



Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
H 35° C L 21° C	H 36° C L 23° C	H 36° C L 23° C



P4 Policy to be Launched in Amaravati on Ugadi

- 20 lakh families to benefit in the first phase
- Initiative to bridge the gap between rich and poor

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has given final shape to the P4 policy, launching it on the occasion of Ugadi in Amaravati. This initiative aims to create a collaborative effort between the rich and the poor, ensuring equal opportunities for all. During a review meeting at the Secretariat, CM Naidu explained the P4 policy's framework, stating that anyone, including NRIs, can voluntarily participate in supporting underprivileged families.

Those who assist in implementing this policy will be regarded as guides, while the beneficiary families will be recognized as golden families. As part of the execution plan, village and ward assemblies will prepare a list of beneficiary families, with 20 lakh families benefiting in the first phase. The Chief Minister reiterated that the government is committed to eradicating poverty by 2029 and that this program will play a crucial role in achieving that goal. CM Naidu emphasized that P4 is an independent initiative and is not linked

to any government welfare schemes. The program will continue without interruption, focusing solely on uplifting the weaker sections of society. He assured that the government will ensure effective implementation, making it a model for poverty alleviation. The launch of P4 in Amaravati on Ugadi marks a major milestone in the state's development agenda. With a strong vision for inclusive growth, CM Naidu aims to make Andhra Pradesh a poverty-free state by 2029, strengthening social and economic equity.

AP Govt Committed to Creating 20 Lakh Jobs by 2029, Says Minister Nara Lokesh



TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Education and IT Minister Nara Lokesh reaffirmed the government's commitment to generating 20 lakh jobs in Andhra Pradesh by 2029. The second meeting of the sub-committee of ministers on job creation was held at his Undavalli residence, where officials presented a PowerPoint briefing on investments, job creation, and the status of various MoUs.

According to the report, agreements signed so far are expected to bring investments worth ₹8,73,220 crore, creating employment opportunities for 5,27,824 people. Minister Lokesh, who chairs the sub-committee, directed officials to enhance the Investment Tracker Portal by integrating all details related to land allotments and permissions. He emphasized the need for policy reforms to eliminate hurdles for investors and attract global and domestic companies. He also assured that industries already established in the state would receive necessary incentives to expand further.

"Several industrialists are keen on investing in the state. We must ensure quick land allotments, permissions, and subsidies to facilitate their ventures. The MSME sector will play a crucial role in job creation, and we will actively support its growth. ITIs and polytechnics should be leveraged to provide skilled manpower. Additionally, we must focus on port development and tourism investments," Lokesh stated.

He also highlighted opportunities in the mining sector and called for efforts to boost investments in this area. The meeting was attended by Industries Minister TG Bharat, Power Minister Gottipati Ravikumar, Urban Development Minister P. Narayana, MSME and SERP Minister Kondapalli Srinivas, Mines Minister Kollu Ravindra, and senior officials Ajay Jain, N. Yuvraj, Katamaneni Bhaskar, Praveen Kumar, Saikanth Verma, and M. Abhishek Kishore.



YS Jagan Slams NDA Government for Halting Crop Insurance

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MP Srikrishna Devaraya Slams Vidadala Rajani Over Allegations

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

TDP MP Srikrishna Devaraya has strongly countered the allegations made by YSRCP leader and former minister Vidadala Rajani, who claimed that an ACB case was falsely filed against her for allegedly collecting illegal money from a stone crusher owner. Rajani accused the government of political harassment and claimed that attempts were made to access her phone data. Responding to her remarks, MP Srikrishna Devaraya warned Rajani to be careful while making accusations regarding phone records and land matters. He clarified that his family has been running the Vignan Foundations for four decades with an unblemished record.



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Araku Coffee Stall Launched in Parliament Premises

- Araku Coffee gains national recognition
- Efforts of 1.5 lakh tribal farmers honored
- Leaders extend support for tribal empowerment

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Swiggy Delivery Boy Attacked by Apartment Owner for Calling Him 'Bro'

- Delivery worker assaulted for addressing customer as 'bro'
- Security personnel allegedly involved in the attack
- Protests by delivery workers demand action against accused

TPN Correspondent | Visakhapatnam

A routine food delivery in Visakhapatnam's Seethamadhara area took a violent turn when a Swiggy delivery boy was allegedly attacked by an apartment owner simply for calling him "bro."

The incident occurred at Block B of Oxygen Towers, where Prasad, a resident, had ordered food through Swiggy. Delivery worker Anil arrived at the apartment and rang the doorbell. A woman answered but did not understand what Anil said, so she informed Prasad, who came out to collect the order.

As Anil handed over the parcel, he reportedly said, "Your food parcel has arrived, bro." The simple remark enraged Prasad, who took offense at being addressed informally. "How dare you call me bro instead of sir?" he allegedly shouted before attack-



ing Anil. What started as an argument quickly escalated, with Prasad and security personnel allegedly assaulting the delivery worker. Reports suggest that

they stripped Anil down to his underwear and forced him to stand outside the apartment gate in humiliation. To make matters worse, they allegedly made him write an apology letter.

As news of the incident spread, rumours surfaced that Anil, devastated by the humiliation, had attempted suicide. This triggered an outpouring of anger among delivery workers, who gathered outside Oxygen Towers in protest. They demanded immediate action against Prasad and those involved in the attack.

Amid rising tensions, Dwarka ACP Annepu Narasimhamurthy arrived at the scene and spoke to Anil over the phone, ensuring that he was safe. The protesters calmed down after the ACP assured them that legal action would be taken if Anil filed a formal complaint.

Araku Coffee Stall Launched in Parliament Premises

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Araku Coffee, the renowned organic coffee from Andhra Pradesh's Araku Valley, has made its mark on the national stage with the launch of a dedicated stall in the Parliament premises. The coffee, which holds a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, represents the dedication of 1.5 lakh tribal farmers, whose generations have cultivated and preserved this unique blend. The initiative received strong support from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, who have been instrumental in bringing global recognition to India's organic farming sector. Their efforts have helped GI-certified products like Araku Coffee gain prominence, empowering rural communities and promoting sustainable agriculture on a global scale. Gratitude was extended to Union Ministers Piyush Goyal, Juwal Sriram, and Kiren Rijju for their commitment to tribal welfare and their efforts in promoting tribal products. Special thanks were also conveyed to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla for his cooperation in facilitating this landmark initiative. Union Minister for Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, known for his advocacy for tribal entrepreneurship and rural development, played a key role in ensuring Araku Coffee's recognition at the national level. His efforts reinforce the government's commitment to supporting indigenous products, ensuring that tribal farmers receive the recognition and opportunities they deserve.

CM Naidu Directs Officials to Prevent Drinking Water Shortage in Summer

- CM reviews summer action plan, orders preventive measures
- Free buttermilk distribution to resume statewide
- ₹39 crore released to address drinking water shortages

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

With rising temperatures across Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has directed officials to ensure no region faces a drinking water shortage. Chairing a review meeting on the summer action plan at the Secretariat, he instructed the Disaster Management, Panchayat Raj, Municipal, and Health departments to take necessary precautions. The CM emphasized early warnings about extreme heat and advised officials to alert the public via mobile notifications. He also called for setting up cold storage and buttermilk distribution centers at markets, bus stands, and labor camps, recalling a similar initiative from 2014-19. Urging voluntary organizations to participate, he assured government support for these efforts. Addressing the drinking water crisis in Rayalaseema and Prakasam districts, Chandrababu Naidu ordered the construction of 12,138 water tanks in villages at a cost of ₹35 crore, ensuring water availability for cattle and rural households. He reiterated the coalition government's commitment to public welfare and urged officials to act swiftly. The CM approved ₹39 crore to resolve water shortages in municipalities. He suggested villages construct farm ponds through NREGA and undertake pond desilting to improve



water storage. He also directed officials to provide NREGA laborers extra working days in summer, along with water, ORS packets, and necessary facilities. To prevent heat-related illnesses, municipal workers will not be assigned outdoor tasks between 12 PM and 4 PM. The CM also instructed hospitals to ensure adequate beds, doctors, and treatment facilities for sunstroke cases. Additionally, special efforts will be made for mosquito control in tribal areas to prevent disease outbreaks.



Hailstorm to Continue in AP for Four More Days

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Unseasonal rains and hailstorms have caused severe damage to crops in several districts of Andhra Pradesh, leaving farmers in distress. The Meteorological Department has warned that the adverse weather will persist for another four days, with thunderstorms and strong winds expected. Officials stated that cumulonimbus clouds are triggering the thunderstorms, while a surface circulation extending from Vidarbha to Tamil Nadu, reaching 1.5 km above sea level, is influencing the weather patterns. Due to the increased risk of lightning strikes, authorities have advised people to take precautions and avoid open areas and trees during thunderstorms. With crops already suffering extensive damage, farmers are deeply concerned about further losses. The state government is expected to assess the situation and extend necessary support to the affected farmers. Officials are closely monitoring the conditions and may initiate relief measures to minimize losses.



Govt Focuses on WhatsApp Governance & Speed Up Data Connectivity

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary K. Vijayanand has directed officials to speed up data connectivity across the state and strengthen the Real-Time Governance Society (RTGS) for efficient public service delivery. He emphasized the need for seamless digital infrastructure to enhance governance through WhatsApp and other digital platforms. In a recent review meeting, Vijayanand instructed officials to assess RTGS operations and improve data-driven decision-making. He stressed the importance of expanding WhatsApp governance to make government services more accessible to people in both urban and rural areas. The WhatsApp governance model, introduced in Andhra Pradesh, allows citizens to access government services, lodge complaints, and receive updates directly on their mobile phones. Vijayanand called for a faster rollout of data connectivity initiatives to ensure that people in remote areas also benefit from real-time communication with government departments. Officials have been tasked with identifying connectivity gaps and working with telecom providers to improve network coverage, particularly in villages and tribal areas. The government aims to integrate advanced digital solutions into public administration, ensuring that citizens can receive faster responses to grievances and access essential services effortlessly. The Chief Secretary also stressed the need for continuous monitoring and upgrading of the RTGS system to align with modern governance standards. He assured that the government is committed to leveraging technology to bring efficient, transparent, and accessible governance to every citizen.

International University for Uttarandhra

Agreement Signed in Presence of Minister Nara Lokesh

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

In a significant step towards enhancing higher education opportunities in Andhra Pradesh, Georgia National University (GNU) has signed an agreement with the state government to establish a prestigious international university in Uttarandhra. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in the presence of State Education, IT, and Electronics Minister Nara Lokesh at his Undavalli residence. As per the agreement, GNU will invest ₹1,300 crore in the project, which will expand the global education ecosystem while generating employment for 500 people. This partnership aims to leverage GNU's expertise in investment, technology, planning, and infrastructure to set up a world-class university. Speaking at the event, Minister Nara Lokesh emphasized that this collaboration will elevate Andhra Pradesh's education sector to international standards. He stated, "This agreement with Georgia National University will provide world-class education and equip students with global job market skills. It reflects our government's commitment to developing AP students as future global leaders." Founded in 2002, Georgian National University SEU is Georgia's largest private university, known for its global reputation. It has 1,100+ skilled faculty members and 52,500 alumni working across various industries worldwide. The university of-



fers four internationally accredited faculty programs and collaborates with leading global companies while organizing international exchange programs with funding support. The MoU signing event was attended by GNU Founder & Rector Dr. Gia Kavtelishvili, Vice Rectors Professor George Gavtadze, Dr. Goderji Buchashvili, Levan Kalandarishvili, India Operations Director Jonnalagadda Vivekananda Murthy, Atmiya Education Chairman Hashmik Vaghela, CEO Chirag Vaghela, AP Economic Development Board CEO Saikanth Verma, College Education Commissioner Bharat Gupta, and Education Secretary Kona Shashidhar, among others.

MP Srikrishna Devaraya Slams... Continued from page 1

He asserted that they never applied for land in Amaravati and had legally purchased land at a high price in 2009 during the Congress regime through public auction. He criticized Rajani for making baseless claims without understanding the difference between land auction and land allotment. Refuting her claims about the so-called Red Book list, Devaraya emphasized that IPS officer Joshua, whose service extends until 2040, had no connection with the owner of Balaji Stone Crushers. He reminded that it was Rajani herself who had lodged a complaint about irregularities in stone crushers on August 24, 2021. Further, Devaraya accused Rajani of threatening officials for personal gain and questioned her alleged financial dealings with individuals like Potharam Basha, MPP Shankar Rao, Mutta Vasu, Gold Seenu, Abbas Khan, and Nagayya. He stated that she had not returned the money taken from them and questioned whether she had attempted to stop the case by sending mediators. He urged Rajani to stop misleading the public and face legal scrutiny instead of making false allegations for political mileage.

YS Jagan Slams NDA Government for Halting Crop Insurance

TPN Correspondent | Pulivendula

Former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy toured rain-affected areas in Kadapa district on Monday, inspecting banana, papaya, and other damaged crops in Pulivendula and surrounding villages. He visited Thathiredypalli, Vempalle, and Lingala, interacting with distressed farmers to understand their losses due to timely rains and storms. Speaking to the media, Jagan criticized the coalition government, accusing it of halting crop insurance and farmer assurance funds that were provided during his tenure. He emphasized that under YSRC rule, free crop insurance was a farmer's right, and financial assistance was given without delay. He alleged that Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu had failed to honor his ₹26,000 per farmer promise, stating, "Not even 26 paise has been given so far."

Jagan assured farmers that YSRCP would reinstate all pending financial support once back in power. He pledged to restore crop insurance, resume input subsidies, and ensure financial relief to those affected by natural calamities. "Farmers should not lose hope. Once we return, we will bring back all the welfare schemes that were stopped," he declared. During his visit, he also met dairy and horticulture farmers, promising them comprehensive support if his party regains power. Jagan accused the government of neglecting rural development, stating that many farmers are struggling due to lack of assistance and broken promises. Concluding his visit, Jagan vowed to fight for farmers' rights, promising to pressurize the government for compensation and take necessary steps for their welfare on behalf of YSRCP. "Our commitment to farmers will never waver," he assured.

Minister Kandula Durgesh Hoists Blue Flag at Rushikonda Beach

TPN Correspondent | Visakhapatnam

Andhra Pradesh Tourism, Culture, and Cinematography Minister Kandula Durgesh hoisted the prestigious Blue Flag at Rushikonda Beach, celebrating its reinstatement after a brief suspension by the Danish certifying authority. The certification had been revoked earlier due to environmental concerns, but following significant improvements, Rushikonda has once again met global eco-tourism standards. Two days ago, representatives from the Danish organization officially handed over the Blue Flag certificate to the district collector. In this context, Minister Durgesh led the flag-hoisting ceremony, marking the achievement.



Speaking on the occasion, the minister emphasized that the Blue Flag certification would enhance Rushikonda's reputation and attract more international tourists. He urged visitors to maintain cleanliness and preserve the environment, ensuring that the beach remains a world-class tourist destination. He also highlighted the state government's commitment to developing beach tourism

in Andhra Pradesh and fulfilling its promise to restore Blue Flag status to Rushikonda. Additionally, Minister Durgesh revealed that proposals have been submitted for Blue Flag recognition at several other beaches in Andhra Pradesh. This initiative aims to further strengthen the state's global tourism appeal and establish it as a premier coastal destination.

Minister Satyakumar Yadav Accuses DMK of Using Delimitation for Political Gain

- Clarifies that re-division will happen only after a committee is formed
- Asserts that development depends on political will, not seat allocation

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Minister Satyakumar Yadav has made sharp remarks against the DMK party, alleging that it has brought the issue of delimitation to the forefront purely for political advantage ahead of elections in Tamil Nadu. Speaking to the media on Monday, he accused certain parties of misleading the public to protect their political interests. Yadav clarified that any re-division of constituencies will only happen after the formation of a

delimitation committee, which will thoroughly discuss the matter before making any decisions. He dismissed claims of injustice



to any state, arguing that the NDA government is committed to cooperative federalism and will ensure fair representation while respecting the sentiments of all states.

Taking a direct jab at DMK, he alleged that the party has always used emotive issues like Hindi imposition to gain power and is now exploiting the delimitation debate for political mileage. He emphasized that the allocation of seats does not determine a state's development, citing Uttar Pradesh as an example of a state

with more seats but lagging in certain development indicators, while Kerala, with only 20 seats, has progressed significantly. Yadav also highlighted that the funds and tax devolution from the central government have significantly increased under the current administration, from ₹26,000 crore to ₹34,000 crore, reaching ₹96,000 crore last year. He insisted that development is driven by strong political will, not merely by population size or the number of parliamentary seats.

MP Lavu Srikrishna Devarayalu Exposes AP Liquor Scam in Lok Sabha

- Jagan's liquor scam allegedly larger than the Delhi liquor scam
- ₹2,000 crore transferred to Dubai through Sunil Reddy
- CID inquiry underway; MP urges central intervention

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

MP Lavu Srikrishna Devarayalu made explosive revelations in the Lok Sabha, exposing the alleged liquor scam under the previous YSRCP government in Andhra Pradesh. He claimed that the scam, led by former CM Jagan Mohan Reddy, was even bigger than the Delhi liquor scam.

According to Devarayalu, ₹2,000 crore was transferred to Dubai

through Jagan's relative, Sunil Reddy, under the guise of an infrastructure company. Additionally, 26 newly established firms, including Adan, Graysons, Leela, JR Associates, and PV Spirits, reportedly made massive profits through illicit means. He alleged that even before liquor production began, fraudulent transactions took place.

Further, the MP stated that sub-standard liquor was produced

and ₹1,000 crore was funneled to traders linked to the ruling party at the time. He emphasized that the AP state government has already ordered a CID probe into the matter but urged the central government to intervene due to the involvement of foreign transactions.

With mounting pressure for a high-level investigation, the AP liquor scam is likely to trigger major political repercussions in the state.



Vigilance Inquiry Ordered Against Tammineni Sitaram Over Fake Degree Allegations

TPN Correspondent | Srikakulam

The Andhra Pradesh government has ordered a Vigilance & Enforcement inquiry against former Speaker and YCP Srikakulam parliamentary in-charge Tammineni Sitaram over allegations of securing admission into a law course using fake educational certificates. The investigation was prompted by a long-standing complaint from Amadalavalasa TDP MLA Koonal Ravikumar, who exposed the alleged fraud. According to MLA Koonal, Tammineni Sitaram, who had only studied up to the intermediate level, obtained admission into Mahatma Gandhi Law College, Hyderabad, in 2020 using forged degree certificates. Documents accessed through the RTI Act revealed that Ambedkar Open University, from which Sitaram claimed to have earned his degree in 2018, had no record of him appearing for the required examinations. The matter was first raised in March 2023, but the then YCP government allegedly suppressed the issue by misusing its power and avoiding an investigation. However, after the coalition government took charge, MLA Koonal renewed pressure on the authorities, leading to the government's directive for an official probe. The AP Vigilance & Enforcement Director General has



now been instructed to investigate the allegations, following orders from Government Principal Secretary S Suresh Kumar (Political) (FAC).

The rivalry between Koonal Ravikumar and Tammineni Sitaram has been well known in Amadalavalasa politics. Despite being maternal uncles and close relatives, their political feud has been ongoing for years. While Sitaram switched parties from TDP to PRP, Congress, and YSRCP, Koonal has remained with TDP. The political battle intensified after Sitaram became Speaker in 2019, leading to multiple cases being registered against Koonal under the YSRCP government. Now, with the inquiry underway, the future of Tammineni Sitaram remains uncertain, as officials proceed with investigating the alleged fake degree scam.

YCP Leader & Anchor Shyamala Breaks Silence on Betting Apps Controversy

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

YCP Leader & Popular television anchor Shyamala has finally addressed the controversy surrounding her alleged involvement in promoting betting apps. She stated that the issue is currently under the court's jurisdiction, and she cannot comment further at this stage. However, she assured full cooperation with the police investigation.

Expressing regret over her actions, Shyamala acknowledged that promoting betting apps was a mistake. She admitted that betting-related activities could lead to financial losses

and that she should have been more cautious. She vowed not to endorse any such apps in the future.

Her statement comes as authorities intensify their crackdown on illegal betting platforms, with multiple celebrities facing scrutiny for their promotional activities.



Giribabu Pays Condolence Visit to Dorababu's Family

TPN Correspondent | Tuni

YSR Congress Prathipadu constituency in-charge Mudragada Giribabu visited S. Annavaram village in Tuni mandal on Monday to offer condolences to the family of Kusanam Dorababu, who recently lost his life in a tragic road accident.

Giribabu met Dorababu's family members and inquired about the circumstances surrounding the accident. Expressing deep sorrow, he stated that Dorababu was a person admired by everyone, irrespective of political affiliations. He recalled his



long-standing association with him and shared his grief over losing a good friend.

He assured the bereaved family of his full support and extended his sympathies, emphasizing that Dorababu's absence would be deeply felt in the community. Giribabu also appreciated Dorababu's contributions to society and the respect he earned from all sections of people.

If You Did Nothing Wrong, Why Did You Go to Court? – Pullarao Questions Rajani

TPN Correspondent | Chilakaluripet

TDP MLA Prathipati Pullarao has launched a scathing attack on former minister and YSRCP leader Vidadala Rajani, accusing her of corruption and hypocrisy. Speaking to the media on Monday, he questioned whether the people would believe moral lectures from someone whom they see as a symbol of corruption in Chilakaluripet.

Pullarao alleged that Rajani misused her power during her tenure and is now trying to gain sympathy. He criticized her for attacking an honest MP without justification and challenged her to answer why cases were filed against her if she had done nothing wrong.

The MLA further claimed that even YSRCP leaders themselves had approached the AP High Court against

her, unable to tolerate the alleged financial irregularities. He questioned why those who filed corruption cases against Rajani are now demanding their money back, suggesting that her past misdeeds are catching up with her.

Taking a broader swipe at the YSRCP, Pullarao accused the party of introducing indecent posts and toxic propaganda into the political landscape of Chilakaluripet. He recalled that Chandrababu Naidu had previously warned of legal action in corruption cases and emphasized that the law will take its course against Rajani.



Political Tension in Visakhapatnam, Kadapa as YCP Resorts to Camp Politics

TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Political turmoil is heating up in Visakhapatnam and Kadapa local bodies as the YSRCP faces challenges from the ruling alliance. In Visakhapatnam, the alliance has initiated a no-confidence motion against Mayor Hari Venkatakumari, making a floor test inevitable. To secure the mayor's seat, the alliance requires 64 votes, with just four more corporators needed to tip the balance in their favor.

However, Deputy Mayor GM Sridhar expressed confidence in retaining power, stating that even those who switched sides are expected to return.

He affirmed that the YSRCP will win the floor test with the support of party leaders Jagan Mohan Reddy, Botsa Satyanarayana, and Gudivada Amarnath. Meanwhile, in Kadapa, a similar situation is unfolding as the election for the Zilla Parishad (ZP) chairman is set for March 27. Of the 50 ZP seats, the YSRCP currently holds 39. In response to the ongoing political maneuvering, the party has resorted to camp politics, reportedly moving its corporators and ZP members to safe locations in Ooty and Bangalore. Many have allegedly relocated along with their families to prevent any last-minute defections.



Forest Officials Obstructing Development, Hurting Tourism: MLA Buddhaprasad

TPN Correspondent | Avaniigadda

Avaniigadda MLA Mandali Buddhaprasad has alleged that the attitude of forest department officials is obstructing CM Chandrababu Naidu's development ambitions. Speaking to the media in Puligadda, Avaniigadda mandal on Monday, he highlighted the decline in tourist footfall following the recent imposition of toll collection at Palakayathippa Beach in Kodur mandal. MLA Buddhaprasad stated that Sagara Sangama Beach holds both spiritual and tourism significance, but the forest department's refusal to permit holy baths at the Sangama Kshetra has hurt devotees' sentiments. He recalled his past efforts in constructing

a road to the beach and developing two buildings, regretting that progress had been stalled due to the department's actions. He also questioned whether officials had taken any responsibility for maintaining the buildings.

Referring to the Krishna Pushkaralu event, he expressed disappointment that the Krishnamma statue, which had fallen and got stuck in the mud, was ignored by the forest department. He criticized their attempt to prevent local authorities from recovering it.



Minister Nadendla Manohar Inaugurated New Additional Consumer Forum Bench in Vijayawada



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
State Minister for Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Nadendla Manohar emphasized the government's commitment to protecting consumer rights. On Monday, he inaugurated the second additional bench of the Consumer Commission on the second floor of the Bezawada Bar Association building at the Vijayawada City Civil Court Center. Civil Supplies Commissioner Saurav Gaur, Forum Chairman, and members of the Bezawada Bar Association were present at the event. Speaking on the occasion, Minister

Manohar stated that strict legal action would be taken against those selling substandard and expired goods. He said the new additional bench would serve as a platform for strengthening consumer rights in Vijayawada. He also assured that awareness campaigns on consumer rights would be conducted across the state. Minister Manohar highlighted that the Andhra Pradesh State Consumer Forum is leading in resolving cases and providing compensation to consumers. He noted that out of 1,33,736 cases registered in the state, most

have been resolved. He explained that cases up to ₹50 lakh can be filed in the district consumer forum, while cases up to ₹2 crore can be registered at the state forum.

He reiterated that "the consumer is the king" and assured that people need not fear while asserting their rights. For the first time in the country, a digital campaign will be launched in schools and colleges to promote awareness. He expressed happiness over setting up the additional bench in Vijayawada, as consumers previously faced difficulties traveling to Machilipatnam for grievances.

Civil Supplies Department Commissioner Saurav Gaur, Vijayawada Consumer Additional Bench Forum Chairman Ch. Kishore, member K. Sasikala, Bezawada Bar Association General Secretary Arigala Siva Rama Prasad, President K. Chandramouli, AP Bar Council member Ch. Ajay Kumar, former Bezawada Bar Association president Somu Krishna Murthy, and others participated in the program.

AP Prepares ₹10k Crore Bankable Projects Under Urban Challenge Fund

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati
A preparatory meeting was held under the leadership of Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary IAS S. Suresh Kumar to strategize and prepare bankable projects worth Rs. 10,000 crore under the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF). The initiative aligns with the Union Budget 2025-26 announcement, which allocated Rs. 10,000 crore for the current financial year as part of a larger Rs. 1 lakh crore corpus for urban development over the next decade. The UCF aims to fund projects in three key categories: 'Cities as Growth Hubs' (economic corridors, logistics hubs, and urban employment zones), 'Creative Redevelopment of Cities' (brownfield development, urban regeneration, and sustainable design), and 'Water and Sanitation' (sewerage and solid waste management). The funding pattern includes up to 25% support from the UCF, up to 25% from local bodies or state government, and a minimum of 50% from financial institutions, bonds, or PPPs. Chief Secretary S. Suresh Kumar in-

structed officials from 17 municipal corporations, including Smart Cities Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Amarava-



ti, and Tirupati, to prepare Financial Operating Plans (FOPs) to assess creditworthiness and identify bankable projects. A target of Rs. 2,500 crore worth of proposals must be submitted by April 10, 2025. He also urged corporations to utilize Andhra Pradesh Urban Infrastructure Asset Management Limited (APUIAML) for assistance. Representatives from the World Bank, International Financial Corporation, municipal commissioners, and urban development bodies attended the meeting.

Woman Harassed by In-Laws for Giving Birth to a Girl Child in Nandigama



TPN Correspondent | Nandigama
A shocking case of harassment has come to light in Nandigama, where a woman has accused her husband's family of tormenting her for giving birth to a girl child. HariPriya, a resident of Telapadu village in Telangana's Eripalem mandal, was married in 2023 to Chilla Vamsi Krishna from Keesara village in Kanchikacherla mandal. HariPriya alleged that after giving birth to a girl child 11 months ago, the harassment from her in-laws intensified. She claimed that her husband's younger brother, Vijay Krishna, a civil constable, has been pressuring her for money and gold. She further alleged that Vijay Krishna has been threatening her, stating that no one could take action against him. According to HariPriya, Vijay Krishna told her, "You must bring gold and money, or else don't come into our house." She also alleged that her husband, Vamsi Krishna, is being prevented from meeting her by his family. Additionally, she stated that her in-laws belittled her, saying, "We all have sons, but you have given birth to a daughter." HariPriya has appealed for justice, urging authorities to take strict action against those responsible for her ordeal. The case has sparked outrage, raising concerns about gender discrimination and domestic harassment.

Anusha Wins Silver in Soft Tennis at Indian International Tournament

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
Vijayawada-based soft tennis player N. Anusha won a silver medal as part of the Indian women's team in the 2nd Indian International Soft Tennis Championship, held in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, from March 16 to 22. Andhra Pradesh Soft Tennis Association General Secretary D. Dilip Kumar confirmed Anusha's achievement and praised her contribution to the national team. Following this success, Anusha is currently representing India in the South Asian Soft Tennis Championship, being held in Greater Noida from March 23 to 26. Her performance in these back-to-back international events is being widely appreciated. On this occasion, Anusha received congratulatory messages from Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAP) Chairman Animini Ravinaidu, Andhra Pradesh Soft Tennis Association Chairman Daram Naveen Kumar, President V. Srinu Babu, Treasurer Billa Neeraj, and officials from various district associations.



NGGO Leaders Thanks to Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav for Releasing Employees' Dues

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati
Andhra Pradesh NGGO State President K.V. Shivareddy and General Secretary A. Vidyasagar expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav for swiftly addressing the financial concerns of government employees. They acknowledged the government's commitment to releasing pending dues after their concerns were brought to its attention.

On Monday, NGGO and JAC leaders, including K.V. Shivareddy and A. Vidyasagar, met Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav at the State Secretariat in Velagapudi to personally convey their thanks. The leaders appreciated the government's efforts in clearing ₹6,200 crore in pending dues, including ₹2,500 crore for GPF, ₹1,000 crore for APG-



LI, ₹2,300 crore for Subbakaya, and additional allocations for group insurance and medical reimbursements. They also highlighted the government's responsiveness, noting that

₹1,300 crore had already been released for Sankranti, followed by this substantial financial allocation. Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav reaffirmed the government's

commitment to supporting its employees, recognizing their role as key partners in governance. He stated that CM Chandrababu Naidu prioritized releasing funds to help employees facing financial difficulties.

During the meeting, union leaders urged the minister to consider increasing the retirement age of public sector and Gurukul employees to 62 years, regularizing remaining contract employees, and appointing a Chairman for the PRC Commission. The meeting was attended by AP NGGO state leaders, JAC leaders, Agricultural AO State President Venumadhav, Class IV Employees Association State President Chandrashekhar, NGO representatives Jagadishwar Rao, Ranga Rao, Bharathi Prasad, CVR Prasad, Smt. Surekha, Harshavardhan, and others.

227 Returnable Plots Allotted to Gannavaram Farmers

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
As part of the Gannavaram airport development project, 227 returnable plots were allotted to 99 farmers through an e-lottery process at the AP CRDA office in Vijayawada. The plots included 147 residential and 80 commercial plots. During the event, farmers were first given a trial run of the e-lottery system before the final live allotment. CRDA officials, along with Gudivada Revenue Division Officer

(RDO) Balasubrahmanyam, handed over provisional certificates to the farmers who received plots. Special Deputy Collector (Land Acquisition) NSVB Vasantharayu, who organized the program, stated that a special GIS system was used to help farmers understand the geographical location of their allotted plots. Village surveyors and CRDA staff were deployed to assist in the process. Farmers were urged to complete their registra-



tion as soon as possible, with CRDA confirming that no fee would be charged for registration.

CRDA officials, revenue department staff, and village surveyors participated in the event.

VMC Fire Personnel Conduct Surprise Inspection of Restaurants

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
Following the recent fire accident at Platform-65 (Train Restaurant) near Benz Circle, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) fire personnel conducted a surprise inspection of fire prevention equipment in several restaurants and hotels on Monday. The inspections were carried out under the orders of VMC Commissioner Dhyanaachandra at RR Darbar, Raja Darbar, Southern Spice, and Kadiyapatnam restaurants. During the inspections, restaurant management and staff were educated on fire prevention techniques, proper usage of fire safety equipment, and emergency response measures. Officials demonstrated how to operate fire extinguishers, install fire sprin-

klers and smoke detectors, and ensure compliance with fire safety regulations. District Fire Officer Malyadri, Regional Fire Officer Venkateswara Rao, and Station Fire Officer Raja participated in the inspection and emphasized the importance of maintaining adequate fire safety precautions to prevent potential hazards.



CPM Demands Action on Capital Region Promises

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati
CPM State Secretary Group Member Ch. Babu Rao has urged the government to fulfill the promises made to the people of the capital region without further delay. He, along with Capital Committee Secretary M. Ravi, submitted petitions to CRDA Commissioner Kanna Babu and local legislators T. Shravan Kumar during a meeting organized by CRDA in Tullur. Speaking at the meeting, Babu Rao criticized the non-implementation of the Pooling Act and legal guarantees made a decade ago. He emphasized the need for infrastructure development in the newly planned layouts as well as in the existing 29 vill ages. He also demanded the immediate commencement of construction of central government institutions and offices in Amaravati. The leaders stressed that locals, in-

cluding farmers, laborers, and the poor, should be made stakeholders in development and provided employment opportunities. They called for transparency regarding agreements made with the World Bank and suggested holding Gram Sabhas to address public grievances. Additionally, they demanded an increase in workers' wages, immediate payment of pending dues, and the implementation of an SC/ST sub-plan in CRDA. Other key demands included the provision of three-cent house plots for local poor families, loan waivers on shacks, and enhanced job security for sanitation and outsourcing workers with salary hikes to ₹21,000 in line with other cities. The leaders emphasized that these issues should be addressed within a specific timeframe to ensure the overall development of the capital region.

Konaseema Aqua Conservation Committee Demand Urgent Govt Support to Aqua Farmers



- Farmers face high feed costs despite duty reductions
- Electricity subsidy exclusion adds financial burden
- Concerns over declining aquaculture expansion

TPN Correspondent | Konaseema

The Konaseema Aqua Conservation Committee has submitted a representation to the District Collector, highlighting the severe challenges faced by aqua farmers due to increasing costs and inadequate government support. Despite last year's budget proposal reducing customs duty on essential aquaculture feed components—including minerals, vitamins, fish oil, and artemisia—the prices of feed remain unchanged, continuing to range between ₹25,000 and ₹30,000 per ton. The lack of quality seeds has further impacted the sector. Farmers have also raised concerns over price control by feed companies and Chinese firms, which jointly hold 50% of the market. At the Aqua Fest-20, held in Vijayawada from February 16-18, CM N. Chandrababu Naidu emphasized expanding the Aqua Zone from 4 lakh acres to 10 lakh acres. However, in Konaseema district, land allocation for aquaculture under the 2018 gazette notification stood at 12,050 hectares, but was reduced to 3,878 hectares in the 2023 notification, affecting farmers.

Another pressing issue is the exclusion of 1,290 electricity connections from the subsidy zone, placing additional financial strain on farmers. They are also burdened with SPL charges, EPC charges, shortfall charges, and coal charges, making sustainable aquaculture increasingly difficult. Additionally, farmers report abrupt electricity disconnections under special drives, further compounding their difficulties. Despite the NDA government's efforts, the bed rate of aqua products has fluctuated significantly, with shrimp prices dropping to ₹280 per kg from ₹500. While recent market improvements have led to prices reaching ₹40,000 per ton, the profit margins remain unsustainable. Farmers warn that if immediate steps are not taken, instead of expanding to 10 lakh acres, the existing 4 lakh acres of aquaculture land may shrink further. They urge the government to intervene by ensuring fair pricing, extending subsidies, and providing institutional support to sustain livelihoods and boost the aquaculture industry.

Mandapeta Municipal Office Shifted to Tidco Apartments from April 1st



TPN Correspondent | Mandapeta

Mandapeta MLA Vegulla Jogeswara Rao has directed municipal authorities to shift the municipal office to Tidco Apartments in Gollapunta

Colony from April 1. This move aims to ensure the timely completion of the remaining work and the handover of pending plots to beneficiaries. Out of the 6,128 Tidco apartments constructed, 2,565 have been handed over, while 3,563 are still pending. The MLA criticized Tidco and municipal officials for delays, despite 95% of the work being completed. He ordered that the municipal office operate from Tidco Apartments until all plots are distributed. Residents are advised to visit the new office at Tidco Apartments for municipal services from April 1st.

Suspect Arrested with 21 Kg of Ganja in Srikakulam

TPN Correspondent | Srikakulam

A suspect was caught with 21.760 kg of ganja near Kasibugga Railway Station on Monday morning at 10:30 AM. Acting on a tip-off, Kasibugga Police Station CI and staff apprehended the accused, seizing ganja and a mobile phone from them. Kasibugga DSP V. Venkata Apparao provided case details at a press conference at Kasibugga Police Station on Monday



evening. He stated that the accused has been arrested, a case registered, and the suspect sent to remand. Police continue to investigate the source and intended destination of the seized contraband.

Police Solve YSRCP Activist Murder Case in Four Days



- Murder linked to an illegal relationship
- Two accused arrested, including victim's wife
- CI confirms no political angle in the case

TPN Correspondent | Eluru Dist

The police have solved the murder case of YSRCP activist Gandham Bose (35) from Tatiyakula Gudem village, Jeelugumilli mandal, within four days. The case, which initially caused extreme tension, led to a road blockade on the Visakhapatnam-Hyderabad National Highway for four hours.

Bose was attacked with an iron rod while sleeping at his home around midnight on the 17th of this month. He succumbed to injuries while undergoing treatment at Khammam KIMS Hospital. His wife, Gandham Shanthakumari, initially alleged a political conspiracy, blaming a TDP leader. Following this, YSRCP activists and Bose's family staged a dharna, de-

manding immediate action. Upon investigation, Jeelugumilli CI B Venkateswara Rao revealed that Shanthakumari and her maternal uncle Songa Gopala Rao were in an illegal relationship and had planned the murder. Bose allegedly harassed his wife physically and financially while struggling with gambling losses. Unable to bear the harassment, Shanthakumari conspired with Gopal Rao to eliminate him. Taking advantage of viral news about Jagadamba Theertham fund irregularities and an audio clip of a TDP leader allegedly threatening Bose, the accused acted on the night of March 17. While Bose was sleeping, Gopal Rao attacked him with an iron rod, killing him instantly. The police tracked and arrested both accused on Monday morning on the outskirts of Ashwaraopet. They seized the murder weapon and two mobile phones. CI Venkateswara Rao confirmed that there was no political angle in the case. District SP Kommi Prathapa Sivakishore took the case seriously and appointed a special team led by Polavaram DSP M Venkateswara Rao, including officers from Jeelugumilli, Buttaygudem, and T Narasapuram police stations, to crack the case swiftly.

Chilkuru Balaji Temple Chief Priest Offers Services at Tirumala

TPN Correspondent | Tirumala

Chilkuru Balaji Temple Chief Priest CS Rangarajan had darshan of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala on Monday morning during the VIP break. He participated in the service of the Lord and paid his obeisances. After the darshan, Vedic scholars blessed him with Vedic hymns at the Ranganayakula Mandapam, and the temple authorities distributed Srivari Tirtha Prasadam.

Speaking to the media outside the temple, CS Rangarajan stated that he had come



to Tirumala to seek the Lord's protection following the attack on him on February 7. He expressed deep devotion, saying he witnessed the divine grace and blessings in the Lord's eyes. He also emphasized that the Hundi offerings of Lord Venkateswara should be exclusively used for spiritual and religious purposes, promoting Sanatana Dharma rather than being diverted for other activities.

Reconstruction of Venugopalaswamy Temple Initiated



TPN Correspondent | Nellore

State Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy announced that the reconstruction of Sri Venugopalaswamy Temple in Nellore will begin soon as per a master plan prepared by the Endowment Department. Speaking at the temple governing body meeting in Moolapet on Monday, he emphasized the need to restore the temple's former glory with collective efforts. The minister recalled that his family has been associated with the temple for generations. He noted that the temple was once a hub for devotees and grand weddings, particularly in the Glass Mandapam, which was highly sought after. However, the decline in devotees and negligence in temple upkeep have led to its deterioration. Experts in Agama Shastra suggested

that the temple's Muhurta power must be revived through special rituals and auspicious ceremonies. As part of the statewide temple development plan, ₹143 crore has been sanctioned for the reconstruction of 76 temples. Minister Reddy mentioned that the Shomeshwara Temple in Somashilla has already had its foundation stone laid with the blessings of Sringeri Peethadhipathi, and similar rituals will be conducted for Venugopalaswamy Temple. The Endowment Department has completed site inspections, and tenders will be issued once the temple governing body approves the resolution. A meeting with Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu is scheduled to discuss temple assets, leases, and income utilization. Earlier, the minister was welcomed with Vedic chants and temple rituals. He performed special pujas at the Venugopalaswamy Temple along with temple officials and committee members.

TTD Board of Trustees Approves ₹5,258.68 Crore Budget for 2025-26

TPN Correspondent | Tirumala

TTD Chairman BR Naidu announced that the TTD Board of Trustees has approved a ₹5,258.68 crore budget for 2025-26, with the state government's approval. Speaking at a media conference at Annamayya Bhavan, Tirumala, on Monday, he outlined major decisions taken in the Governing Council meeting. The TTD EO, Sri J. Shyamala Rao, has been directed to improve medical assistance and consider salary hikes for flood workers. Financial support has been approved for temple reconstruction in Kodangal, Karimnagar, Upamaka, Anakapalle, Kurnool, Dharmavaram, Talakona, and Tirupati Gangamma temples. The Board decided to remove and reconstruct several VIP and non-VIP guesthouses in Tirumala while modernizing others. Additionally, the 20-acre land allocated for Science City and Museum at Alipiri will be reclaimed. Unlicensed hawkers in Tirumala will be identified and removed. TTD is exploring options to



provide offline Srivari darshan for elderly and differently-abled devotees and is trialing a change in VIP break darshan timings to 5:30 AM. Family members of TTD employees will now receive six Supatham tickets every three months. A committee will be formed to resolve issues of 151 contract lecturers working in TTD colleges for 25 years. TTD aims to build Srivari temples in all Indian states and internationally. A new trust will oversee temple construction abroad, and steps will be taken to protect Tirumala's assets and resolve pending court cases. Condolences were expressed for Garimella Balakrishna Prasad, and the Ontimitta Kodandaswamy Brahmotsavam booklet was released.

Fire Breaks Out at Scrap Shop Near Marikavalasa Highway

TPN Correspondent | Visakhapatnam

A massive fire accident occurred at a scrap shop near Marikavalasa Highway in Visakhapatnam, causing severe damage to property worth approximately Rs. 30 lakhs. The incident, which took place on Monday afternoon, led to a huge traffic jam on the busy highway, disrupting vehicular movement for several hours. Upon receiving information, firefighters immediately rushed to the scene and launched firefighting operations. Due to the presence of highly flammable materials in the scrap shop, the flames

spread rapidly, making it challenging for the fire personnel to control the situation. However, after a prolonged effort, the firefighters managed to douse the fire,



preventing further damage to nearby structures. The exact cause of the fire is yet to be determined, and authorities have begun an investigation. No casualties were reported in the incident. Meanwhile, local police and traffic officials were deployed to clear the congestion caused by the fire and restore normal traffic flow. Officials have urged shop owners in the area to take necessary precautions to prevent such fire mishaps in the future. Further updates on the investigation are awaited.

Nehru's Obsession with RSS

Opted for selective secularism over fostering a sense of citizenship.

The stance of the Indian National Congress on Hinduism has been a subject of considerable debate and contention over the years. At the forefront of this discourse is Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, whose limited understanding of Hinduism significantly influenced the party's approach to the religion. Nehru's tendency to conflate Hinduism with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu nationalist organization, led to a broad and often unfounded disdain for Hinduism within the Congress framework. This conflation not only misrepresented the diverse and pluralistic nature of Hinduism but also painted it in a negative light, leaving lasting repercussions for the community. Nehru's policies, driven by a desire to project an image of secularism and liberalism to secure minority votes and gain international recognition, often came at the expense of Hindu interests. In his quest to be seen as a champion of minority rights, he inadvertently marginalized the Hindu community, making them scapegoats for various socio-political issues. This approach fostered an environment where Hindu identity was often viewed with suspicion, leading to a growing sense of alienation among Hindus. Moreover, Nehru's disconnection from Hindu practices further exemplified this ideological rift. His lack of participation in Hindu rituals and absence from temples were not merely personal choices; they symbolized a broader disconnect between the Congress

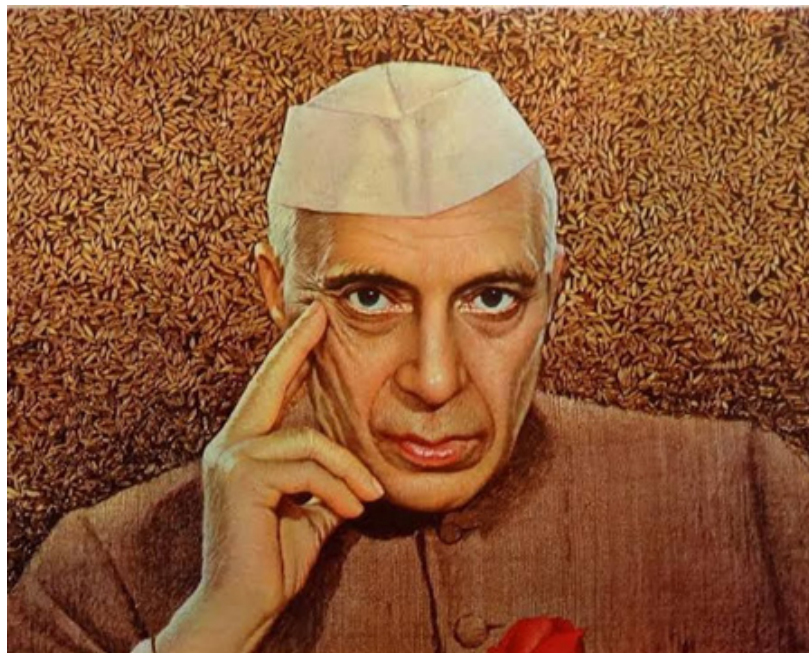
Failed in promoting the idea that all citizens should first identify with the nation-state.

Nehruvian secularism focused on managing religious diversity through shared sense of citizenship.

For instance, the continuation of separate personal laws for different religious communities, instead of implementing a Uniform Civil Code, is often cited as an example of this selective secularism.

In contrast, an approach centered on citizenship would have emphasized the responsibilities and rights of individuals irrespective of their religious affiliations, fostering a stronger national consciousness.

leadership and the cultural and religious sentiments of a signif-



Dr. Buragadda Srinadh

icant portion of the Indian populace. This detachment contributed to the perception that the Congress party was against the values and beliefs of ordinary Hindus. In his pursuit of minority votes, Nehru strategically positioned himself and the Congress party as oppositional to Hinduism,

perceiving it as a means to consolidate power and maintain a secular image. This political maneuvering laid the groundwork for an anti-Hindu sentiment within the party, which can be traced back to Nehru's era. Over the years, this sentiment has evolved into a significant ideological force within Congress, influencing its policies and rhetoric against Hinduism. As a result, the relationship between the Congress party and Hinduism has become increasingly fraught, shaped by a complex interplay of political strategy, historical grievances, and cultural identity. The legacy of Nehru's approach continues to resonate, shaping the party's stance on Hinduism and its engagement with the Hindu community in contemporary India. This ongoing tension reflects

broader societal dynamics and highlights the challenges of navigating religious identity in a diverse and pluralistic nation. Jawaharlal Nehru and the Indian National Congress shaped the political landscape of post-independence India. Their emphasis on terms like secularism and the promotion of a liberal society reflected a vision of a nation that embraced diversity and pluralism—primarily for their own electoral strategy. However, this strategy often overshadowed the fundamental principle of equality among all individuals as citizens. While secularism is undoubtedly important in a country as diverse as India, its prioritization sometimes came at the expense of a more robust discourse on citizenship and the responsibilities that accompany it. In contrast, many developed nations have historically placed a strong emphasis on citizenship and the rule of law as foundational elements of their democratic frameworks. These nations have built their political identities around the idea that citizenship entails not only rights but also responsibilities, and that the rule of law is essential for ensuring justice and equality for all individuals. This focus on citizenship has fostered a sense of belonging and accountability among citizens, reinforcing the idea that everyone, regardless of background, is entitled to equal treatment under the law. India, however, presents a unique case. The Congress Party, under Nehru's leadership,

initially prioritized secular propaganda as a means to unify a diverse population and mitigate communal tensions. While this approach was intended to retain power, it often led to the neglect of more foundational aspects of citizenship and responsibilities. The emphasis on secularism, while crucial for maintaining harmony in a multi-religious society, did not sufficiently address the need for a comprehensive understanding of what it means to be a citizen in a democratic state. This divergence in focus has had lasting implications for Indian society. The lack of a strong emphasis on citizenship and responsibilities in the early years of independence may have contributed to ongoing challenges related to social justice, inequality, and the protection of individual rights. In many ways, the initial prioritization of secularism over citizenship has created a complex landscape where issues of identity, belonging, and legal recognition remain contentious. As India continues to evolve as a democracy, the need for a balanced approach that integrates the principles of secularism with a robust understanding of citizenship and the rule of law becomes increasingly important. By fostering a culture that values both diversity and equality, India can work towards realizing the vision of a truly inclusive society—where all individuals are recognized as equal citizens, entitled to the full spectrum of rights, protections and responsibilities under the law.

Battle for the ₹10 Beverage Market

How FMCG Giants Are Reshaping India's Thirst Economy

THE POINT DECK

As summer temperatures rise, so does the competition among India's top beverage brands, all vying for dominance in the ₹10 price segment. With middle-class consumers seeking affordable and refreshing options, established players like Pepsi and Coca-Cola now find themselves facing an onslaught of competition from Ambani's Campa Cola, Amul's TRU, Parle Agro's Smoothh, and a range of new entrants.

Why the ₹10 Price Point Matters

In a price-sensitive market like India, the ₹10 segment holds a unique appeal. It offers affordability without compromising brand loyalty, making it an ideal entry point for companies looking to capture a wider consumer base. Historically, this price bracket has driven mass adoption across various FMCG categories, and beverages are no exception. Companies are increasingly leveraging it to push everything from carbonated drinks to dairy-based refreshments and energy boosters.

Reliance's Campa Cola Shakes Up the Market

Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) has aggressively expanded its footprint in the beverage industry with the revival of Campa Cola. The brand, once a household name in the 1970s and 80s, made a strong comeback last year, launching products at competitive pricing to disrupt the stronghold of Coca-Cola and Pepsi. Campa Cola has already claimed over 10% of the sparkling beverage market in select states, with expectations to cross ₹1,000 crore in revenue in FY25. In addition to Campa Cola, Reliance Consumer has been strategically expanding its beverage portfolio. In January 2025, the company launched RasKik Gluco Energy at ₹10, followed by Spinner, a sports drink co-created with legendary cricketer Muttiah Muralitharan. These new offerings



directly challenge traditional hydration and energy-boosting beverages, making Reliance a formidable force in the market.

Amul's Foray into Beverages

The Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), better known for its dairy dominance, has also jumped into the battle with its Amul TRU dairy-based fruit drinks. Priced at ₹10 for a 150 ml pack, TRU is Amul's attempt to capture a share of the growing flavored milk and fruit beverage segment. The brand has already seen success with its butter-milk, which, despite having higher-priced variants, finds maximum sales in the ₹10 pouch category.

Parle Agro's Smoothh Carves Its Own Niche

Parle Agro, the company behind the ever-popular Frooti, entered the dairy beverage space with Smoothh in 2021. The brand, backed by actor Varun Dhawan's endorsement, has quickly scaled up, reaching ₹685 crore in sales by 2023. Smoothh benefits from Parle Agro's massive distribution network of over two million outlets, ensuring easy accessibility across the country.

Who Will Quench India's Thirst?

According to ICRIER, India's beverages market—spanning carbonated soft drinks, bottled water, fruit-based drinks, and juices—was valued at ₹67,100 crore in 2019. This number is projected to skyrocket to ₹1.47 trillion by 2030, signaling a massive growth opportunity for companies willing to innovate and compete in the affordable beverage segment. The ₹10 beverage market is no longer just about soft drinks; it has transformed into a battleground of innovation, affordability, and brand loyalty. With an increasing shift toward value-for-money products, consumer preferences are shaping a market where both global giants and home-grown brands must fight to stay relevant. While Reliance's aggressive pricing strategy and distribution muscle make it a serious contender, brands like Amul, Parle Agro, and PepsiCo are not backing down. As the competition intensifies, one thing is certain: India's thirst for affordable, refreshing drinks is only getting stronger, and brands that can blend quality with affordability will emerge victorious.

Rippling founder shares 'Heartbreaking' Legal Disputes with Wife

Prasanna Sankar, co-founder of the \$10-billion tech company Rippling, is embroiled in a highly publicized legal dispute with his wife, leading to a dramatic turn of events. Facing serious allegations including assault and rape, which he strongly denies, Prasanna claims he is fleeing Tamil Nadu to escape what he describes as police harassment and retaliation over a settlement dispute. The conflict arose from Prasanna's divorce proceedings with his wife, Dhivya. He alleges that after refusing to pay more than the agreed ₹9 crore settlement, she retaliated with fabricated accusations. The dispute intensified when Dhivya allegedly took their son to the United States without consent, leading Prasanna to file an international child abduction case. A US court reportedly ruled in his favor, ordering the child's return to India. Prasanna insists he has full custody rights under a Memorandum of Understanding and claims that his son was handed over to him voluntarily. However, he says his legal troubles escalated due to police pressure, forcing him into hiding. Prasanna has detailed his ordeal in a series of posts on Twitter (now X), alleging police intimidation and unlawful detentions. He accused Chennai police of picking up his friend Gokul from Bengaluru without a warrant and holding him in custody to force him into removing his social media posts. "If I do not remove my Twitter posts, he'd be in trouble," Prasanna wrote,

highlighting what he sees as an abuse of power. He also claimed to be moving between cities with his 9-year-old son, evading authorities while seeking legal relief. Despite the severe allegations, Prasanna remains defiant. "I built an empire from nothing. I can handle this even if a state is on the other side. I'm a survivor, not a victim," he declared. He plans to file a court petition on March 24, seeking protection from police harassment.



Social Media Reactions

Prasanna's revelations have sparked widespread debate online. Many users sympathized with his situation, expressing frustration over alleged misuse of legal provisions. "Read it once. Then twice. And somewhere between the words, I felt something break. A man. A husband. A father," wrote one user. Another remarked, "This breaks my heart! The sad state of justice in our country hits harder when things like these happen closer to the neighborhood and to someone who has a lot." As the legal battle unfolds, the case has ignited discussions about **custody rights, police actions, and the fairness of legal proceedings in domestic disputes.**

Plea In Top Court Challenges 1991 Ruling On Immunity To Judges

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the 1991 judgment in the K Veeraswami case, which grants immunity to judges from criminal proceedings without prior approval from the Chief Justice of India (CJI). The plea also seeks a directive to the Delhi Police to register an FIR over the alleged discovery of semi-burnt cash at the residence of Delhi High Court judge Yashwant Varma.

The alleged cash discovery followed a fire at Justice Varma's official residence in Lutyens' Delhi at 11:35 pm on March 14, prompting the fire department to respond and extinguish the blaze.

In response to the controversy, CJI Sanjiv Khanna withdrew judicial work from Justice Varma and formed a three-member in-house committee to conduct an inquiry. The Delhi High Court Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya was also directed not to assign judicial duties to Justice Varma until further notice.

The petition, filed by advocate Mathews J Nedumpara and three others on March 23, argues that the immunity granted to judges violates the constitutional principle of equality before the law and undermines judicial accountability.

The plea challenges the 1991 Supreme Court ruling, which stated that "no criminal case shall be registered against a High



Court or Supreme Court judge without prior permission from the CJI." The petitioners contend that this decision was made "per incuriam" (in ignorance of law) and "sub silentio" (without explicit legal consideration).

The plea demands the recognition of a cognizable offence in the alleged cash recovery case, urging the Delhi Police to register an FIR. It also seeks a declaration that the in-house inquiry committee lacks jurisdiction to investigate the incident and calls for the prohibition of external interference in law enforcement duties related

to the case. Additionally, it advocates for the implementation of the Judicial Standards and Accountability Bill, 2010, which aimed to curb judicial corruption but lapsed.

The plea asserts that "equality before law is a fundamental principle of the Constitution" and that the judiciary should not be treated as a special class immune from penal laws. It also questions why, despite the alleged cash recovery, no FIR has been filed against Justice Varma so far.

The Supreme Court is expected to take up the matter for consideration soon.



Sanitation Worker Finds Burnt Rs 500 Notes

Outside Justice Yashwant Varma's House

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

In a new twist to the 'cash at judge's home' controversy, a sanitation worker discovered burnt ₹500 currency notes while sweeping outside Justice Yashwant Varma's residence at 30, Tughlak Road in central Delhi on Sunday.

The incident caused a minor stir in the high-security area, which is close to the Tughlak Road police station. The sanitation worker, employed by the NDMC, clicked photos of the burnt notes and informed his seniors, who then alerted the police.

This discovery seemingly supports the police's claim that currency notes were burnt in a fire that broke out on Holi night (March 14) in an outhouse of Justice Varma's official residence. However, Justice Varma has strongly denied any presence of cash on his premises, calling the entire episode a conspiracy to malign him. The controversy has led to Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna ordering a probe and directing the Delhi High Court Chief Justice not to assign any judicial work to Justice Varma until the investigation is completed.

On Friday, Chief Justice Khanna constituted a three-member committee to probe the allegations against Justice Varma.

The committee has not been given a fixed deadline, and further action will be decided based on its findings once the report is submitted.

MPs' Salaries Hiked To Rs 1.24 Lakh Per Month; Allowances, Pensions Also Raised



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Union government has increased the salaries, allowances, and pensions of Members of Parliament (MPs), with the revised pay structure coming into effect from April 1, 2023. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs issued a gazette notification announcing the revision, marking

the first major salary hike since 2018.

According to the notification, the monthly salary of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs has been increased from ₹1 lakh to ₹1.24 lakh. The daily allowance provided to MPs during parliamentary sessions has also been revised, rising from ₹2,000 to ₹2,500. Additionally, the pension for former MPs has been raised from ₹25,000 to ₹31,000

per month. The additional pension for every year of service beyond five years has been increased from ₹2,000 to ₹2,500 per year.

The allowances covering constituency and office expenses are also set to rise. As per the 2018 revision, MPs received ₹70,000 per month as a constituency allowance and ₹60,000 per month as an office allowance. These figures will now see an upward revision, though exact details are yet to be disclosed.

Apart from salaries and pensions, MPs continue to enjoy several benefits, including 34 free domestic flights annually for themselves and their families, first-class train travel, and a mileage allowance for road travel. They are also entitled to 50,000 free electricity units and 4,000 kilolitres of water annually.

MPs receive rent-free housing in New Delhi for the duration of their tenure, with hostel rooms, apartments, or bungalows allocated based on seniority. Those opting out of official accommodation are eligible for a monthly housing allowance.

The latest revision comes amid the ongoing budget session of Parliament and is aimed at adjusting MPs' compensation in line with inflation and rising living costs.

"Elitists Hired As Paid Agents To Divert Attention"

- Shiv Sena MP On Kunal Kamra Row



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Shiv Sena MP Milind Deora on Monday slammed comedian Kunal Kamra, accusing him of being a "paid agent" used to divert public attention from critical issues like the Disha Salian case. His remarks come after Kamra mocked Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde in his show, leading to an angry backlash from Shiv Sena workers.

Deora alleged that political elites have hired classist elitists like Kamra to serve their interests. "I can say this clearly—those who are entitled monarchists in Indian politics have, in a way, hired classist elitist people to do their work, to protect them, and to distract from the Disha Salian case," he said, referring to the death of celebrity manager Disha Salian, which has been a subject of controversy. He also pointed out that Salian's father had filed a petition, suggesting that Kamra's act was a diversion tactic.

While acknowledging the role of comedy in democracy, Deora emphasized the difference between humor and elitism. He criticized Kamra for mocking a leader from a humble background, stating, "We take pride in the fact that the Deputy Chief Minister of India's second-largest state was once an auto-rickshaw driver. We take pride that the Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy was once a tea seller. But the language Kamra used exposes him as a paid agent."

Deora also took aim at Congress for defending Kamra's right to free speech, questioning their selective outrage. "What did the Chief Minister of Telangana say recently? He said journalists should be stripped and beaten publicly. Did Congress react to that? When Aditya Thackeray's father was CM, what did he do for Kangana Ranaut's safety when she was just a Bollywood actress, not an MP? They demolished Kangana's office. Such people have no right to speak about democracy and the Constitution."

Earlier, Shiv Sena workers stormed Mumbai's Habitat Studio, where Kamra was performing, and vandalized the venue. The police later summoned them for questioning.

During his show, Kamra had taken a dig at Shinde, using a modified version of a song from 'Dil To Pagal Hai', saying, "Meri nazar se tum dekho toh, gaddar nazar wo aaye. Haaye." The remark, referring to Shinde's 2022 rebellion that led to the split of Shiv Sena, drew laughter from the audience and was later shared by Kamra on social media platform X.

Hindi Was Compulsory 3rd Language During Congress Rule

TPN Correspondent | Tiruchirappalli

Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai on Sunday alleged that Hindi was a mandatory third language during the Congress-led UPA regime and credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for introducing flexibility in the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Speaking at a public meeting, he accused the ruling DMK of failing to make Tamil the compulsory medium of instruction despite governing the state for years.

Referring to NEP 2020, Annamalai stated, "For the first time, Modi changed the third language policy from mandatory Hindi to allowing students to choose any Indian language. Now, students can study Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, or even Hindi." Annamalai Targets DMK Over Education Policy

He further pointed out that countries like China, Germany, and Japan have made significant progress by providing education in their native languages. He claimed that while the DMK has been in power for decades, it never made Tamil



the compulsory medium of instruction. "It was Modi who ensured Tamil as the mandatory language of instruction from classes 1 to 5," he added.

Highlighting the BJP's ongoing campaign in support of NEP 2020, Annamalai revealed that 26 lakh signatures had been collected within 18 days. He also took a dig at the DMK's previous signature

campaigns, including their opposition to NEET, questioning their effectiveness.

He further accused DMK leaders, including ministers, of making derogatory remarks about North Indians and dismissed Chief Minister Stalin's claim that his party would secure over 200 seats in the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections. "Stalin is living in an illusion," he remarked.

Protests Erupt Across Turkey Over Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu's Arrest

Opposition calls arrest a bid to block 2028 presidential run.

- Dilek Kaya Imamoglu warns authorities of consequences.
- Imamoglu faces accusations of corruption and links to terrorism.
- Protests reflect frustration with Turkey's democracy, economy, and public services.

TPN Correspondent | Istanbul

Protests Escalate Following Mayor's Arrest

Turkey is witnessing one of the most significant outbursts of public unrest in over a decade, triggered by the controversial arrest of Istanbul's mayor, Ekrem Imamoglu. The protests, which began on Wednesday following his detention, have spread rapidly across the country, despite government-imposed bans on public gatherings. Imamoglu, a key figure in Turkey's opposition movement, was arrested during a pre-dawn raid by hundreds of police officers, leading to widespread condemnation from his supporters and opposition parties.

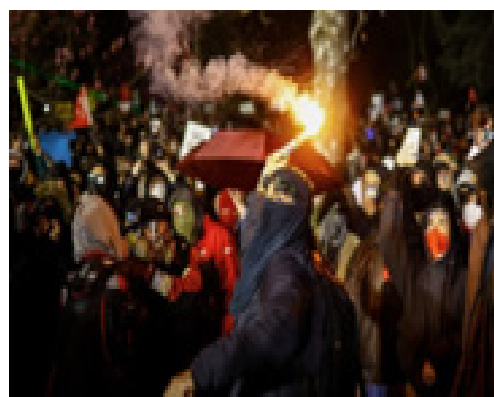


In a passionate speech to the crowds gathered outside Istanbul's City Hall, Imamoglu's wife, Dilek Kaya Imamoglu, declared, "He will defeat you! You will lose!" She described the injustice faced by her husband as symbolic of the struggles many ordinary citizens face under the current government. Her words resonated deeply with the protesters, with many expressing that Imamoglu's plight echoed their own frustrations with the state of democracy and governance in Turkey.



Allegations and Charges Against Imamoglu

Imamoglu is facing serious charges including corruption, bribery, and links to terrorism due to his political dealings with a pro-Kurdish party. The Turkish authorities claim that he was involved in creating a criminal organization, rigging tenders, and accepting bribes. Despite the severe nature of these accusations, the court has refrained from formalizing charges related to terrorism, focusing instead on the financial crimes. His arrest and the subsequent legal battles have intensified political tensions, with his supporters accusing the government of using the judicial



system to undermine political opposition. As protests continue to grow, it is clear that Imamoglu's arrest has become a focal point for broader societal concerns about the erosion of democratic rights, political freedoms, and the stability of Turkey's economic and social systems under Erdogan's rule. The ongoing unrest and Imamoglu's rising popularity signal a challenging period ahead for the Turkish government as public dissatisfaction with the regime intensifies.

Pakistan: Islamabad High Court restores biweekly meetings for Imran Khan in Adiala Jail

Allowed to meet family, lawyers, and friends biweekly, but visitors are prohibited



TPN Correspondent | Islamabad

In a significant ruling on Monday, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) restored biweekly meetings for former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who has been incarcerated in Adiala Jail since August 2023. However, the court imposed strict conditions, particularly prohibiting visitors from making political statements following their meetings with Khan.

According to the court's order, Imran Khan will be allowed to meet his family and legal team on Tuesdays, while friends can visit him on Thursdays. Only those individuals authorized by his coordinator, lawyer Salman Akram Raja, will be permitted to meet the PTI leader.

During the hearing, IHC's Acting Chief Justice Sarfaraz Dogar raised concerns over the use of jail meetings for political purposes. He specifically mentioned that visitors should "meet and leave" without engaging in any political discourse. Additionally, the court emphasized that speaking to the media after these meetings would be unnecessary and should be avoided. Visitors were instructed to sign an undertaking agreeing not to make any public statements related to the meetings.

The decision came after the jail authorities defended the consolidation of Khan's meetings into a single day due to security concerns. They had previously cited the risks involved in allowing sep-

arate meetings on different days. However, the court rejected this argument, reaffirming a prior ruling that allowed biweekly meetings.

Imran Khan's legal team, led by his lawyer Zaheer Abbas, argued that their client's scheduled meetings were being arbitrarily denied. For instance, they claimed that a scheduled meeting on March 20 was not allowed despite repeated requests.

Justice Dogar also directed Imran Khan's legal team to approach the trial court separately if they sought permission for his children to visit him. This decision comes as Khan continues to face multiple legal challenges, with his conviction in corruption cases transforming his status from under-trial to convicted prisoner, which has affected his privileges in prison.

The court's ruling marks a minor relief for the PTI leader and his supporters. However, the prohibition on political statements during meetings indicates that the judiciary intends to prevent jail visits from being used as a platform for political messaging. Any violations of this new rule, particularly regarding media engagements, could result in further legal actions, according to reports from The Express Tribune.

This ruling has been interpreted as a balancing act, allowing Khan's supporters to meet with him but curbing the political messaging that has surrounded his imprisonment.



South Korean Court Dismisses PM Han Duck-soo's Impeachment Over Martial Law

Minister Choi Sang-mok assumed acting president role during the court's review.

TPN Correspondent | Seoul

South Korea's Constitutional Court ruled on Monday to strike down the impeachment of Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, reinstating him to his position as acting president. This decision followed Han's brief tenure as acting president after the suspension of President Yoon Suk Yeol last year due to his declaration of martial law. Han had been impeached by lawmakers in December, just weeks after stepping into the leadership role in the wake of Yoon's suspension.

The impeachment motion against Han was dismissed with a 7-1 vote by the court's eight justices, with two justices voting to reject the motion entirely. The impeachment, which led to Han's suspension, was primarily based on allegations of his role in the martial law incident, as well as his refusal to appoint three more justices to the Constitutional Court, a demand from the opposition-led parliament.

Han's brief time as acting president began after President Yoon's suspension on December 3, 2024, following his controversial declaration of martial law. The martial law, which lasted only six hours after a strong parliamentary vote to reject it, caused widespread political upheaval. It raised alarms both domestically and internationally, as allies like the United States expressed concern over Yoon's ability to lead in the wake of the crisis. During the turmoil, Han was seen as a stabilizing figure with his extensive political experience, having served in various leadership roles for over three decades under five different presidents.

Despite his long career and reputation for bridging partisan divides, Han became embroiled in the political conflict when he was accused of not doing enough to oppose the martial law decision. This led the opposition-dominated parliament to impeach him in late December. During the impeachment hearings, Han denied any involvement in the martial law declaration and called for the impeachment to be dismissed.

In the meantime, Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok temporarily took over as acting president while the Constitutional Court deliberated on the cases of both President Yoon and Prime Minister Han. Han's reinstatement marks the latest twist in the political crisis that has gripped South Korea since the martial law declaration and the subsequent suspensions of its top leaders.

US Gold Card Scheme A Hit?

Trump's 'Gold Card' Scheme Sees Promising Start with 1,000 Sold in a Single Day

TPN Correspondent | Washington DC

Donald Trump's newly launched 'Gold Card' or 'Golden Visa' program, which offers permanent residency and optional citizenship in the United States for a hefty price of \$5 million per card, is reportedly off to a strong start. According to US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, the program has already gained significant traction, with 1,000 Gold Cards sold in a single day.

Speaking on the 'All-In Podcast,' Lutnick shared that the program would officially roll out in about two weeks, adding that tech mogul Elon Musk is currently working on the software needed for the initiative. Lutnick's revelation about the rapid



sales of Gold Cards paints a picture of high demand for this exclusive opportunity to secure permanent residency in the US. The Gold Card grants individuals permanent residency in the United States without the obligation to pay global taxes, a key feature of the program. Lutnick explained that while the cardholders will not be forced to become US citizens, they will have the right to live in the country indefinitely. This arrangement is appealing to foreign nationals, particularly those from countries with high global tax rates, as the Gold Card holders will only be taxed on income earned within the US.

Lutnick elaborated on the potential benefits for wealthy individuals, citing an example where someone might purchase multiple Gold Cards for their family, ensuring access to the US in times of crisis or instability. "It's a safety net," Lutnick said, emphasizing the freedom and security the card offers. Research by the Trump Administration reportedly shows that around 37 million people worldwide could afford to buy the Gold Card. With the potential for large-scale sales, President Trump has expressed confidence in selling up to a million cards. The funds raised from this program will be used to address the US fiscal deficit and national debt. The Gold Card scheme has no annual cap on issuance, meaning it could generate substantial revenue. If the trend continues, with \$5 billion in sales just 24 hours into the program, it looks set to be a highly profitable venture for both investors and the US government.

Bullish Surge in Indian Stock Markets with Six Consecutive Sessions of Gains



Domestic stock markets closed with huge gains on Monday. They surged for the sixth consecutive session. They jumped with doubled enthusiasm. Investors were overjoyed at the bullish moves. The reasons for this were positive signals from global markets, reinvestment by foreign institutional investors who had been selling for years, strengthening of the rupee against the dollar, and a surge in banking and finance stocks. With this, Nifty rose by 307 points and Sensex by 1078 points. Nifty reaching the crucial 200 DEMA is a positive development. If the momentum continues like this, the markets are sure to turn around.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 76,905 in the previous session, opened at 77,456 on Monday. It touched an intraday low of 77,179. It reached an intraday high of 78,107. It finally closed at 77,984 with a gain of 1078 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,515, reached a low of 23,433 and a high of 23,708. It rose by 307 points in total and closed at 23,658. The Nifty Bank rose by 1111 points and settled at 51,704.

In the Nifty50, 42 companies gained and 8 lost. PSU banks, private banks, banking, finance, PSE, realty, oil, infra, energy, IT, auto, pharma, and metal stocks were the top gainers. Kotak Bank, NTPC, SBI, Tech Mahindra, and Power Grid were the top gainers. Titan, IndusInd, Trent, M&M, Airtel lost the most.

Market breadth on NSE today completely shifted in favor of buyers. Out

of 3027 stocks traded, 1865 gained. 1082 lost. 53 stocks touched 52-week highs. 62 stocks touched 52-week lows. 202 stocks crossed the upper circuit and 74 stocks crossed the lower circuit.



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Rupee strengthened by 34 paise to settle at 85.63 against dollar. Government appoints Rahul Bhawe as MD and CEO of IFCI. Motilal Oswal, Ramdev Agarwal and Motilal Oswal Foundation will sell 8 lakh shares of Motilal Oswal Financial Services for donation. 10 lakh shares of Bharat Electronics changed hands.

IREDA shares rose 10%. RBI imposed a penalty of Rs 36 lakh on IDBI Bank. Nifty Defense Index rose 8%. Shares of the respective companies surged. Manappuram Finance shares rose 22% in 8 sessions. LT approved raising Rs 12,000 crore through commercial borrowing. Geojit maintains buy rating on Suzlon Energy with a target price of Rs 71. Diamond Power gets an order worth Rs 215 crore.

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Rupee strengthened by 34 paise to settle at 85.63 against dollar. Government appoints Rahul Bhawe as MD and CEO of IFCI. Motilal Oswal, Ramdev Agarwal and Motilal Oswal Foundation will sell 8 lakh shares of Motilal Oswal Financial Services for donation. 10 lakh shares of Bharat Electronics changed hands. IREDA shares rose 10%. RBI imposed a penalty of Rs 36 lakh on IDBI Bank. Nifty Defense Index rose 8%. Shares of the respective companies surged. Manappuram Finance shares rose 22% in 8 sessions. LT approved raising Rs 12,000 crore through commercial borrowing. Geojit maintains buy rating on Suzlon Energy with a target price of Rs 71. Diamond Power gets an order worth Rs 215 crore.

1. State Bank of India (SBI)

SBI is India's largest public sector bank with a dominant position in the banking industry. Over the past five years,



SBI has delivered CAGR (Compounded Annual Growth Rate) of 21% in stock price. As of recent reports, SBI's loan book has expanded significantly due to strong credit demand.

With the Indian economy growing, SBI is likely to benefit from rising loan demand, especially in retail, MSME, and corporate segments. SBI's focus on digital banking (e.g., YONO app) is improving operational efficiency and attracting younger customers. The bank has significantly reduced Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), making it financially stable for long-term investors. SBI has been rewarding investors with dividends, making it an attractive stock for passive income.

2. Bajaj Finserv



Bajaj Finserv is a financial powerhouse, with businesses in lending, insurance, and wealth management. Over the last 10 years, it has delivered a CAGR of 30% in stock price. Bajaj Finserv operates in NBFC (Bajaj Finance), insurance (Bajaj Allianz), and mutual funds, reducing business risks. India's rising middle class and digital finance adoption will benefit Bajaj Finserv's loan business. With increasing insurance penetration in India, Bajaj Finserv's insurance arm has huge long-term potential. The company has strong Return on Equity (ROE) of ~20% and Return on Assets (ROA) of ~5%.

3. SBI Life Insurance



SBI Life is one of India's largest private life insurance players. The stock has grown 15-18% CAGR over the past five years. India's insurance penetration is still low (~3%), giving SBI Life massive room for growth. Being a part of SBI, the company benefits from a strong distribution network with 22,000+ SBI branches selling policies. SBI Life enjoys high persistency ratios (customer retention), ensuring stable long-term

revenues. The company has high solvency margins, meaning it can handle future claims efficiently. SBI Life is expected to deliver 15-20% annual growth, with a target price of ₹2,200-₹2,500 over the next 5 years.

4. Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL)

Reliance is India's largest conglomerate, with businesses in oil & gas,



retail, telecom (Jio), and digital services. Over the last 5 years, it has delivered a CAGR of ~18%. With India's data consumption growing, Jio is set to dominate the 5G market. Reliance Retail is expanding aggressively and may overtake competitors like D-Mart in the long run. Reliance is investing in green energy (hydrogen, solar, battery storage), securing future revenue streams. Reliance has aggressively reduced debt, making its balance sheet stronger.

5. Power Finance Corporation (PFC)

PFC is India's leading lender to power and infrastructure projects. Over the last five years, the stock has delivered a CAGR of ~20%. With urbanization and industrialization, India's electricity demand is growing. PFC benefits from government policies favoring power sector reforms. The stock is an excellent option for long-term investors seeking passive income. PFC is funding solar and wind energy projects, securing long-term growth.



POWER FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED

Unified Pension Scheme Notified for Govt Employees

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has officially notified the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for central and state government employees, marking a significant shift in the pension structure. This new scheme will come into effect from April 1, 2025, ensuring a structured and assured pension for eligible employees.

The UPS aims to provide a guaranteed pension of 50% of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months before retirement. This approach ensures stability in post-retirement earnings for government employees. The scheme was approved by the Union Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 24, 2024, as an improvement over the existing National Pension Scheme (NPS), which is primarily linked to market returns.

Eligibility Criteria

The scheme is applicable to central government employees who are currently under NPS as of April 1, 2025, allowing them the option to switch to UPS. Additionally, newly recruited employees on or after April 1, 2025, will be automatically enrolled under this scheme. Around 23 lakh central government employees are eligible to choose between NPS and UPS, depending on their preference for

pension security.

Employees can access the enrollment and claim forms online from April 1, 2025, through the official website of Protean CRA at <https://npscra.nsdl.co.in>. For those preferring an offline process, physical form submissions will also be accepted, as per the notification.

Key Features of UPS

The Unified Pension Scheme ensures an assured pension of 50% of the average of the last 12 months' basic pay before superannuation. To qualify for the full pension benefits, an employee must complete a minimum of 25 years of service. Unlike the old pension system, UPS requires employees to contribute 10% of their basic salary and dearness allowance (DA), while the government will contribute 18.5% toward their pension fund. The final pension payout under this scheme will be partially influenced by market-linked investments, mainly in government securities.



India Set to Become World's Consumption Capital: Report

India is poised to emerge as the world's consumption capital, outpacing major global economies, according to a new report by Angel One and Iconic Asset. The report highlights that consumption already accounts for 56 percent of the country's GDP and is growing at the fastest rate globally.

Over the next decade, India's consumption is expected to double by 2034, driven by factors such as the rising number of nuclear families and a workforce expansion that will further boost economic activity. Household growth in India is outpacing population growth, leading to increased spending, while the country is also set to lead global workforce expansion. The report underscores India's strong savings potential, noting that total savings between 1997 and 2023 amounted to \$12 trillion. This figure is projected to surge tenfold to \$103 trillion by 2047, unlocking new opportunities for higher spending and economic growth. Additionally, recent tax cuts announced in the Union

Budget are expected to contribute to rising consumption. The report estimates that these reductions will free up ₹1 lakh crore, leading to an additional ₹3.3 lakh crore in spending and potentially boosting India's GDP by 1 percent.



India's Flash PMI slips to 58.6 on slower service activity

India's HSBC Flash Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) dropped slightly to 58.6 in March 2025, down from 58.8 in February 2025, reflecting a slowdown in the service sector's activity. The Flash PMI is a key early indicator of economic health, capturing data from 80% to 90% of survey responses. A PMI value above 50 indicates growth in private sector activity, and India's

PMI has remained above this level for over three years.

The service sector growth slowed, with the Flash PMI for services at 57.7 in March, compared to 59 in February. The slowdown in services could be attributed to higher prices relative to manufacturers and weaker growth in new business from abroad. In contrast,

the manufacturing sector saw an improvement, with the manufacturing Flash PMI rising to 57.6 in March 2025 from 56.3 in February. This marked the highest manufacturing output since July 2024, though manufacturers faced margin pressure as input prices rose, while factory gate prices increased at the weakest rate in a year.

Tata Sierra Testing In Full Swing; Thar-Rival Launching By Year-End

Tata Motors is gearing up to reintroduce the iconic Sierra SUV, with its latest version undergoing rigorous testing. First unveiled at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025, the 2025 Tata Sierra is expected to hit Indian roads by the end of this year, followed by its EV variant later. Recent spy shots suggest the test mule is in its final production-spec form, indicating that the much-anticipated SUV will soon be ready for launch.

Design Updates

The 2025 Tata Sierra features a high-mounted bonnet, vertically split headlamps, a gloss-black grille with silver skid plates, and wide air dams with an ADAS sensor. Notably, it will sport flush door handles, a body-colored B-pillar, a blacked-out C-pillar, and roof rails. Unlike the original '90s model, which had a three-door layout, the new Sierra comes with a practical five-door setup.

Features & Technology

While Tata Motors has yet to reveal the full feature list, the 2025 Sierra is expected to include a 10.25-inch digital instrument cluster, a 12.3-inch touchscreen infotainment system, a panoramic sunroof, a wireless charger, a powered tailgate, and multi-color ambient lighting. Other premium additions may include a high-end audio system, dual-zone climate control, and powered, ventilated front seats. For safety, the Sierra is expected to be



equipped with Level-2 ADAS features, including adaptive cruise control, lane-keep assist, automatic emergency braking, blind-spot monitoring, ABS with EBD, a 360-degree camera, electronic stability control, and a tire pressure monitoring system.

Engine & Powertrain

The Sierra ICE variant is likely to come with two engine options:

- A 1.5-litre T-GDi turbo-petrol engine delivering 165 HP and 280 Nm of torque.
 - A 2.0-litre Kryotec diesel engine producing 170 HP and 350 Nm of torque.
- Both engines will be available with

manual and automatic transmission options.

Launch, Price & Competition

Set to rival the Mahindra Thar and Maruti Suzuki Jimny, the Sierra will take a more premium and urban-focused approach. It will not use a body-on-frame chassis like its competitors but instead aim to be a refined alternative—akin to how the Land Rover Defender stands apart from the Jeep Wrangler and Mercedes-Benz G-Class. Expected to be priced from ₹13 lakh onwards, the Tata Sierra will launch by the end of 2025, offering a fresh take on India's growing lifestyle SUV segment.

Sick of bloating from caffeine? Here's how you can reduce it



Caffeine is a popular stimulant, but for some people, it can cause bloating and digestive discomfort. This occurs because caffeine increases stomach acid production, which may irritate the gut lining and lead to bloating. Additionally, many caffeinated drinks contain acids and compounds that promote gas production in the stomach.

If you experience bloating after consuming caffeine, simple dietary and lifestyle adjustments can help. Here are nine effective tips to reduce bloating caused by caffeine:

Caffeine is a diuretic, meaning it increases urination and may lead to dehydration. Dehydration can cause water retention and bloating, so it's essential to drink plenty of water throughout the day, especially when consuming caffeinated beverages.

Limit Dairy-Based Caffeinated Drinks

If you experience bloating after drinking coffee or tea, lactose intolerance could be the culprit. Dairy-based creamers and milk may be hard to digest for some people. Try switching to plant-based milk options like almond, oat, or lactose-free alternatives. Sugar-free energy drinks and flavored coffee often contain artificial sweeteners like sorbitol, aspartame, and sucralose, which are known to cause bloating and digestive issues. Opt for natural sweeteners like honey, stevia, or cinnamon instead.

Choose Low-Acid Coffee or Cold Brew

Coffee is naturally acidic, which can irritate the stomach and contribute to bloating. If you're sensitive to acidity, consider low-acid

coffee varieties or cold brew coffee, which has lower acidity and is gentler on digestion.

Carbonated sodas and energy drinks contain caffeine along with gas-producing carbonation, which can trap air in your digestive system and cause bloating. If this affects you, switch to non-carbonated options like black coffee, matcha, or herbal teas.

Avoid Drinking Caffeine on an Empty Stomach

Having caffeine on an empty stomach can increase acid buildup, leading to bloating and discomfort. To prevent this, consume a fiber-rich meal or snack—such as oatmeal, bananas, or whole grains—before drinking coffee or tea.

Limit Excessive Caffeine Intake

Too much caffeine can overstimulate the digestive system, causing acid reflux, inflammation, and bloating. If you're prone to bloating, try reducing your caffeine intake and see if your symptoms improve.

If caffeine bloating persists, consider herbal teas like ginger, peppermint, or fennel tea, which have natural anti-bloating properties. These teas can soothe digestion, reduce inflammation, and prevent gas buildup.

Cinnamon and ginger have digestive benefits that can counteract caffeine's bloating effects. Adding a pinch of cinnamon powder or fresh ginger to your coffee can neutralize acidity, improve digestion, and reduce bloating.

By making these simple adjustments, you can continue enjoying caffeine without the discomfort of bloating. Experiment with these strategies to find what works best for you!

"Vast Underground City" Discovered Under Egyptian Pyramids, Claim Scientists



the Great Sphinx and the pyramids. The study claims to have found five small, room-like structures inside one of the pyramids, challenging previous archaeological assumptions about burial sites. Experts Dismiss Findings as "Fake News"

Leading Egyptologists have strongly denied these claims, calling them unverified and misleading. Zahi Hawass, Egypt's former Minister of Antiquities, dismissed the research, stating that the methods used were "neither scientifically approved nor validated." He emphasized that decades of studies using advanced techniques like gravimetry and muon tomography have found no evidence of such massive subterranean structures. Radar specialist Professor Lawrence Conrady also labeled the findings "a huge exaggeration," arguing that no existing radar technology could produce images from thousands of feet underground. However, he did acknowledge that smaller ancient structures or ceremonial chambers might have been built under pyramids, similar to Mesoamerican traditions. Despite the bold claims, the findings have yet to undergo peer review or independent verification. Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities has not commented on whether further investigations will be conducted.

A controversial new study has claimed the discovery of a "vast underground city" beneath Egypt's iconic pyramids. Using advanced radar technology, researchers led by Filippo Biondi of the University of Strathclyde and Corrado Malanga of the University of Pisa

believe they have uncovered hidden structures beneath the Giza Plateau. The scientists, working on what they call the "Khafre Project," assert that their radar scans detected eight vertical cylinder-shaped artefacts stretching over 2,100 feet beneath the pyramids.

Additionally, they claim to have identified various unidentified structures at a depth of 4,000 feet. The team suggests that their findings may be linked to the legendary "Halls of Amenti," a mythical chamber thought to contain ancient records beneath

the Great Sphinx and the pyramids. The study claims to have found five small, room-like structures inside one of the pyramids, challenging previous archaeological assumptions about burial sites. Experts Dismiss Findings as "Fake News"

Unique Temple in Kolkata Serves Noodles and Momos as Prasad: A Cultural Fusion

Kolkata blends faith and food with its distinctive offering of Chinese cuisine as prasad.

India's cultural and religious diversity is one of its most unique features, and a temple in Kolkata beautifully embodies this fusion. While most temples across the country offer laddus or sweets as prasad, the Chinese Kali Temple in Kolkata stands out by serving noodles, momos, and other Chinese dishes as prasad. This temple is not just known for its religious significance and stunning architecture but also for its cultural blend that attracts people from various walks of life.

The Story Behind the Chinese Kali Temple

The Chinese Kali Temple has an interesting and fascinating backstory that brings together both the Bengali and Chinese communities. According to local legend, many years ago, a young

boy fell gravely ill, and doctors could do nothing to save him. In desperation, his parents took him to a place where two black stones were revered as Maa Kali by the locals. After days of prayers, the boy miraculously recovered. In gratitude for this divine intervention, the boy's parents began worshipping Maa Kali at this sacred site. Over time, this sacred space became a temple, and both the Bengali and Chinese communities contributed to building the Chinese Kali Temple here.

The Uniqueness of Noodles and Momos as Prasad

Noodles, a staple of Chinese cuisine, became a part of the temple's prasad offerings as a result of a significant historical event. During the Chinese



Civil War, many Chinese refugees migrated to Kolkata, bringing their culinary traditions with them. As part of their customs, they would offer special dishes to deities, and eventually, they began offering noodles to Maa Kali at this temple. Over time, noodles became a permanent offering, alongside momos and other Chinese delicacies, which are now considered divine

blessings by devotees. This fusion of Chinese cuisine with Indian temple rituals showcases the merging of two distinct cultures.

A Must-Visit Destination in Kolkata

Located on Matheswartala Road in Kolkata's Tangra region, the Chinese Kali Temple is a must-visit for anyone seeking to explore the rich cultural fusion that Kolkata has to offer. Visitors can experience a profound spiritual journey while enjoying a unique offering of Chinese food as prasad. The temple, which remains open seven days a week, serves as a reminder of how diverse traditions can come together to form a harmonious whole.

To visit the temple, take the metro to

Rabindra Sadan Station and board a bus heading towards Science City or Topsia. The blend of spirituality and Chinese cuisine makes this temple a truly unique destination in Kolkata.

Highlights:

Cultural Fusion: Chinese and Bengali communities built the Chinese Kali Temple together.

Unique Prasad: Noodles and momos are served as prasad in a fusion of Indian and Chinese traditions.

Historical Context: Chinese refugees brought their culinary customs during the Chinese Civil War.

Spiritual Experience: Devotees experience both cultural and spiritual enrichment at the temple.

Location: Situated on Matheswartala Road in Kolkata's Tangra area, the

Who is Vignesh Puthur Mumbai Indians spinner from Kerala

Mumbai Indians' new left-arm wrist spinner, Vignesh Puthur, had a dream IPL debut in the 2025 season as he claimed the crucial wickets of Rituraj Gaikwad, Shivam Dube, and Deepak Hooda against Chennai Super Kings. Despite MI's loss, his performance stood out as one of the biggest positives for the team. Brought in as the Impact Player, Puthur replaced Rohit Sharma and made an instant impact by dismissing CSK skipper Gaikwad in his very first over. He followed it up by removing big-hitter Shivam Dube, and later, he also got rid of Deepak Hooda, finishing with figures of 3/32.

Who is Vignesh Puthur? The 24-year-old spinner from Malappuram, Kerala, was signed by Mumbai Indians for ₹30 lakh in the IPL auction. Though he has never played at the senior level for Kerala, he has represented the state at the U-14 and U-19 levels. Currently, he plays for Alleppey Ripples in the Kerala Cricket League and has also featured in the Tamil Nadu Premier League.

Hailing from a humble background, Puthur is the son of an autorickshaw driver and a homemaker. Initially a medium pacer, he switched to leg-spin on the advice of local cricketer Mohammed Sherif, which proved to be a turning point in his career. His performances in the Kerala College Premier T20 league for St. Thomas College put him on the radar of IPL scouts.

Earlier this year, Mumbai Indians sent him to South Africa as a net bowler for MI Cape Town in the SA20 league, which helped him gain experience.



Portugal beat Denmark in Thrilling Quarter-Final



Portugal secured a thrilling 5-2 victory after extra time against Denmark in the second leg of the UEFA Nations League quarter-finals, winning 5-3 on aggregate to book a semi-final clash with hosts Germany in June.

Despite an early setback when Cristiano Ronaldo's penalty was saved by Kasper Schmeichel, Portugal mounted a strong comeback, with Francisco Trincao's late double and Goncalo Ramos' goal sealing the dramatic win.

Portugal's Fightback Denmark, carrying a 1-0 first-leg advantage, held their ground early as Schmeichel denied Ronaldo from the spot in the 6th minute. However, Portugal equalized on aggregate in the 38th minute when Joachim Andersen's attempted clearance ended up in his own net.

Denmark responded in the 56th minute through Rasmus Kristensen's header, regaining their aggregate lead. But

Portugal refused to back down. Ronaldo made amends for his penalty miss by scoring a crucial rebound goal in the 72nd minute. Just four minutes later, Christian Eriksen tapped in an open goal, putting Denmark back in front overall.

With the game slipping away, Trincao struck in stoppage time to force extra time. The Sporting Lisbon winger then put Portugal ahead shortly after the restart, threading his second goal through a crowded penalty box. He was also involved in the final goal, as Goncalo Ramos finished off the contest.

Denmark fought bravely, but Portugal's relentless attack proved decisive. Having won the inaugural Nations League in 2019, Roberto Martinez's side now aims to become the first team to win the tournament twice.

Portugal will face Germany in the semi-finals as they continue their quest for European glory.

Spain edge Netherlands on penalties, set up Nations League semi-final

Defending Nations League champions Spain edged past the Netherlands in a thrilling 5-4 penalty shoot-out victory after their quarter-final second leg ended 3-3 in Valencia on Sunday. With this win, Spain set up a semi-final clash against France on June 5 in Stuttgart. Spain took an early lead after Mikel Oyarzabal converted a penalty following a foul in the box. The Netherlands equalized in the 54th minute when Memphis Depay won and scored a spot-kick.

Oyarzabal struck again in the 67th minute, capitalizing on a strong Nico Williams run. However, the Netherlands found another response as Ian Maatsen's powerful strike leveled the game with 11 minutes left. The match went into extra time, where Lamine Yamal curled in a brilliant strike to give Spain the lead. But there was another twist as Unai Simon brought down Xavi Simons, who then stepped up to convert the penalty and force a shoot-out.

Penalty Shoot-out Thriller Spain held their nerve in the shoot-out despite Yamal missing his spot-kick. Unai Simon made a crucial save against Donyell Malen, and Pedri sealed the win

with the final penalty. Spain now faces France, the 2021 Nations League winners, in the semi-finals. France reached the last four after a 5-4 shoot-out win over Croatia in a game where Michael Olise and Ous-

mane Dembele scored in regulation time. With their title defense still alive, Spain will now prepare for a high-stakes clash against Kylian Mbappe's France in Stuttgart.



Tamim Iqbal suffered a Heart Attack while Playing Underwent angioplasty after being rushed to the hospital.

Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal suffered a heart attack during a Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League match on Monday, prompting an urgent medical response. The 36-year-old was leading Mohammedan Sport-

ing Club against Shinepukur Cricket Club when he experienced chest pain during the first innings. Tamim fielded for just one over before being rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

Medical Emergency and Treat-

ment Initially, arrangements were made to transport him by helicopter from BKSP ground in Savar, but due to logistical issues, he was instead taken to Fazilatunnesa Hospital. A medical bulletin issued by

the hospital confirmed that Tamim underwent an angiogram and angioplasty to clear a blockage. "He returned to us in a critical condition. It was a heart attack, and the procedure went smoothly. He is currently under observation," the bulletin stated. Doctors credited the swift coordination between medical staff at the stadium and hospital for his timely treatment.

Following the incident, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) cancelled a scheduled board meeting, and BCB President Faruque Ahmed rushed to the hospital along with senior officials to monitor his condition.

Tamim Iqbal, who retired from international cricket for the second time in January 2024, had earlier reversed his decision in July 2023 after intervention from then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The former Bangladesh captain played 70 Tests and 243 ODIs, amassing 5,134 and 8,357 runs, respectively, along with 1,758 runs in 78 T20Is.



THIS IS PEAK IPL Delhi Capitals chase down 210 with just 1 wicket left, after being 7/3 and 65/5.



In a nail-biting encounter, Delhi Capitals (DC) secured a thrilling one-wicket victory over Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) with three balls to spare in Match 4 of IPL 2025. Chasing a challenging target of 210, DC stumbled early as LSG's bowlers struck crucial blows. However, a resilient partnership between Vipraj Nigam and Ashutosh Sharma reignited their hopes. As the match neared its cli-

max, DC required five runs off four balls with just one wicket in hand. A composed finish saw them cross the line, sealing an unforgettable win. LSG's Shardul Thakur's fiery opening spell and Nicholas Pooran's explosive knock earlier in the game went in vain. DC's triumph marks a strong start to their campaign, showcasing their depth and resilience under pressure.



Pooja Hegde Speaks Out on Paid Trolling in Film Industry



Actress Pooja Hegde has opened up about the growing issue of paid trolling in the film industry, revealing that she has been a target of orchestrated social media attacks. In a recent interview, she shed light on how such negativity is not limited to male stars but also affects female actors, despite their significant contributions to a film's success. While it's commonly believed that the industry revolves around male leads, Pooja emphasized that heroines also play a crucial role in drawing audiences to theatres. However, with limited opportunities for female actors and a highly competitive landscape, jealousy and rivalry often fuel targeted criticism. She pointed out that PR agencies actively run negative campaigns, spreading memes, trolls, and online hate against actresses. While many heroines are aware of this unhealthy trend, most choose to remain silent. Pooja's revelation highlights how this practice, once prevalent in Bollywood, is now making its way into South Indian cinema as well.

Preity Mukundhan Calls Acting with Prabhas Her Career's Biggest High



Tamil Nadu-born actress Preity Mukundhan, who has been making her mark in Tamil cinema, is set to appear in Kannappa alongside Manchu Vishnu. Initially, she auditioned for the lead role, but the part went to Nupur Sanon. However, when Nupur exited the project, the role came back to Preity, giving her a major opportunity in Telugu cinema. Reflecting on her experience,

Preity shared her excitement about working with Prabhas, calling it the most unforgettable moment of her career. "I never thought I would even get to meet him in my life, but now I've acted with him. This is my career's biggest high," she said. For her role in Kannappa, she underwent extensive training in horse riding and sword fighting. Known for her glam-

orous photoshoots on Instagram, Preity confidently embraces bold and stylish looks. She was previously seen as the lead in Om Bheem Bush, opposite Sree Vishnu. However, the film's underwhelming performance at the box office delayed her next big project. Now, with Kannappa, she is looking forward to making a strong impact in the industry.

Weekend Box Office: Five Films Set for Release

The Tollywood box office has seen a lukewarm March, with only Court exceeding expectations. As the month comes to a close, five films are gearing up for release, promising a variety of cinematic experiences for audiences.

Among them, Robinwood and Mad Square stand out as the only straight Telugu films, while Lucifer 2: Empuraan, Veera Dheera Shoorra, and Sikandar add to the mix with their star power and diverse appeal.

Nithin's Robinwood is already making waves, thanks to its catchy track Adi Dha Surprise and the much-talked-about cameo by Australian cricketer David Warner. With Sreeleela as the female lead, this comedy entertainer could mark a strong comeback for Nithin, who has been struggling at the box office.

Mad Square, arriving on March 28, has its eyes on younger audiences, particularly collegegoers, who contributed to the success of its predecessor. A premiere on



the 27th is under consideration, while ticket bookings are already underway.

The highly anticipated Mohanlal starrer Lucifer 2: Empuraan, helmed by Prithviraj Sukumaran, is set for release on March 27. Given the immense success of Lucifer—which was later remade in Telugu as Godfather—fans have high expectations for this sequel.

Meanwhile, Vikram's Veera Dheera Shoorra has flown under the radar compared to the other releases. How-

ever, with S.J. Suryah in a crucial role, the film could surprise audiences with its performances.

Adding Bollywood flair to the lineup, Salman Khan's Sikandar, co-starring Rashmika Mandanna, will also hit screens at the end of the month. While its reach in smaller centers remains uncertain, a Salman-starrer never fails to generate buzz. With such a diverse slate of releases, the Ramzan weekend promises an exciting showdown at the box office.

Ajay Devgn Unveils First Look of Raid 2



Ajay Devgn is set to return as IRS officer Amay Patnaik in Raid 2, with the first-

look poster unveiled on Monday. The sequel, directed by Raj Kumar Gupta, is slated

for release on May 1, 2025. The intense poster shows Ajay standing

amid towering stacks of files, exuding a determined expression. Sharing the look on social media, he wrote, "Naya shehar. Nayi file. Aur Amay Patnaik ki ek nayi raid. #Raid2 knocking at your doors in cinemas near you on 1st May, 2025."

Produced by Bhushan Kumar, Kumar Mangat Pathak, Abhishek Pathak, and Krishan Kumar, Raid 2 is presented by Gulshan Kumar and T-Series in association with Panorama Studios. The film features Riteish Deshmukh, Vaani Kapoor, and Rajat Kapoor alongside Ajay Devgn.

The original Raid (2018) was inspired by a real-life Income Tax raid from the 1980s and starred Saurabh Shukla and Ileana D'Cruz. Ajay Devgn, who was last seen in Singham Again, continues his streak of action-packed roles.

Mohanlal Confirms Film With Mammooty

Mohanlal and Mammooty, the legendary duo of Malayalam cinema, are set to reunite on screen for a big-budget film tentatively titled MMMN, directed by Mahesh Narayanan. In a recent interaction with NDTV, Mohanlal opened up about his deep friendship with Mammooty, revealing that they stay in touch frequently and meet almost every week. He also shared that during his recent visit to Sabarimala Temple, he performed special poojas



for his family and Mammooty. Speaking about their upcoming film, Mohanlal stated, "We are working on a film. It is yet to be completed. We had to shoot it in Visakhapatnam, and Mammooty had to shoot in the UK. It

is a big film. We will finish it by May or June, so you can watch it in September or October." MMMN features a stellar cast including Nayanthara, Fahadh Faasil, Kunchacko Boban, Rajiv Menon, Renji Panicker, Revathi, and others. The film will be shot across multiple locations, including Delhi, Kochi, Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Azerbaijan, Thailand, Abu Dhabi, Sri Lanka, and London, with a planned 150-day shoot schedule.

Varun Tej's VT15, An Indo-Korean Horror Comedy,

Varun Tej's upcoming film, temporarily titled VT15, began shooting on Monday with a traditional pooja ceremony in Hyderabad. Directed by Merlapaka Gandhi, the project blends Indian and Korean filmmaking in the horror-comedy genre. Produced by UV Creations and First Frame Entertainment, the film is being made on an expansive scale. The announcement, made on

Varun Tej's birthday, gained further traction after the release of an intriguing poster in January. Noted composer S Thaman will score the film's music, while Manoj H Reddy is handling cinematography. According to sources, Ritika Nayak is set to join the cast, though the film's editor has yet to be announced. Sharing photos from the pooja ceremony, UV Creations



wrote, "The journey begins. The super entertaining journey of #VT15 begins with an auspicious pooja ceremony. Get ready for a blockbuster ride full of laughs, chills, and thrills."