raising concerns over their impact on social harmony in Karnataka.



## Lokayukta Gives Clean Chit to CM Siddaramaiah in MUDA Scam; Opposition Demands CBI Probe

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20

The Karnataka Lokayukta has given a clean chit to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and other accused in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case. The Lokayukta informed complainant Snehamayikrishna that the case was not worthy of investigation. However, opposition leaders have expressed outrage over the report, alleging a cover-up and demanding a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Leader of Opposition R. Ashok criticized the report, sarcastically remarking that it was "not a clean chit but a wash with Nirma powder." Speaking to the media in Bengaluru, he questioned why expensive lawyers were hired if there was no wrongdoing. He alleged that the police officers involved in the case were seeking transfers and promotions, leading to the closure of the case. Ashok further accused the Lokayukta of issuing a pre-determined report, calling it a deliberate attempt to shield those in power. Ashok also raised questions about the return of 14 sites, stating, "If there was no mistake, why did they give back the sites?" He claimed that the illegal layout was ignored until the accused wanted a 50:50 site division. He also suggested that CM Siddaramaiah was too cautious to leave any direct evidence such as phone calls or letters. He insisted that only an independent investigation could uncover the truth, reiterating that justice had not been served. Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council, also slammed the Lokayukta's decision. He stated that a CBI investigation was necessary to reveal the truth. He questioned the Congress party's trust in the CBI, pointing to alleged past misuse of the agency. Narayanaswamy further alleged that those involved in the MUDA irregularities had political backing, which influenced the outcome of the Lokayukta's investigation. Opposition leaders have vowed to continue their fight against the MUDA irregularities and announced a meeting in Bengaluru to discuss legal action. They emphasized that they would explore all possible avenues to ensure that justice was served. They also criticized the Congress government for allegedly manipulating the case to protect those involved. Despite the Lokayukta's findings, the controversy surrounding the case remains, with the opposition determined to keep the issue alive in the political arena. They reiterated that the matter should be handed over to the CBI for an impartial probe, ensuring transparency and accountability in the investigation.

## BJP Demands White Paper on Karnataka's Financial Condition

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has demanded that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah present a white paper on Karnataka's financial condition before tabling the state budget on March 7. BJP state president B.Y. Vijayendra has alleged that the state is heading towards "bankruptcy" due to the financial burden imposed by the Congress government's five guarantee schemes. The guarantees include Gruha Jyothi, providing 200 units of free electricity per household, Gruha Lakshmi, offering ₹2,000 per month to women heads of families, and Anna Bhagya, which gives 10 kg of free rice per BPL family member. The Yuva Nidhi scheme supports unemployed youth with ₹3,000 for graduates and ₹1,500 for diploma holders for two years. Additionally, the Shakti scheme allows free travel for women on government-run non-luxury buses. Vijayendra alleged that the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) is on the verge of closure due to financial mismanagement, claiming the government has failed to clear ₹7,000 crore in dues to the transport corporation. He further stated that Karnataka's financial health is deteriorating despite borrowing ₹1.19 lakh crore over the past two years. The BJP leader also criticized the government for rising costs, stating that property guidance values have increased by 30%, registration fees by 600%, metro fares by 50%, and milk



prices by 15%. He accused the government of failing to clear ₹6,000 crore in electricity dues from state departments, further straining finances. He also condemned the Chief Minister for blaming the Centre for the recent Bangalore Metro fare hike, claiming that no other Metro Rail Corporation in India has implemented such an increase, making Bengaluru's metro fares the highest in the country. Regarding internal party matters, Vijayendra addressed the issue of dissident BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal, stating that the central leadership had served him a notice, and a decision on further action would be taken soon. He emphasized that party unity is essential to counter the ruling Congress in Karnataka. With the state budget session approaching, the BJP is intensifying its attack on the Congress government, calling for transparency on Karnataka's financial health.

## BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal Responds to Party's Show-Cause Notice, Demands Leadership Change

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20

After initially denying that he had received a show-cause notice from the party's central committee, senior BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal has reportedly submitted a detailed response to the notice, making strong demands for changes within the party's leadership in Karnataka. Yatnal has urged the BJP's central leadership to appoint a "capable leader" who can unify the party and ensure inclusivity among its members. He has specifically called for the removal of B.Y. Vijayendra as the state BJP president, citing concerns over his leadership style and decision-making approach. Additionally, Yatnal has demanded an end to what he describes as "dynastic rule" within the state unit of the party, arguing that leadership positions should be based on merit rather than family lineage. Despite maintaining a defiant stance in front of the media, Yatnal is said to have submitted his reply within the stipulated time frame. In his response, he asserted that he had not engaged in any anti-party activities but was merely voicing legitimate concerns about the internal functioning of the party. He stressed that his criticism was constructive and aimed at strengthening the BJP ahead of the upcoming elections. "Vijayendra is not a team player and has built his own coterie. Due to this, a significant section of party leaders and workers feel completely ignored. This lack of inclusivity will not benefit the party in the long run," Yatnal reportedly stated in his reply. He also defended his involvement in the agitation against the Waqf Board, claiming that his actions were in line with the party's ideology and were positively received by BJP central leaders in Delhi. "The protest was meant to reinforce the party's core values and expand its support base, not to harm its reputation in any way," he said. Furthermore, Yatnal warned that if necessary corrective measures were not implemented soon, the BJP might struggle to achieve its goal of securing a clear majority in the next Assembly elections. "It is imperative to have a strong and capable leader who can effectively guide the party during this crucial period," his reply emphasized. The controversy surrounding Yatnal's remarks and the internal rift within the BJP continues to grow, with many speculating on how the party's central leadership will respond to his demands. With increasing factionalism and leadership concerns, the developments in Karnataka BJP are being closely watched by both party members and political analysts alike.

## Caste census will be made public: CM Siddaramaiah

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka, Feb 20

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has announced that the state government will soon publish the Socio-Economic and Education Survey report, commonly referred to as the caste census. The announcement comes ahead of the state budget, following a meeting with leaders from backward classes and minority communities. The Karnataka Backward Classes Federation, in its memorandum to the Chief Minister, strongly urged the government to implement the caste census report and increase reservation to 75 per cent. The federation also demanded an allocation of Rs 10,000 crore for various boards and corporations that cater

to the needs of backward classes. Their argument is that the report's implementation will help in ensuring equitable distribution of resources and opportunities among marginalized communities. Addressing reporters, Siddaramaiah reaffirmed the scientific basis of the caste census report and assured that it would be implemented without delay. "The report has been prepared using a thorough and scientific methodology. There is no reason to doubt its credibility. The government has received it, and we will implement it in the coming days," he said. He emphasized that the findings would be instrumental in formulating welfare schemes targeting specific underprivileged sections. However, he noted that

opposition to the report stemmed from a lack of understanding of its potential benefits. The Chief Minister also reiterated his government's commitment to uplifting the poor, women, minorities, and backward classes by integrating them into the mainstream. "Discrimination exists even within backward classes, and this needs to be addressed. Our government is determined to ensure social justice," he stated. He further assured that special attention would be given to nomadic communities, which have historically faced severe marginalization. The caste census, conducted during Siddaramaiah's previous tenure as Chief Minister in 2015, has been a contentious issue in Karnataka politics. While some groups argue

that its findings are necessary for a fair redistribution of government benefits, others fear it could lead to political and social divisions. As the government prepares to release the report, political reactions from both the ruling and opposition parties are expected. The opposition BJP has previously opposed the caste census, raising concerns about its implications. However, Siddaramaiah remains firm in his decision, asserting that the report's implementation will be a crucial step toward achieving greater social and economic equality in Karnataka. The coming days are likely to see intense political debates as the state moves forward with the publication and execution of the caste census report.







# NGT Pulls Up UPPCB Over Water Quality Reports at Maha Kumbh

**TPT Correspondent I**Uttar Pradesh, 20

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) reprimanded the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB) for failing to submit adequate information regarding water quality, particularly faecal coliform levels, in the Ganga and Yamuna rivers at Prayagraj during the ongoing Maha Kumbh. A report submitted earlier this month by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) highlighted alarmingly high levels of faecal coliform—microbes originating from human and animal waste—at the confluence of these rivers, where millions are taking part in ritual bathing. Additional Advocate General Garima Prasad, representing the Uttar Pradesh government, stated that while the State government is not contesting the CPCB's findings, it is seeking clarification on the sampling points used for data collection. The NGT noted that the UPPCB's report, submitted to the court, only included water samples collected until January 12, prior to the commencement of the Maha Kumbh. Expressing its dissatisfaction, the tribunal questioned why the report, spanning 250 pages, lacked crucial details on faecal coliform levels. The bench criticized the submission, suggesting it was an attempt to waste the tribunal's time. The Principal Bench of the NGT, consist-



ing of Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava, Judicial Member Justice Sudhir Agarwal, and Expert Member A. Senthil Vel, is reviewing a plea concerning the water quality of the Ganga and Yamuna rivers at Prayagraj. In its February 17 order, the NGT referenced the CPCB report, which stated, "River water quality was not conforming with the primary water quality for bathing with respect to Faecal Coliform (FC) at all monitored lo-

cations on various occasions. The large number of people bathing at Prayagraj during the Maha Kumbh Mela, especially on auspicious days, has significantly increased faecal concentration." The UPPCB informed the tribunal that it possesses the latest reports on water quality. Consequently, the NGT directed the State pollution board to file the updated report within a week and scheduled the next hearing for February 28.

## Flu Outbreak Triggers Poultry Price Drop, Mutton and Seafood Costs Surge

**TPT Correspondent I**Andhra Pradesh, 20

The ongoing bird flu outbreak has significantly impacted the poultry industry, leading to a sharp decline in chicken prices across several districts in the state. At the same time, consumers shifting away from poultry have fueled a surge in the demand and cost of mutton and seafood. In Guntur, the price of skinless chicken has fallen to ₹160 per kg, down from ₹180-₹210, while chicken with skin has dropped from ₹160 to ₹140 per kg. Similarly, a tray of 30 eggs, which previously cost ₹170-₹190, is now being sold for ₹160. In Kakinada, the price of skinless chicken has reduced from ₹260 to ₹240 per kg, and chicken with skin is now ₹220 per kg, down from ₹240. The price of eggs has also seen a decline, dropping from ₹6.70 to ₹5.30 per piece. A similar trend is observed in Tirupati, where live chicken prices have plummeted from ₹155 to ₹133 per kg, and dressed chicken has dropped from ₹190 to ₹163 per kg. Additionally, the cost of 100 eggs has decreased from ₹560 to ₹500. While chicken prices have slightly increased in some parts of YSR district, egg prices have continued to decline. However, the shift away from poultry has caused a surge in mutton prices. In Guntur, mutton, which was previously priced between ₹750 and ₹900 per kg, has now soared to ₹1,000 per kg. Similar price hikes have been recorded in Tirupati and Anantapur. The seafood market has also witnessed a significant rise in prices. Prawns, which were previously available at ₹400 per kg, are now being sold for ₹600 per kg. Fish prices have also surged, with Pandugappa fish increasing from ₹500 to ₹800 per kg. This increased demand for seafood has contributed to a 10% rise in fish production. However, concerns have emerged regarding the use of chicken waste as fish feed, prompting authorities to closely monitor the situation to prevent potential health risks. As the bird flu outbreak continues, authorities are urging consumers to take necessary precautions while handling and consuming poultry products. Poultry farmers are facing heavy losses due to the sudden drop in demand, and industry experts anticipate that it may take weeks for the market to stabilize.

## Telangana Sees Record Investment Growth, IT Sector Booms

**TPT Correspondent I**Hyderabad, Feb 20

A recent study by the MSME Export Promotion Council has highlighted Telangana's impressive economic growth, with new investment proposals amounting to Rs 3,25,110 crore and completed projects worth nearly Rs 75,000 crore between the financial years 2021-22 and 2023-24. During this period, the private sector announced new investment projects valued at Rs 62,500 crore, with completed projects reaching Rs 7,022 crore. In 2021-22, new investment proposals stood at Rs 85,087 crore, significantly increasing to Rs 1,33,102 crore in 2022-23. The trend continued in 2023-24, with new proposals total Rs 1,06,921 crore. These figures, sourced from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), demonstrate Telangana's growing appeal among both national and foreign investors. MSME EPC Chairman Dr. D.S. Rawat stated while releasing the study on Wednesday.

The report also detailed the completion of projects in the state: Rs 22,380 crore in 2021-22, Rs 24,910 crore in 2022-23, and a record Rs 2,70,910 crore in 2023-24. As of January 7, 2025, the total outstanding investment projects for 2023-24 amounted to Rs 8,25,982 crore, with Rs 4,78,100 crore under implementation. Furthermore, Telangana's total exports of principal commodities grew from Rs 91,776 crore in 2022-23 to Rs 1,16,527 crore in 2023-24. The per capita GSDP also saw an increase from Rs 3,45,225.7 to Rs 3,93,384.5 during the same period. The industrial sector's contribution to the state's economy has remained steady at approximately 18 percent of the gross state value added (GSVA). In 2023-24, the sector's share increased to 18.5 percent, marking a 10.1 percent rise in its contribution. Meanwhile, the services sector, the key driver of Telangana's economic growth, experienced an impressive 14.6 percent surge in gross value

added (GVA) in 2023-24. Telangana continues to establish itself as a major player in the IT industry, holding a 31 percent share of India's software exports. The number of startups in the state grew from 400 in 2016 to 2,000 in 2022. Telangana accounted for 16.7 percent of employment in India's IT sector as of FY 2023. Additionally, the state's IT/ITeS exports grew at a rate of 17.93 percent, surpassing the national average of 8.09 percent. Looking ahead, IT/ITeS exports in Telangana are expected to reach 23 percent by 2027, generating over 3,00,000 additional direct jobs. The sector alone is projected to employ over 13 lakh people, fostering the development of more IT hubs across the state. The study also noted that 56 percent of Telangana's estimated 2.6 million MSMEs operate in rural areas, with the remaining 44 percent in urban regions. These developments position Telangana as a key economic powerhouse in India.



## Two Arrested in Rs 1.56 Crore Online Trading Scam in Chennai

**TPT Correspondent I**Uttar Pradesh, 20

The cybercrime wing of the Avadi Central Crime Branch (CCB) has arrested two individuals for their involvement in an online trading scam that defrauded a civil engineer from Mangadu of Rs 1.56 crore. The accused, identified as A Ajith Kumar (29) from Sivagangai and P Prakash (41) from Puducherry, acted as money mules, providing their bank accounts for fraudulent transactions and facilitating the transfer of funds abroad. According to police sources, the victim, Jayaraman (55), fell prey to the scam after receiving a WhatsApp advertisement in June 2023 that promised assured 100% profits through online trading. Upon responding, he was added to a WhatsApp group consisting of over a hundred members. The group included individuals who frequently posted messages claiming to have earned high returns. Some members also reached out to Jayaraman privately, encouraging him to invest.

Believing the scheme to be legitimate, Jayaraman initially invested Rs 5,000. Over the following months, he continued making investments, eventually depositing Rs 1.56 crore by July 2024. He transferred funds to a bank account provided within the group. However, he became suspicious when he was unable to withdraw his displayed profits. Realizing he had been de-

frauded, he lodged a complaint with the police in September.

Investigations led to a fake company registered in Puducherry under the name of Ajith Kumar, who had only completed Class X and was working in an eatery in Chennai. Police discovered that Jayaraman had transferred all his money into this account, from where it was redirected to another account belonging to P Prakash, a BA graduate from Puducherry.

Ajith and Prakash were allegedly recruited by a cybercrime syndicate to run an office dedicated to the scam. Ajith was responsible for receiving funds from victims, which he then transferred to Prakash. The latter managed the further transfer of funds to international accounts. In return, Ajith earned Rs 1.5 lakh as commission, while Prakash received Rs 1.1 lakh.

According to police, a separate WhatsApp group was created to communicate with victims, reinforcing the illusion of a legitimate trading platform. Authorities are currently investigating how the money was laundered and transferred abroad. Efforts are also underway to identify the masterminds behind the operation.

The police have urged the public to be cautious of online investment schemes that promise unrealistic returns and to verify the legitimacy of trading platforms before making any financial commitments.

## KIIT University Officials Arrested Amid Nepali Students' Eviction Row

**TPT Correspondent I**Bhubaneswar, 20

Amid widespread public outrage over the forced eviction of Nepali students protesting the suicide of a fellow student, police on Tuesday arrested three senior officials and two security guards of KIIT University. Diplomatic efforts continued throughout the day to ensure the safe return of the affected students to the university. The Education Ministry of Nepal warned that it might stop issuing No Objection Certificates (NOC) to students seeking admission in Odisha unless the situation was resolved in a "justifiable and legal way." The Nepal Embassy in India reported that Ambassador Shankar P. Sharma had a telephonic discussion with KIIT University founder Achyuta Samanta and met with university representatives in New Delhi. Samanta assured the ambassador that necessary actions had been taken, including the termination of staff and a public apology from the vice-chancellor. Nepal's Foreign Affairs Minister, Arzu Rana Deuba, also engaged in discussions with KIIT representatives. The university pledged to bear the travel expenses of students who had returned to Nepal and make arrangements for re-examinations for those who missed their tests. On the same day, the state government formed a high-level committee to investigate the issue. The university's Director General of Human Resources, Sibananda Mishra, Director of Administration, Pratap Chamupati,



and Director of Hostels, Sudhir Kumar Rath, were arrested along with two security guards, Ramakanta Nayak and Jogendra Behera, by Infocity police. Earlier, KIIT University suspended an administrative officer from its international relations office and two hostel officials, while terminating two security personnel. As tensions escalated, the university issued a public apology. "We are extremely appalled by the incident that took place on our campus on February 16. We deeply regret how some of our members behaved with the protesting students. KIIT has always valued its students and has never acted against their interests," stated Vice-Chancellor Saranjit Singh. He further condemned the irresponsible comments made by two university officers, clarifying that

while the remarks were made in their personal capacity, the institution does not endorse their actions. Appealing for calm, the university urged Nepali students to resume regular academic activities, emphasizing its commitment to students from Nepal, India, and across the world. Meanwhile, the father of the deceased student expressed confidence in the state government and the police to deliver justice. Protests continued outside the university as police maintained strict vigilance. The 20-year-old third-year B.Tech student allegedly died by suicide after facing harassment from a male friend from the same batch. The accused has since been arrested. In a late development, all five arrested university employees were granted bail by a local court in the evening.



# 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:

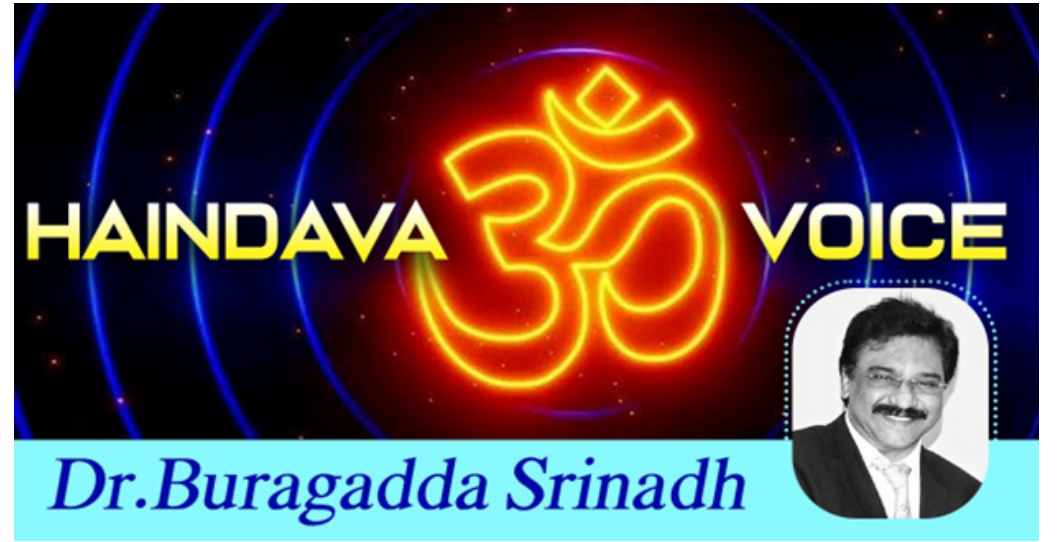
- **Incentivize Green Practices:** Governments can encourage adoption through tax benefits, subsidies, and low-interest loans for green construction projects.
- **Strengthen Building Codes:** Enforce the Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) to ensure all new constructions meet green standards.
- **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."



ment 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, IT 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

