



Weather Forecast

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



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad
Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy made strik-

If I had done the same... KTR would have been in Jail

- CM Revanth Reddy accuses BRS of partisan politics
- Claims he was jailed for flying a drone while KTR remains free
- Asserts he won't misuse power for political vendettas

Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) would already be in Chanchalguda Jail. He alleged that he was wrongfully imprisoned and harassed for minor infractions, while BRS leaders have been shielded from legal action.

Revanth recalled that he was jailed for flying a drone while he was an MP, even though the law only mandates a ₹500 fine for such an offense. He accused the previous gov-

ernment of using its power to silence opponents, stating that he was kept in solitary confinement for 16 days and denied basic rights. He also revealed that he was granted bail briefly for his daughter's wedding, only to be sent back to jail afterward.

The Chief Minister stated that many people are demanding the arrest of former CM KCR and KTR, but he will not resort to political vendettas. "If I wanted to take revenge, many

people would have been in jail by now," he remarked, emphasizing that he does not believe in framing cases to target opponents.

Revanth Reddy also took a dig at KCR's defeat in Kamareddy, stating that the people had rejected the former CM despite his claims of being the "father of Telangana." He recalled how KCR's loss to a common man in the election was a reflection of public anger.

The Chief Minister further stated that he endured great hardships in jail but did not let bitterness guide his decisions. He remarked that the previous government had unjustly imprisoned him, kept him awake under bright lights, and treated him like a serious criminal. However, he believes that justice will prevail, saying, "God has seen their mistakes, and they are already facing the consequences."

White Ration Card Hurdle for Rajiv Yuva Vikasam Applicants



TPN | Kishore Katta
Hyderabad, March 28: The Congress government in Telangana launched the Rajiv Yuva Vikasam scheme with great ambition to provide financial assistance to youth. However, applicants are encountering significant obstacles, primarily due to the requirement of a white ration card to avail benefits under the scheme.

After coming to power, the government conducted village-level meetings under the Praja Palana (Public Administration) initiative, where people submitted applications for various welfare schemes. However, it later mandated a white ration card for eligibility, leading to widespread confusion and frustration.

During the 10-year rule of the BRS, not a single ration card was issued, leaving many without the required document. Despite this, the Congress government instructed applicants not to apply for ration cards through Praja Palana. As a result, many had to remove their names from their old ration cards to apply for new ones.

2 PAGE

Who Will Get the Ministerial Berth?

Intense Competition Among Nizamabad MLAs

3 PAGE

If it is proven that way, I will resign on the Spot

KTR challenges proof of 100% loan waiver in any Telangana village

Accuses Congress of stalling development since coming to power

Questions Congress' silence on Telangana's neglect in central budget

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

BRS Working President and MLA K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has thrown a bold challenge, stating that if it is proven that a 100% farm loan waiver has been implemented in any village in Telangana, he will resign as an MLA and quit politics immediately. Speaking in the Legislative Assembly, KTR dared Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to visit their respective constituencies—Sircilla and

Kodangal—to verify the claim.

KTR alleged that since the Congress government took over, development in Telangana has completely stalled, leaving farmers, unemployed youth, women, and students dissatisfied. He criticized the ruling party for failing to fulfill its electoral promises and claimed that Telangana had achieved rapid progress during the BRS regime.

He emphasized that under former Chief Minister KCR's



leadership, Telangana became a self-reliant state with a balance between welfare and planned development. Referring to state income from 2014 to 2022, KTR highlighted that Telangana had strengthened its financial standing.

Taking a dig at the Congress leadership, KTR questioned why they remain silent about the injustice meted out to Telangana in the central budget. He accused Congress of constantly criticizing the previous BRS government but failing to

speak up against the BJP-led central government. He also remarked that power is not permanent for anyone and that the Congress should focus on governance rather than political blame games.

KTR further criticized the Center for allegedly adopting Telangana's welfare schemes while providing no financial assistance to the state. He questioned why the central government allocated funds for the Kumbh Mela but neglected Telangana's Sannakka Saralamma Jatara, a major tribal festival. He also mocked the Congress, saying that while critics claim BRS secured "zero" seats in the last Lok Sabha elections, the state too received a "zero" from the central budget, and Congress leaders should answer why they are not protesting this neglect.

Lok Sabha Passes Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025, which aims to modernize and consolidate India's immigration laws. The bill, introduced by Junior Home Minister Nityanand Rai on behalf of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, seeks to enhance security measures while promoting economic growth and tourism.

During a three-hour-long debate, Amit Shah emphasized that while India welcomes those who contribute to its de-



velopment, strict action will be taken against those entering with malicious intent, including Rohingyas and illegal

Bangladeshi immigrants. He stated that the bill would enable better tracking of foreigners who overstay and help in

- Bill aims to modernize and consolidate India's immigration laws
- Strengthens monitoring of foreign visitors and illegal immigration
- Empowers government to regulate premises frequented by foreigners
- Repeals four existing immigration-related laws

identifying those posing security threats. The proposed law grants the central government greater control over areas frequented by foreigners, allowing authorities to close premises, impose restrictions, or refuse

entry to certain individuals. This provision is expected to strengthen national security by targeting drug cartels, infiltrators, arms smugglers, and economic offenders.

2 PAGE

German Industrialist Stephen Meets CM Revanth Reddy

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

German industrialist Stephen met Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Batti Vikramarka, requesting necessary facilities to set up an industry in Telangana that produces wine, arak, and other related products using sugarcane obtained from palm and coconut trees.

The initiative stems from a

study tour to Cambodia, during which Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, PCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud, and Professor Janaiah invited Stephen to collaborate on establishing such an industry in Telangana, given its economic benefits in Cambodia. Responding to the request, Stephen informed the Chief Minister that he is ready to invest in the industry as part of cane-based industries in the

state. During the meeting at the Assembly premises today, Stephen explained to CM Revanth Reddy that the proposed industry will enhance the livelihoods of cane workers by improving value addition, increasing minimum income, and expanding employment opportunities. He also highlighted plans to export Telangana's

2 PAGE





Telangana Spent 79% of Estimated Budget in 2023-24: CAG Report

- Telangana spent ₹2,19,307 crore expenditure for 2023-24.
- State's total outstanding loans reached ₹4,03,664 crore, equaling 27% of GSDP.
- ₹35,425 crore was taken as overdrafts over 145 days.
- ₹24,347 crore was spent on interest payments, while ₹26,981 crore went to salaries.
- ₹76,773 crore allocated to local bodies, marking an 11% increase from the previous year.

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

The Telangana government spent ₹2,19,307 crore out of the estimated ₹2,77,690 crore budget for the financial year 2023-24, achieving 79 percent of the projected expenditure, according to the latest report from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

The report, detailing the state's financial performance, was tabled in the Legislative Assembly by Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka on Thursday.

As per the CAG report, the state government exceeded the approved budget by ₹1,11,477 crore, marking a 33 percent increase in expenditure. The total

spending accounted for 15 percent of the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The state also borrowed ₹10,156 crore through ways and means advances and took overdrafts amounting to ₹35,425 crore over 145 days.

For the financial year 2023-24, Telangana allocated ₹24,347 crore for interest payments and ₹26,981 crore for salaries. Tax revenues contributed 61.83 percent of the state's total income. Despite the financial burden, the government reported a revenue surplus of ₹779 crore, with 45 percent of revenues allocated to salaries, pensions, and interest payments. The state also received ₹9,934 crore in grants from the Centre.

By the end of 2023-24, Tel-



angana's total outstanding loans stood at ₹4,03,664 crore, equivalent to 27 percent of its GSDP. Additionally, government-backed loan guarantees amounted to ₹2,20,607 crore. In comparison, the state borrowed ₹53,144 crore in the previous financial year (2022-23). Capital expenditure for 2023-24 was ₹43,918 crore, while ₹76,773 crore was allocated to local bodies and other institutions, reflecting an 11 percent increase from the previous year.

Assembly Passes Resolution Opposing Delimitation of LS Seats

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

The Telangana Legislative Assembly has passed a resolution opposing the Centre's proposed delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies following the 2026 population census. Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who moved the resolution on Thursday, stated that the concerns of southern states regarding delimitation were being dismissed by Union ministers from Telangana as if the Centre had no such proposal. However, he termed these claims as "half-truths."

Revanth Reddy pointed out that the Centre had failed to in-

crease the number of Assembly seats in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh as per the AP Reorganisation Act of 2014, which mandated an increase from 119 to 153 seats in Telangana and from 175 to 225 seats in Andhra Pradesh. He argued that the Centre's handling of this issue indicated its intentions regarding future delimitation plans.

"When we requested the Centre to implement the increase in Assembly seats as per the reorganisation act, they responded that it would be done after the 2026 National Population Census. However, they have already carried out the delimitation of Assembly



constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir and are in the process of doing the same in Sikkim,

following a resolution passed in 2018. This clearly exposes the Centre's double standards," he

said.

The Chief Minister warned that if delimitation were carried out purely based on population, the representation of southern states—Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, and Karnataka—could drop from the current 24 percent of total Lok Sabha seats to just 19 percent.

He demanded that the process consider each state as a unit and ensure an increase in Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) representation while amending the Constitution to raise Telangana's Assembly seats from 119 to

153.

He strongly asserted that the southern states would not accept a population-based delimitation, as it would unfairly penalize them despite their adherence to the Centre's population control policies since 1971.

"In the southern states, population growth has largely stabilised. The difference between births and deaths in Telangana is just 1.8 percent. Delimitation would become a limitation for the south," he reiterated.

To further highlight the issue, Revanth Reddy announced that a massive public meeting would be held in Hyderabad soon.

1st Page Cont..

White Ration Card Hurdle for Rajiv Yuva Vikasam Applicants

Applicants caught in a bureaucratic deadlock

A year has passed since the Praja Palana program, yet new ration cards have not been issued. This has put applicants in a difficult position, as their names have been removed from old ration cards, and they are yet to receive new ones. Without a white ration card, they cannot apply for the Rajiv Yuva Vikasam scheme.

Additionally, the scheme requires ration cards to be linked to Aadhaar, but many applicants do not have a valid ration card to complete the process. Even obtaining an income certificate requires a white ration card, making the situation even more challenging. As a result, thousands of eligible individuals are unable to apply for the scheme, prompting growing demands for the government to relax the rules and extend the application deadline.

Election-linked suspicions over the scheme

Meanwhile, speculation is rife that the Congress government introduced Rajiv Yuva Vikasam with an eye on the upcoming panchayat elections. Reports suggest that a select few might receive loans on Telangana Formation Day, while others may have to wait until after the elections.

With the state treasury reportedly under financial strain, there are doubts about whether the government can allocate ₹6,000 crore for the scheme. The key question remains: Will the Congress government modify the eligibility rules and provide relief to those without white ration cards? The coming days will provide clarity.

Lok Sabha Passes Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025

The bill seeks to replace four existing laws governing immigration: the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920; the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939; the Foreigners Act, 1946; and the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000. While it simplifies and harmonizes provisions from these laws, it also introduces new regulations suited to modern-day challenges.

Amit Shah clarified that the bill is not related to granting citizenship, but rather focuses on streamlining immigration processes, enhancing border security, and ensuring a structured legal framework for foreigners entering and residing in India.

German Industrialist Stephen Meets CM Revanth Reddy

cane-based products to Europe and other international markets while expanding local marketing networks.

Additionally, the project includes setting up a research and development department and producing high-yielding cane saplings to ensure long-term sustainability. Ministers Ponnampati Prabhakar, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, PCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud, German representative Stephen, and industrialist Rohit were present at the meeting.

Cisco, TASK Partner to Expand Digital Skills Training

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Cisco Networking Academy has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Telangana Academy for Skill and Knowledge (TASK) to provide advanced training in digital technologies and AI-based infrastructure development. The agreement was formalized in the presence of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and IT & Industries Minister Sridhar Babu.

The collaboration aims to equip young professionals with cutting-edge digital skills essential for the modern workforce. As part of this initiative,

Cisco Networking Academy will offer specialized training programs at the state's newly established Skills University.

The MoU signing ceremony was attended by key officials, including Chief Secretary A. Shanti Kumari, IT & Industries Special Chief Secretary Jayesh Ranjan, and Cisco Networking Academy's Global Innovation Officer Guido Geiderich. Their collective vision emphasizes bridging the skills gap in Telangana. This partnership builds on discussions held during the World Economic Forum in Davos and aligns with broader efforts to position Telangana as a hub for skilled professionals in



AI and emerging technologies. By integrating Cisco's proven curriculum and expertise, TASK

aims to strengthen the state's digital workforce and drive innovation.

Four Days Left for 90% Waiver on Property Tax Interest: GHMC

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has reminded property owners that only four days remain to clear their property tax under the One-Time Scheme (OTS) and avail a 90% waiver on accumulated arrear interest. The deadline for the scheme is March 31.

GHMC Commissioner K. Ilambarthi urged taxpayers to make use of this opportunity and pay their dues on time.



Payments can be made online via the MyGHMC app, at Citizen Service Centers, e-Seva Kendras, or through bill collectors visiting homes. To facilitate

payments, GHMC Citizen Service Centers will operate from 8 AM to 11 PM. Under the OTS, property owners need to pay the principal amount of their tax dues up to the 2024-25 financial year along with 10% of the accumulated interest, thereby availing a 90% waiver on total interest. The scheme covers all properties under GHMC, including residential and commercial buildings.

For those who have already paid their dues along with in-

terest and penalties, 90% of the interest and penalties will be adjusted against their future property tax payments.

To assist property owners with tax-related grievances, GHMC has also launched the Property Tax Solution (PTP) program. The program runs every Saturday from February 22 to March 29 at circle offices from 10 AM to 1 PM, addressing revision petitions, tax assessments, payment registrations, and legal disputes.

CPM Stages Protest at Ramoji Film City Over Land Encroachment Allegations

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

Tensions flared at Ramoji Film City (RFC) on Wednesday as leaders of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPM) staged a protest, accusing the RFC management of illegally encroaching on lands meant for the poor. The protest, which saw demonstrators breach RFC's gates, turned heated as CPM leaders and affected families demanded justice.

The protesters conducted a sit-in on the disputed land,

asserting their claims after months of unsuccessful negotiations with RFC management over alternative housing solutions. The situation quickly escalated, leading to confrontations between the demonstrators and the police. Several CPM leaders were detained, and a woman reportedly lost consciousness amid the commotion, adding to the tensions.

As part of their ongoing agitation, CPM organized the 'Iwala Chalo Ramoji Film City' rally, intensifying pressure on RFC

management to address the issue. According to CPM representatives, the dispute has persisted for over a year, with no concrete resolution despite repeated discussions. They previously staged a protest outside the Collectorate, urging government intervention.

In response, RFC management issued a statement as-



sure that alternative land would be allocated to those affected. However, CPM leaders argue that no significant progress has been made, leaving many families uncertain about their future.



Who Will Get the Ministerial Berth?

Intense Competition Among Nizamabad MLAs

Congress plans a ministerial post for Nizamabad to strengthen its hold.

Sudarshan Reddy and Madan Mohan Rao lead the race.

Laxmikanth Rao and Bhupathi Reddy also in contention.

Social representation and BC quota impact the decision.

Final call with CM and PCC Chief.

TPN Correspondent | Nizamabad

The political landscape in the Nizamabad joint district has become chaotic due to the absence of a strong leadership presence in the state cabinet. With no senior minister from the region, the district administration has been largely unresponsive to the requests and recommendations of local MLAs, leading to governance issues.

As the Telangana Congress prepares for cabinet expansion, deliberations are underway regarding the allocation of a ministerial post to the Nizamabad joint district. The leadership believes that granting a cabinet berth will strengthen the party's foothold in the region. However, the decision has sparked a fierce contest among senior Congress MLAs.

Fierce Competition Among Aspirants
Several MLAs are vying for the ministerial post, including Bodhan MLA Sudarshan Reddy, Yellareddy MLA Madan Mohan Rao, Jukkal MLA Laxmikanth Rao, and Nizamabad Rural MLA Bhupathi Reddy. While the Congress high command has already approved the cabinet expansion, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, who recently met with top leadership in Delhi, has been given the final say on

appointments.

The Telangana Congress is treading cautiously, aiming to maintain social balance while considering candidates for ministerial positions. The party is also exploring ways to appease those who do not secure a ministerial post by offering other key positions.

According to sources, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has instructed the state leadership to prioritize MLAs who have strongly fought against the BRS and emerged victorious. Based on this, senior Congress leader and Bodhan MLA Sudarshan Reddy appears to be the frontrunner in the race.

Sudarshan Reddy vs. Madan Mohan Rao
A major contest is emerging between Sudarshan Reddy and Yellareddy MLA Madan Mohan Rao. In the past, Madan Mohan Rao contested as the Congress candidate for the Zaheerabad parliamentary seat but failed to put up a strong fight against BRS's Bibi Patil, losing by a narrow margin. Despite this, he has actively worked against the BRS and is lobbying strongly in Delhi to secure the cabinet position.

On the other hand, Sudarshan Reddy, a former minister, has significant politi-

cal backing. He shares close ties with the family of Congress veteran Jaipal Reddy and is also related to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy. Reports suggest that senior Congress leaders, including former Home Minister Jana Reddy, have discussed Sudarshan Reddy's potential induction into the cabinet.

However, some within the party question whether an MLA with more than a decade of experience should be given another ministerial opportunity, adding complexity to the decision-making process.

Other Contenders in the Race

Meanwhile, Jukkal MLA Laxmikanth Rao is attempting to leverage his Dalit background to secure the position. However, reports indicate that his chances have diminished, especially since MLA Vivek Venkataswamy, also from the same community, is not a senior Congress leader. Nizamabad Rural MLA Dr. Bhupathi Reddy, who has repeatedly contested from the constituency and finally defeated former BRS leader Bajireddy Govardhan in the recent elections, has also intensified his lobbying. He enjoys the support of the National Medical Association and the doctors' lobby, which has urged the



state Congress to give him a ministerial post. The argument being made is that doctors with minor degrees have previously secured cabinet positions, strengthening Bhupathi Reddy's case.

Social Balance Becomes a Key Factor

While Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is inclined to appoint Sudarshan Reddy as a minister, the recent focus on caste-based representation has made the decision more complex. The Congress leadership is keen on maintaining a social balance by giving due representation to BCs, SCs, and

STs to avoid alienating these voter groups. Reports suggest that two ministerial berths will be allocated to MLAs from the BC community.

In the past, the in-charge ministers of Nizamabad played a crucial role in reviewing and directing district development. However, the current situation is different. Despite the leadership's commitment to ensuring ministerial representation from the joint district, the final decision rests with PCC Chief Mahesh Kumar Goud and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, keeping the aspirants on edge.

KTR sets an example, pledges organ donation in Assembly

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Thursday pledged to donate his organs while speaking in the Telangana Assembly during a discussion on the Telangana Replantation of Human Organs (Repeal) Bill. He emphasized the importance of raising awareness and encouraging people to participate in organ donation.

"As MLAs, we represent two to three lakh people and must lead by example. It is our duty to create awareness and inspire the people," KTR said, urging Speaker G Prasad Kumar to organize an application signing camp in the Assembly to facilitate MLAs in registering as organ donors. "I will be the first to sign the organ donation papers," he declared, drawing applause across party lines.

Congress MLA from Aswaraopeta, Jare Adinarayana, highlighted that 29 kidney failure patients in his constituency would benefit from the Bill. Inspired by KTR, he also pledged to be the first in his constituency to sign up for organ donation.

BRS backs Bill with additional proposals

BRS MLA T Harish Rao extended his party's support to the Bill and suggested additional measures, including conducting state-honoured funerals for organ donors, providing Indiramma Indlu houses to donor families, offering admissions into Gurukuls, and extending free health insurance to encourage more people to donate.



Harish Rao highlighted Telangana's significant progress in organ transplantation. The state saw a steady increase in transplant procedures, rising from 189 in 2013 to 725 in 2023. He credited the BRS government for making Telangana a leading state in organ transplantations. He also noted that under the KCR government, 577 transplantations were covered under Arogyasri, allowing poor patients to receive transplants

free of cost.

Additionally, Congress MLA from Jukkal, T Laxmikanth Rao, urged the government to mandate private hospitals to offer significant discounts to families who agree to donate organs of their deceased relatives.

CM says re-division will hurt states that controlled population

Demands increase in Telangana Assembly seats to 153

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy introduced a resolution in the Legislative Assembly opposing the re-division of constituencies based on population. He argued that states that have effectively implemented population control measures would suffer due to this move, leading to a reduction in their political representation.

The Chief Minister asserted that the existing constituencies should be retained and called for an increase in the number of Assembly seats in Telangana from 119 to 153. He also demanded a rise in the number of SC and ST-reserved seats in proportion to the present population.

Revanth Reddy pointed out that southern states adhered to the central government's directives on population control, unlike several northern states. He warned that if constituencies are re-divided solely based

on population, the representation of southern states in the Lok Sabha would drop from 24% to 19%, weakening their political influence.

Citing a recent resolution passed by a DMK-led meeting rejecting the re-division based



on population, he reminded the House that even former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had opposed such a move. He emphasized that the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act clearly mandates an increase in the number of Assembly constituencies in both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, yet no action has been taken so far.

The Chief Minister also criticized the disparity in central funding, stating that states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh receive more financial support, while

southern states are allocated significantly less. He urged all political parties to support the resolution, ensuring Telangana's political representation is not diminished.

Malla Reddy's remarks spark laughter in Assembly

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Former minister and BRS MLA Ch Malla Reddy, known for his humorous remarks and unique style, once again entertained the Legislative Assembly with his punchy dialogues. His comments during the session on Thursday left the House in splits.

Addressing the Assembly, Malla Reddy stated, "Speaker, I want to tell the government two things. One is that the government will get Rs 11 billion, and the other is the suffering of sarpanches and councilors in my Medchal constituency." However, the Speaker, seemingly confused by the statement, suggested that he should speak about only one matter at a time. Following the Speaker's suggestion, Malla Reddy continued, saying, "My Medchal constituency has been affected by the incident, Speaker." His vague remark led to laughter in the House. He later clarified that he was distressed because all villages



in his district had been converted into municipalities. He also urged the government not to include his constituency under the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

Despite attempting to bring up an issue that could benefit the government, the Speaker did not grant him further time to speak. His comments, however, became a talking point both inside and outside the Assembly.

Singireddy Niranjana Reddy slams Revanth Reddy's governance

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

Former Minister Singireddy Niranjana Reddy launched a scathing attack on Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, calling his leadership a mockery of democracy. Criticizing the Congress government's 15-month rule, he accused them of misleading people and failing to deliver on key promises. He alleged that the government was mocking the aspirations and hopes of the people while being completely disconnected from their struggles.

Singireddy highlighted the achievements of the KCR-led BRS government, stating that in ten years, they waived off ₹28,817 crore worth of loans for farmers, provided ₹73,000 crore through 11 installments under the Rythu Bandhu scheme, and ensured 24-hour free electricity for agriculture by spending ₹10,500 crore per year. He also pointed out that under Rythu Bima, the BRS government

supported 11.10 lakh farmer families who lost their breadwinners by giving each of them ₹5 lakh. However, he criticized the Congress for opposing the need for 24-hour free electricity, recalling that Revanth Reddy himself stated that three hours of electricity was sufficient, claiming that a 10 HP motor could water an acre per hour.

Lashing out at the Congress for failing to implement key welfare schemes, Singireddy said that despite making grand announcements for December 9, many promises remain unfulfilled. The ₹2 lakh loan waiver, ₹7,500 per acre under Rythu Bharosa, and ₹2,500 per girl child under the Mahalaxmi scheme have not materialized. Similarly, the ₹6,000 pension for disabled persons and the ₹4,000 pension for senior citizens, single women, and widows have also not been provided as promised. He further criticized the government for

reducing Rythu Bima from ₹15,000 to ₹12,000 and excluding farmers with up to three acres from the insurance scheme. He accused the Congress of skipping irrigation projects, failing to procure crops at promised bonuses, and looting the state treasury without even paying the insurance premium for farmers.

Singireddy alleged that Revanth Reddy is distorting facts and misleading the public with media management, attempting to cover up the failures of his government. He remarked that self-proclaimed intellectuals and politically motivated individuals had spread false propaganda about the ten-year BRS rule, but the 15-month Congress government has now been exposed. He claimed that the people of Telangana, who were once deceived, would not be fooled again and are waiting for the right time to respond.

Pastor Praveen's Body Kept for Public Tribute

Public viewing arranged at Centenary Baptist Church

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad
Elaborate security arrangements have been made at Centenary Baptist Church in Secunderabad, where the body of renowned gospel preacher Pagadala Praveen has been kept for the public to pay their last respects.

Praveen (45) passed away under suspicious circumstances in Andhra Pradesh earlier this week. Initially, the police reported that he died in a road accident at Godavari Fourth Bridge in Konthamuru village, East Godavari district, on Monday night. However, his sudden demise has raised concerns, leading to demands for a thorough investigation. Following doubts expressed by several

individuals and community members regarding the cause of death, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has ordered a detailed probe into the incident. He directed DGP Harish Kumar Gupta to examine all aspects of the case to uncover the truth.

With large crowds expected to gather at the church to pay tribute, authorities have deployed additional security personnel to ensure order and safety. The police are closely monitoring the situation to prevent any untoward incidents. The funeral arrangements are yet to be officially announced, and further updates on the investigation are awaited.



HYDRAA Clears Illegal Barricades, Encroachments at Boyapalli Enclave

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The Hyderabad Disaster Response and Asset Protection Agency (HYDRAA) took decisive action against unauthorized constructions in Boyapalli Enclave, Almasguda village, on Thursday, dismantling barricades that had obstructed major roads for years.

The illegal roadblocks had long restricted access to several plot owners, affecting nearly half of the enclave's layout. Residents, who had been struggling with these encroachments for years, welcomed the move, expressing relief over restored access to roads and public spaces.

In addition to removing barricades, HYDRAA also reclaimed parklands that had been encroached upon. Authorities reinstated a 240-square-yard open space meant for public use, ensuring adherence to the original approved layout. Local reports confirmed that a cricket box, illegally built on a road inside the enclave, was also torn down.

The Boyapalli Enclave layout was formed in 1982, but over the years, unauthorized developments had blocked three key roads. With HYDRAA's intervention, connectivity has now been restored, reinforcing urban planning regulations.



Owaisi seeks Assembly resolution against Waqf Amendment Bill

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi has urged the Telangana government to adopt a resolution rejecting the Waqf (Amendment) Bill proposed by the Centre. Speaking during the appropriation bill debate in the Telangana Legislative Assembly on Thursday, March 27, he also called for Waqf lands to be brought under the prohibited category in the Bhu Bharathi revenue portal to prevent illegal encroachments.

Addressing concerns over reservations, Owaisi criticized BJP leaders for falsely claiming that Muslims were taking away Backward Class (BC) reservations. He pointed out that Muslims are included in the OBC list even in BJP-ruled states like Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. He further asserted that the state could surpass the 50% cap on reservations and implement



42% reservations for BCs without needing an all-party delegation to meet the prime minister.

Owaisi also pressed the government to allocate funds for key infrastructure projects in the Old City, including: Charminar pedestrian project, Construction of a new building for Osmania General Hospital

and Development of Mir Alam Tank, Mir Alam Mandi, and Murgi Chowk. Additionally, he urged the Congress government to restore pre-matric scholarships for Muslim minority students, which were discontinued after the formation of Telangana in 2014.

Owaisi demanded the inclusion of Hyderabad's Old City in the Hyderabad Metropolitan Region 2050 Master Plan to facilitate the establishment of IT Towers, startups, and incubators to support Muslim youth.

Expressing anger over the delay in gratia payments, he also reminded the House that despite assurances from the finance minister, compensation has not been provided to the families of victims who perished in the Red Hills fire mishap.

Cops recover ₹9.5 lakh Duped from Businessman

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The Hyderabad police successfully recovered ₹9,50,531 from cyber fraudsters who duped a 32-year-old businessman under the pretense of a lucrative business opportunity. The amount was refunded to the victim after a thorough investigation.

According to reports, the fraudsters convinced the businessman to transfer funds under various false pretenses, including registration fees, processing charges, and issuance of ISO certificates, claiming that his products had a high market demand. Once they received the money, the accused cut off all communication, leaving the victim defrauded.

Upon receiving the complaint, the Hyderabad cybercrime police registered a case under Sections 66(C) and 66(D) of the IT Act, along with Sections 111(2)(b), 318(4), and 319(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The investigation led the police to Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi, where the accused were arrested.

Following legal procedures, the entire amount was successfully recovered and returned to the victim. The Hyderabad police have urged citizens to remain cautious while engaging in financial transactions online and report suspicious activities immediately.



Criminal Cases to Be Filed Against Land Encroachers

Hydra Commissioner issues stern warning against illegal encroachments



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Hydra Commissioner Ranganath has issued a strong warning that criminal cases will be registered against individuals encroaching on government lands. On Thursday, he conducted an inspection in the Shamsabad Municipality limits near Thondupalli Cheruvu following complaints from local residents.

Speaking to the media, Ranganath stated that complaints would be filed at the local police station against those involved in illegal land occupations. Once the Hydra Police Station is established, further action will be taken under its jurisdiction. He warned of serious consequences for individuals exploiting Kuntalas and Cheruvu lands for commercial ventures.

The Commissioner emphasized that strict measures would be enforced to protect government lands from encroachments and prevent any illegal land dealings.

TGSPDCL assistant engineer caught red-handed accepting bribe

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

An assistant engineer working for the Telangana Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TGSPDCL) was caught red-handed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) while accepting a bribe of ₹30,000 for carrying out official work. The accused, S. Surender Reddy, an assistant engineer in the Jeedimetla division, had demanded the bribe to shift an 11 KV

power line and lay a cable for the complainant's building. Based on the complaint, ACB officials set a trap and caught him red-handed while accepting the amount. Following the operation, the bribe amount was recovered from the accused officer. A case has been registered, and Surender Reddy is currently being presented before the Principal Special Judge for SPE and ACB Cases at the Nampally Court in Hyderabad.

Workshop on antimicrobial stewardship held at Osmania General Hospital

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

To promote responsible antimicrobial use and tackle the growing concern of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), Osmania General Hospital (OGH) conducted an Antimicrobial Stewardship Workshop. The event brought together over 104 registered doctors, microbiologists, and healthcare professionals from various hospitals. Organized by the Microbiology Department and Infection Control Team of OGH, the workshop featured expert talks on crucial topics, including pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics, the global significance of AMR, antimicrobial resistance mech-

anisms, antifungal resistance, and the importance of upgrading conventional laboratories to antimicrobial stewardship programs (AMSPs). Experts emphasized the urgent need for hospitals to implement AMSPs to optimize the use of antimicrobial agents, prevent resistance, and improve patient outcomes. They also discussed strategies to enhance infection control measures and the role of healthcare professionals in curbing the misuse of antibiotics. The workshop aimed to create awareness among medical professionals about the responsible use of antibiotics and strengthen antimicrobial stewardship initiatives in hospitals across Telangana.

Young doctor ends life on railway tracks in Secunderabad

TPN Correspondent | Secunderabad

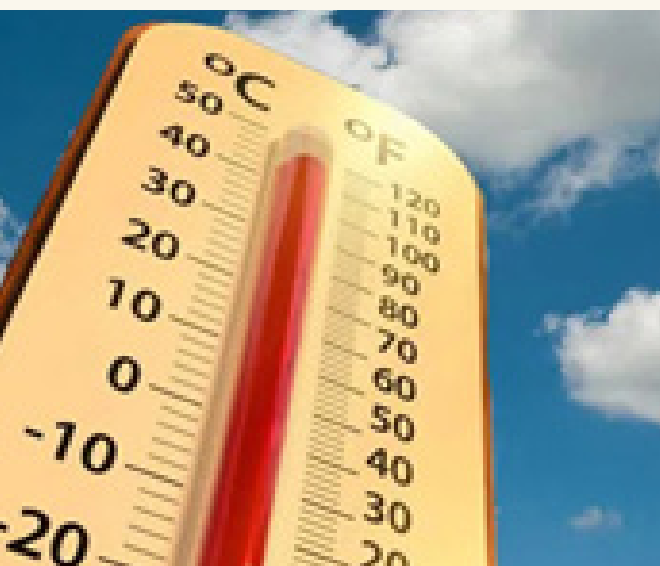
In a tragic incident, a young doctor took his own life by lying on the railway tracks in Secunderabad on Wednesday morning. According to the Railway Police, the deceased, Purohit Kishore, was a 34-year-old doctor working at a Basti hospital in the city. He was reportedly distressed over his inability to get married, which ultimately led him to take the extreme step.

Purohit, originally from Gujarat, had settled in Secunderabad with his family. His parents had recently arranged his engagement, which was celebrated with much joy. However, the marriage was later called off

by the bride's family, allegedly due to Purohit's baldness and other reasons. This cancellation deeply affected him, and despite his family's continued efforts to find a match, he remained upset over the repeated disappointments.

On Wednesday morning, overcome with distress, he went to the Cavalry Barracks railway station near Bollaram and fell under an oncoming train. The loco pilot noticed the incident and immediately alerted the GRP police. Authorities identified Purohit using the identity card found on him and informed his grief-stricken family.

The police have registered a case and are conducting further investigations.



IMD Hyderabad Issues Orange Alert

Temperatures may soar up to 44°C in Telangana

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD)-Hyderabad has issued an orange alert for 15 districts in Telangana, warning that maximum temperatures may range between 41°C and 44°C in the coming days.

After a brief relief due to thunderstorms and hailstorms, the heat is set to return across the state. The IMD forecast indicates that dry weather will persist, with temperatures ex-

pected to rise by 2°C to 3°C over the next few days.

The districts likely to experience extreme heat include Adilabad, Kothagudem, Jagtial, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, Jogulamba Gadwal, Khammam, Kumuram Bheem Asifabad, Mancherla, Mulugu, Nagarkurnool, Narayanpet, Nirmal, Nizamabad, Peddapalli, and Wanaparthy. Other districts will see temperatures between 36°C and 40°C.

On Wednesday, Adilabad recorded 41°C, while Kumuram Bheem Asifabad, Nizamabad, and Wanaparthy touched 40.9°C. Bhadradi Kothagudem, Kamareddy, Nirmal, Mancherla, and Nalgonda also registered temperatures above 40°C. Hyderabad and its surrounding districts hovered between 38°C and 39°C.

With temperatures set to rise further, residents are advised to take necessary precautions to avoid heat-related illnesses.

Kaushik Reddy accuses CM of misleading Assembly on defections

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

BRS MLA Padi Kaushik Reddy on Thursday strongly objected to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's remarks on the MLAs' disqualification case in the Supreme Court, accusing him of mocking the judiciary and misleading the Assembly on the issue of defections. Speaking to media persons in the Assembly, Kaushik Reddy asserted that by-elections were inevitable and expressed confidence that the apex court would rule in BRS's favor. He vowed to continue raising the issue until the defected BRS MLAs were disqualified.

The BRS legislator also took a dig at the Congress government's handling of law and order. He claimed that he received no response when he raised concerns in the Assembly. Referring to the attack on his residence allegedly led by defected MLA Arekapudi Gandhi and his followers, Kaushik Reddy accused the government of inaction and police of colluding with ruling party leaders. He demanded strict action against officers who aided the attackers.

"If MLAs are not safe, what is the plight of common people?" he questioned, further alleging that despite filing a complaint about his phone being tapped, authorities had taken no action. He urged the Congress government to focus on fulfilling its poll promises instead of targeting opposition leaders.



HC Questions SBI Over Role in ₹5 Crore Cyber Fraud Case

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The Telangana High Court has raised serious concerns over the role of banks in cyber fraud cases, specifically questioning the State Bank of India (SBI) Keezhmad branch in Ernakulam, Kerala, over a ₹5 crore cyber scam executed within a single day.

Justice NV Shraavan Kumar has directed the SBI branch manager to submit an explanation within two weeks regarding compliance with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) norms when allowing a fraudulent entity to open a current account.

The case stems from a writ petition filed by 80-year-old AV Mohan Rao from Gopanapally, Hyderabad, who fell victim to a digital arrest fraud scheme. The fraudsters coerced him into transferring ₹50 lakh, which was later traced to an SBI account registered under the name Bharat Enterprises. Investigations revealed that the account had been used to siphon off ₹5 crore from multiple victims across the country in a single day.

Expressing deep concern over the bank's apparent inaction, Justice Kumar questioned why no alarms were raised when such a large sum was deposited and rapidly withdrawn within 24 hours. The court has now mandated the SBI branch manager to submit an additional affidavit detailing the adherence to RBI's regulatory protocols during the account opening process. The response is expected by April 5.

According to cyber police reports, Mohan Rao transferred ₹50 lakh via RTGS from his Punjab National Bank account in Yusufguda, Hyderabad, to the Bharat Enterprises account at SBI Keezhmad on September 10, 2024. The funds were withdrawn almost immediately, with only ₹50 lakh remaining in the account before it was frozen.

SBI officials confirmed that the account saw a sudden spike in transactions, reaching ₹5.5 crore before the funds were depleted. However, the bank expressed confusion over multiple court orders directing the release of funds to various victims, stating that it could not comply due to the diminished balance and the lack of clear instructions on prioritizing the orders.

Further hearings in the case will determine SBI's accountability and the possible recovery of funds for the victims.

Cadaver Dogs Re-enter SLBC Tunnel as Rescue Efforts Continue

Operation intensified with 600 personnel working in shifts



TPN Correspondent | Telangana

Rescue operations in the SLBC tunnel

tragedy have been intensified to locate the six missing workers.

Special officer Shivshankar Loteti (IAS) stated that specially trained cadaver dogs from Kerala were sent into the tunnel once again at 11 AM on Thursday to aid in the search. The state government has appointed Loteti to oversee and accelerate the rescue efforts. A review meeting was held at 10 AM on Thursday, where senior officials discussed strategies to enhance the operations. The relief teams from both central and state governments have been actively working for 34 consecutive days. A total of 600 personnel are engaged in the operations across

three shifts to ensure continuous progress. Officials reported that debris, Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) parts, and spring water inside the tunnel are being systematically removed. Loco trains are being used to transport waste materials out of the tunnel, while high-capacity pumps are continuously draining the accumulated water. The authorities assured that all necessary facilities, including food, accommodation, and healthcare, are being provided to the rescue personnel as they work tirelessly to complete the operation.

Telangana to Get 14 New Excise Police Stations from April 1

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

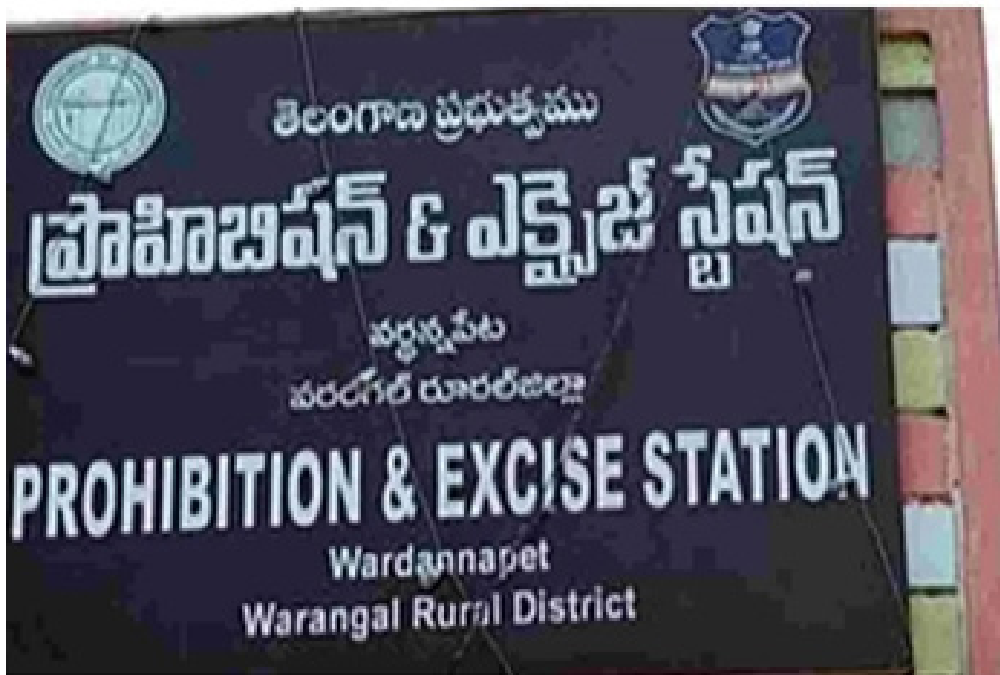
The Telangana government has approved the establishment of 14 new excise police stations as part of efforts to curb illegal alcohol, marijuana, and narcotics trade in the state. Of these, 13 stations will be set up in Hyderabad, while one will be established in Warangal Urban.

The proposal for these excise police stations was initially made in 2020 but faced multiple delays. Now, under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the green signal has been given, with orders issued to make the stations operational from April 1. Minister Jupally Krishna Rao, Principal Secretary Rizvi, and Commissioner Chevuru Hari Kiran have formally approved the proposal. Additional Commissioner of the Excise Department Ajay Rao has instructed the concerned Deputy Commissioners to take necessary steps for the immediate

functioning of the new stations. Preparations such as the division of stations, selection of areas, and staff transfers have already been completed.

In Hyderabad, rented buildings have been secured for stations in Banjara Hills, Chikkadapally, Gandipet, Kondapur, Pedda Amberpet, Kukatpally, Aminpur, and Hasanparthi. However, suitable premises are yet to be found for the stations in Maredpally, Meerpet, Kompally, Kapra, Nacharam, and Alwal. Until dedicated spaces are secured, these stations will operate from separate rooms within existing excise police stations.

Officials believe that once these new stations are fully operational, they will enhance enforcement and provide better services in tackling illicit liquor and drug-related activities.



Govt to Disburse ₹1 Lakh Crore Through 'Stree Nidhi'



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The Telangana government plans to distribute ₹1 lakh crore through Stree Nidhi over the next five years to promote financial independence among rural women and generate employment, announced Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Minister D. Anasuya (Seethakka) on Wednesday.

Speaking at the 12th General Body Meeting of Stree Nidhi Parapathi Sahakara Samakhya Limited at the Engineering Staff College of India, Gachibowli, Seethakka highlighted the institution's growth from its modest beginnings in 2011 to a leading financial model with a loan portfolio of ₹5,200 crore.

"Stree Nidhi is a testament to women's collective strength, and every woman who contributed to its success deserves appreciation," she said.

She noted that Stree Nidhi loans are now being utilized for purchasing livestock, supporting small-scale industries, and promoting micro-enterprises. She encouraged women not just to become self-employed but also to create job opportunities for others.

Seethakka urged district, mandal, and village federations to protect members from private moneylenders and exploitative microfinance companies, advising them to rely on Stree Nidhi and banks for financial assistance.

The minister also announced that a dedicated headquarters for Stree Nidhi had been allocated under the Rural Development Department and would soon be operational after modifications.

Additionally, new district-level samakhyas are being set up across Telangana, with Stree Nidhi contributing ₹22 crore towards this initiative.

Police personnel suspended for assaulting man in Kamareddy

TPN Correspondent | Kamareddy

A constable and a home guard attached to Banswada Police Station in Kamareddy district were suspended after they were found assaulting a man on the road for allegedly causing a nuisance under the influence of alcohol. According to reports, Constable Kiran and Home Guard Gangadhar severely beat up the man on the roadside, drawing criticism

from the public. The victim, who suffered injuries, approached Kamareddy District Superintendent of Police (SP) Rajesh Chandra and filed a complaint regarding the police brutality. After reviewing the complaint and preliminary investigation, SP Rajesh Chandra took swift action by suspending both Constable Kiran and Home Guard Gangadhar for their misconduct. He emphasized that no one is

above the law and that police personnel must adhere to protocols while handling such situations.

The incident has sparked discussions over excessive force used by law enforcement, and senior police officials have reiterated that strict action will be taken against any officers found violating disciplinary guidelines. Further inquiries into the case are underway.

Konda Surekha Presents Steel Carrier to CM Revanth Reddy

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

In a move to promote environmental awareness, Minister Konda Surekha presented a steel carrier to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, urging the public to say no to plastic. As part of this initiative, she distributed jute bags, books, copper bottles, steel carriers, and cloth bags to Telangana MLAs and Legislative Council members to encourage the use of eco-friendly alternatives.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Surekha appealed to the people of Telangana to avoid plastic usage and protect the environment. The event also saw the launch of the book 'Plastic Usage - Danger Bells', which was unveiled by Legislative Council Chairman Gutta Sukhender Reddy, Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka. Chief Secretary Shanthikumari

and Pollution Control Board (PCB) Member Secretary Ravi were also present. Speaking at the event, Konda Surekha highlighted alarming statistics on plastic pollution. She stated that over 5 lakh crore plastic bags are discarded globally every year, and 10 lakh plastic water bottles are purchased every minute. So far, 6.3 billion tons of plastic waste have been generated worldwide, with 79% dumped into oceans and water bodies, 12%

left on land, and only 9% recycled. The minister warned that plastic waste is blocking canals, lakes, and river flows, causing severe damage to plants, trees, animals, and aquatic life. She also cautioned that burning plastic releases toxic gases, increasing the risk of cancer and other severe health issues. She urged everyone to switch to sustainable alternatives to protect the environment for future generations.



Alcohol Sales: More Coffers for Government, More Coffins for Public

Former, National consultant for NRHM, Ministry of Health, Govt of India

Millions of Indians are grappling with severe health issues linked to alcohol consumption, including cirrhosis, cancer, neurological disorders, heart disease, and alarming rates of premature deaths. These health crises not only cause emotional and financial distress for families but also hinder societal progress and national development. The economic burden of alcohol-related healthcare costs is immense, straining both families and the nation. State governments must shift their focus from short-term revenue gains to prioritizing public health and long-term well-being. A prosperous nation depends on a healthy population, making public welfare more critical than government profits. Investing in public health initiatives and addressing alcohol-related issues can foster a healthier society and sustainable national development.

Public Health vs. Revenue: While increasing liquor production and sales may temporarily boost state revenue, it leads to long-term public health crises. Greater alcohol availability correlates with rising healthcare costs as communities face addiction, domestic violence, crime, and other social issues. The short-term financial benefits of alcohol sales are ultimately outweighed by the societal harm. Policymakers must balance revenue generation with the well-being of the population.

Statesmanship Over Profit Motive: Political leaders must prioritize public welfare over financial gains. Although bold decisions may carry political risks, they pave the way for a healthier future. Governments

The British government used bullets to kill our people; we shouldn't use alcohol bottles to do the same.

Families living below the poverty line and those in economically disadvantaged groups are being devastated by alcoholism.

It is impossible to eradicate poverty and advance economic growth without controlling the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages.

The government should not promote increased sales merely to boost revenue at the expense of people's lives.

The ill health, absenteeism, and untimely death of a family's breadwinner due to alcoholism leads to a tragic situation that ultimately destroys that family.

There is no greater sin in the world than this.

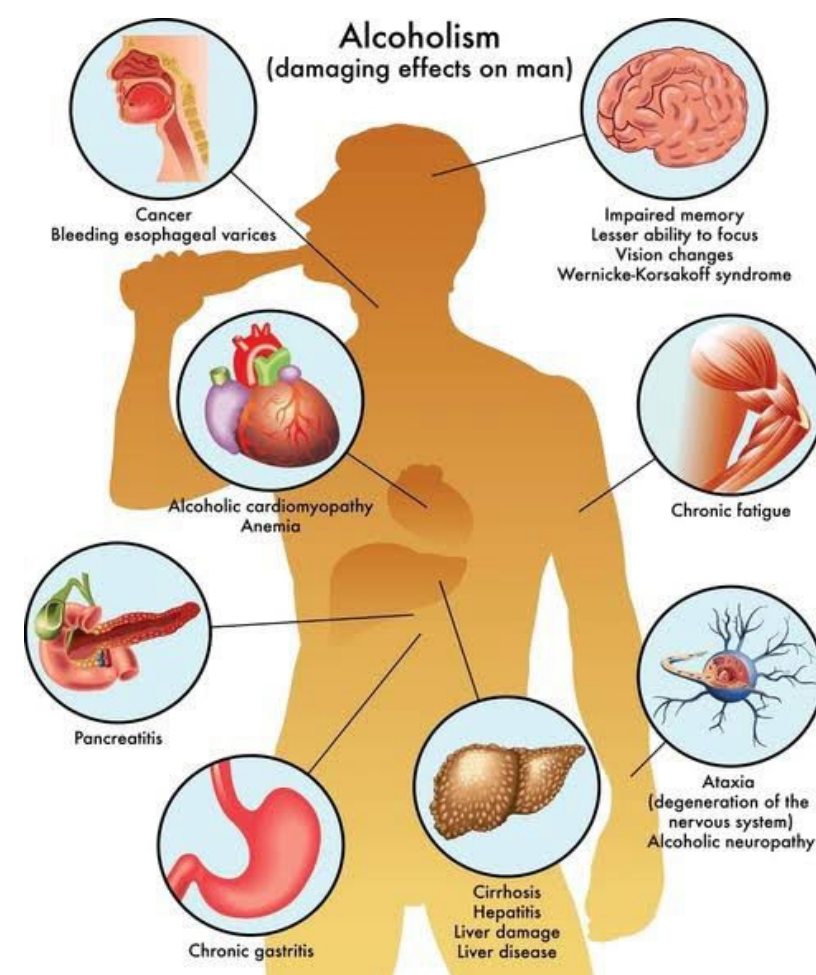
It is impossible to eradicate poverty and advance economic growth without controlling the manufacture and distribution of alcoholic beverages.

should develop sustainable revenue models that do not depend on alcohol sales. Restricting alcohol production and sales can improve public health and social well-being. Countries like the UAE and Indian states such as Gujarat and Bihar have successfully imposed strict regulations on alcohol while fostering economic growth through alternative industries like tourism, technology, and manufacturing. Andhra Pradesh should enforce regulations while encouraging alternative economic opportunities.

Regulation and Accountability: Stricter regulations can curb excessive alcohol consumption. Implementing Aadhaar

verification for alcohol purchases can help monitor and control consumption. Rather than enforcing outright prohibition—which may encourage illegal sales—a regulated approach with stricter licensing criteria and reduced retail outlets can significantly lower alcohol consumption. Responsible policies can create a balanced framework prioritizing public health and safety.

Eliminating Freebies for Alcohol Consumers: Alcohol consumers should not qualify for government welfare programs intended for the needy. Many families suffer when welfare recipients prioritize alcohol over essentials like food,



Dr. Buragadda Srinadh

healthcare, and education. Implementing an Aadhaar-linked tracking system to monitor liquor purchases can prevent welfare misuse. Initial implementation in urban areas can set the stage for broader rural adoption. Public awareness campaigns must educate citizens about the financial and social consequences of alcohol misuse.

Exploring Alternative Revenue Sources: Many countries have successfully restricted alcohol while diversifying their economies. Indian states should adopt similar models, investing in sectors such as tourism, technology, and manufacturing rather than relying on al-

cohol revenue. This approach promotes long-term economic stability and benefits communities. Contradiction in Policies: The government's promotion of alcohol sales creates a paradox: while it profits from liquor sales, it simultaneously funds healthcare for alcohol-induced illnesses. This contradiction

highlights a lack of coherent public policy. Instead of addressing alcohol-related health crises reactively, governments should invest in prevention through awareness campaigns and education programs promoting healthier lifestyles. A preventive approach can reduce healthcare burdens and create a healthier society. Public Awareness on a War Footing: Governments should launch large-scale campaigns, similar to anti-smoking initiatives, to highlight alcohol's dangers. Schools, workplaces, and community organizations must be engaged in spreading awareness. Utilizing print and electronic media can amplify the message, encouraging healthier choices and reducing alcohol-related harm.

A Balanced Approach: If prohibition is not feasible, alternative measures can help curb alcohol consumption:

- Imposing higher taxes on alcohol.
- Restricting liquor licenses and reducing retail outlets.
- Regulating alcohol advertising to limit its influence.
- Encouraging economic alternatives to alcohol revenue.

Governments must move beyond short-term financial gains and embrace long-term strategies prioritizing public health. Restricting alcohol sales, enforcing strict regulations, and promoting alternative revenue sources can create a healthier, more prosperous society. Strong leadership and a commitment to public welfare can ensure sustainable development while reducing the devastating consequences of alcohol consumption.

- Author

Can the Real BRICS+ Please Stand Up?

For decades, the Western-led global order has dictated the rules of the game, often sidelining emerging economies despite their growing economic influence. However, with cracks forming in the transatlantic alliance and a shifting global balance of power, the BRICS+ bloc finds itself at a critical juncture. Will it finally step up as a geopolitical force, or will it remain an economic powerhouse with little political clout?

The West in Disarray—A Perfect Opening for BRICS+?

The U.S. decision to exclude Europe from peace talks with Russia over Ukraine stunned the continent, exposing a brutal truth—Europe had taken transatlantic unity for granted, assuming the U.S. would always have its back. When Trump doubled down, he not only praised Putin but pushed Ukraine towards a ceasefire, leaving European leaders scrambling. The European Parliament labeled this move “blackmail,” with even far-right lawmakers—usually Trump’s biggest supporters—condemning it.

This disarray presents an opportunity for BRICS+. The bloc, which expanded to ten members last year, has long been perceived as an alternative to Western dominance. Contrary to the West’s portrayal of BRICS as an anti-Western alliance, the group isn’t trying to dismantle the current order—it merely seeks a fair seat at the table. In its Kazan summit, BRICS didn’t demand the de-

struction of the Bretton Woods system but advocated for reforms that would make global finance more inclusive.

Yet, while BRICS+ has economic muscle, its political impact remains questionable. With the West fumbling, will BRICS seize the moment, or will it let another opportunity slip through its fingers?

BRICS+ By the Numbers—An Economic Powerhouse

Despite its political inertia, BRICS+ is an economic giant. It represents 3.6 billion people—nearly 47% of the global population. It accounts for 36% of global GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP), surpassing the G7’s 30%. By 2050, projections indicate BRICS+ will control half of global wealth production, while the G7’s share will shrink to 20%.

The bloc also dominates global trade, industrial production, and resource control:

- 38.3% of global industrial output
- 25% of global goods exports
- Nearly 40% of global infrastructure investments
- 54% of global oil production, 53% of natural gas reserves, and 40% of coal reserves
- Nearly 50% of global food production

Yet, despite these staggering figures, BRICS+ still struggles to assert itself in global institutions dominated by the West. It talks about reducing dependence on the IMF and World



Bank, yet lacks decisive action. **Bold Talk, Weak Action**

Russia’s Finance Minister Anton Siluanov recently proposed a BRICS alternative to the IMF and World Bank, complete with its own rating agency and commodities exchange. Yet, other BRICS+ members responded with ambiguity. While the bloc has its own New Development Bank (NDB) and has taken steps toward de-dollarisation, its commitment wavers under Western pressure. When Trump pushed back against de-dollarisation, BRICS nations quickly softened their stance, clarifying they weren’t aiming to replace the dollar—just “exploring options.”

This hesitation extends beyond finance. When major global crises unfold, BRICS+ often re-

mains silent, undermining its geopolitical credibility. Consider these missed opportunities:

- **Syria’s Political Vacuum:** When the Islamist militant group HTS toppled the Bashar al-Assad regime, Western powers swiftly backed a new coalition to reshape Syria. BRICS nations, despite their stance against Western interventionism, largely stayed on the sidelines instead of stepping in as a counterweight.
- **South Africa’s Diplomatic Snub:** When the U.S. abruptly expelled South Africa’s ambassador—citing vague accusations of anti-American sentiment—BRICS nations remained quiet. Trump has long accused South

Africa of mistreating its white minority, even offering U.S. citizenship as a political stunt. The real reason behind the expulsion? Many suspect South Africa’s legal challenge against Israel at the ICC. Despite being a founding BRICS member, South Africa received no vocal support from its allies.

Ukraine Conflict Mediation: While Trump has positioned himself as a broker for peace, Europe remains adamantly pro-war, amplifying fears over Russia. BRICS+ could have stepped up as a mediator, supporting diplomatic efforts rather than passively observing. Instead, it chose inaction.

A Test of Political Will

Trump’s return to the White House signals greater hostility toward BRICS. His “America First” approach dismisses multilateralism and openly challenges China and Russia—two key BRICS players. Economic restrictions and trade war threats are already in motion. The real question isn’t what Trump plans to do—it’s how BRICS will respond. Will BRICS+ finally assert itself as a global force, or will it continue to play second fiddle to Western economic institutions?

The Missing Element—A

Unified Geopolitical Strategy

Unlike NATO or the G7, BRICS lacks a common security framework, making it economically formidable but diplomatically weak. It has failed to act decisively in global conflicts, appearing passive rather than proactive.

To change this perception, BRICS+ must:

- **Strengthen the New Development Bank:** Increase funding and assert independence from Western-dominated financial institutions.
- **Accelerate De-dollarisation Efforts:** Move beyond rhetoric and expand local currency trade mechanisms.
- **Forge a Unified Political Front:** Move beyond economic ties and establish a cohesive geopolitical strategy.
- **Mediate Global Conflicts:** Act as a diplomatic counterweight rather than a passive observer.

BRICS+ at a Crossroads

The West’s influence is waning, and the transatlantic alliance is more fractured than ever. This should be BRICS’ moment to step up. Yet, if it continues to avoid difficult geopolitical battles, it risks becoming nothing more than an elite trade club—economically significant but politically irrelevant.

The world is shifting. The question is: will BRICS+ shift with it or let another defining moment pass it by?



Banking Bill Passed, Opposition Calls for Review

- Banking Bill passed, allows four nominees
- Strict action promised on bank frauds
- Loan write-offs not loan waivers
- Cooperative bank director tenure extended

Parliament on Wednesday passed the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, allowing bank account holders to nominate up to four individuals. The Bill had earlier been approved by the Lok Sabha in December 2024. While the government lauded the amendments as progressive, opposition members raised concerns and called for a more in-depth review of its implications. During the debate in the Rajya Sabha, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman emphasized the government's commitment to strengthening the banking sector. She noted that while non-performing assets (NPAs) have reduced significantly, stringent action against wilful defaulters remains a priority. She highlighted that in the past five years, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has taken up over 912 cases related to bank fraud, including those involving defaulters. Addressing concerns about loan write-offs, Sitharaman clarified that they do not equate to loan waivers, as banks continue efforts to recover outstanding amounts. She also underscored the robust performance of public sector banks, which

recorded their highest-ever profit of approximately ₹1.41 lakh crore in the last fiscal year. She expressed confidence that profitability would further increase in 2025-26. One of the major amendments in the Bill is the revision of the definition of "substantial interest" in a bank. The threshold, previously set at ₹5 lakh nearly six decades ago, has now been raised to ₹2 crore. Additionally, the Bill proposes increasing the tenure of directors (excluding the chairman and whole-time directors) in cooperative banks from eight years to ten years. This change aligns with the Constitution's Ninety-Seventh Amendment Act, 2011, and allows directors of Central Cooperative Banks to serve on State Cooperative Bank boards. The Bill also grants banks greater flexibility in deciding the remuneration of statutory auditors. More than 20 MPs participated in the four-hour discussion, with some arguing that the Bill does not fully address the evolving financial landscape. While the government defends it as a necessary reform, the opposition insists on a more thorough evaluation of its long-term impact.



GE Aerospace Delivers First F404 Engines for Tejas MK-1A Jets

After delays, American defense major GE Aerospace has delivered the first of 99 F404-IN20 engines to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk-1A program. These engines will power India's indigenously developed fighter jets, a key component of the Indian Air Force (IAF) fleet. HAL signed a ₹48,000 crore deal with the Indian defense ministry in 2021 for the production of 83 Tejas Mk-1A jets. The deliveries were scheduled to begin in March 2024 but were delayed, partly due to setbacks in engine supply. With the arrival of the engines, HAL is expected to begin handing over the aircraft to the IAF. The F404-IN20 engine, a custom design for India's single-engine fighter program, features the highest thrust in the F404 family, a higher-flow fan, and advanced single-crystal turbine blades. GE Aerospace has worked closely with HAL

over the years to tailor the engine for Tejas. GE initially supplied 65 F404-IN20 engines by 2016 but had to shut down its production line due to a lack of new orders. When HAL placed an order for 99 additional engines in 2021, GE faced challenges in restarting production, which had been dormant for five years. The COVID-19 pandemic further complicated the process. Now operational again, the production line will ensure a steady supply of engines. The Tejas aircraft, designed for air combat, offensive air support, reconnaissance, and anti-ship roles, is expected to become a mainstay of the IAF. Additionally, India's defense ministry has approved the procurement of 97 more Tejas jets, reinforcing the country's indigenous defense capabilities. GE Aerospace remains committed to maintaining high safety and quality standards as production ramps up.

"India-China Issues Manageable Through Diplomatic Efforts"

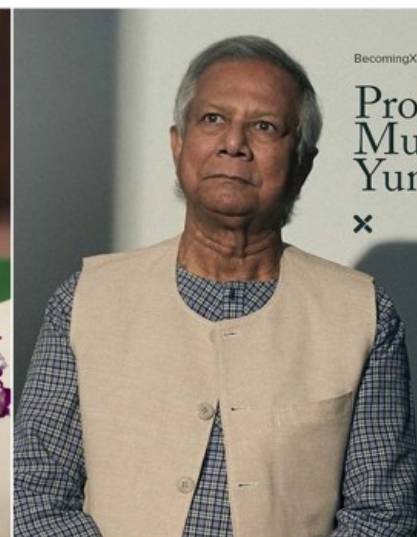
- India-China issues manageable without conflict
- Competition shouldn't escalate into disputes
- 2020 border clash strained relations
- October 2024 talks improved ties
- Diplomatic efforts aim for stability

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar acknowledged on Wednesday that India and China will continue to face challenges in their relationship in the foreseeable future. However, he emphasized that these issues can be managed through diplomatic channels and do not necessarily have to escalate into conflict. His remarks came a day after an Indian delegation held discussions with a Chinese team on cross-border cooperation during a border talks meeting. Speaking at an event organized by the Asia Society in New Delhi, Jaishankar underlined the importance of maintaining a balanced approach in handling the relationship between the two nations. "We have basically made two points: first, that differences should not become disputes, and second, that competition should not lead to conflict. We do compete on many issues, but competition alone should not be a reason for conflict between us. We are very realistic about this," Jaishankar said in his conversation with Kyung-wha Kang, President of the Asia Society. Reflecting on past events, he stated that while disputes are likely to persist between the two countries, there are diplomatic mechanisms in



place to address them. He also referred to the violent clash along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in 2020, which resulted in the loss of 20 Indian soldiers. He described the incident as a traumatic event that significantly affected bilateral relations. The 2020 border standoff led to a freeze in India-China ties, impacting multiple aspects, including trade, technology, air travel, and people-to-people exchanges. However, after four years of deadlock, both countries made progress in October 2024 by reaching an agreement on patrolling along certain friction points at the LAC. Jaishankar acknowledged that since

this agreement, the relationship between the two countries has shown signs of improvement. "Since October, we have seen some progress. What we are trying, step by step, is to see if we can rebuild and undo some of the damage that occurred as a result of the events in 2020," he said. Despite lingering tensions, India and China continue to engage in diplomatic dialogues, seeking ways to manage their differences while preventing conflicts. Jaishankar's statement highlights India's commitment to maintaining stability and fostering diplomatic solutions in its relationship with China.



PM Modi Calls for 'Mutual Sensitivity' in Ties with Dhaka

Amid ongoing tensions in India-Bangladesh relations over violence against minorities, Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his wishes to Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Mohammad Yunus and the people of Bangladesh on the occasion of their National Day on March 26. In his letter, Modi emphasized the importance of strengthening bilateral ties through mutual sensitivity to each other's concerns. In recent months, violence against minorities in Bangladesh has become a major point of contention. According to Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, between August 2024 and February 2025, over 2,374 incidents of violence targeting minorities were reported in Bangladesh. These incidents have created diplomatic challenges and raised concerns in India regarding the safety of minority communities in the neighboring country. Despite these challenges, Modi's message sought to reaffirm the strong historical and cultural ties between the two nations. He acknowledged Bangladesh's National Day as a moment to

reflect on the shared history and sacrifices that have shaped India-Bangladesh relations. "We remain committed to advancing this partnership, driven by our common aspirations for peace, stability, and prosperity, and based on mutual sensitivity to each other's interests and concerns," Modi stated in his message. India and Bangladesh share deep-rooted diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties, but recent tensions over minority rights have underscored the need for continued dialogue and cooperation. India has consistently advocated for the protection of minority communities in Bangladesh and has urged Dhaka to take necessary measures to prevent violence and ensure communal harmony. As both countries navigate these challenges, Modi's message on Bangladesh's National Day signals India's intent to maintain constructive engagement with its neighbor while addressing concerns through diplomatic channels. The focus remains on fostering a relationship built on trust, historical ties, and shared aspirations for regional peace and prosperity.



"Trump's Auto Tariffs: Impact on Indian Suppliers"

US President Donald Trump has announced a 25% tariff on auto imports, effective from April, with an additional 25% tariff on major automotive parts—including engines, transmissions, powertrain components, and electrical parts—set to be implemented by May. This move is expected to impact Indian auto component manufacturers more than vehicle manufacturers, according to industry experts. Prior to this decision, the US imposed nearly zero tariffs on imported automotive components. India's auto component exports to the US amounted to \$6.79 billion in FY24, while imports from the US were valued at \$1.4 billion with a 15% duty. With the new tariffs, Indian suppliers may face challenges in maintaining their competitiveness in the American market. An industry executive, speaking anonymously to PTI, noted that Indian automakers are unlikely to be significantly affected since there are no direct exports of fully built cars from India to the US. However, Indian auto component manufacturers, who play a crucial role in the global supply chain, are expected to bear the brunt of these tariffs. JATO Dynamics India President and Director Ravi G Bhatia stated that India has not been specifically targeted by these tariffs, which apply to multiple countries.

"Now It's Our Turn": Putin To Visit India, Accepts PM Modi's Invite

- Focus on a "special strategic partnership" beyond traditional ties.
- Targeting \$100 billion in annual trade, up from \$60 billion.
- Chennai-Vladivostok maritime corridor to boost economic cooperation.

TPN Correspondent | Moscow

Russia and India are working to elevate their bilateral relationship to unprecedented heights, with Russian President Vladimir Putin set to visit India soon, according to Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. In a televised address, Lavrov confirmed that preparations are underway for the highly anticipated visit, although he refrained from disclosing the exact dates.

Lavrov highlighted that this visit would be reciprocal, as Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first foreign trip to Russia after being re-elected for a third consecutive term. He noted that now it was Russia's turn to reciprocate the gesture. During his visit to Russia last year, Prime Minister Modi had invited President Putin for an official state visit, which Putin has accepted.



The visit is expected to further strengthen the longstanding relationship between the two countries.

This will be President Putin's first trip to India since the outbreak of

the Ukraine conflict in February 2022. The visit holds significant importance, as it will likely push forward Russia's "new economic roadmap" for 2030, which aims to enhance bilateral cooperation. India and Russia have set a target

to double their annual trade to over \$100 billion, a considerable increase from the current trade volume of around \$60 billion.

A critical component of this growing partnership is the expansion of trade routes, particularly through the Chennai-Vladivostok maritime trade corridor. This initiative will ensure fresh supplies from Russia to India, strengthening the economic ties between the two nations. Lavrov also emphasized that Russia is focused on redefining its relationship with India, aiming to develop a "special and privileged strategic partnership." This vision seeks to expand cooperation beyond traditional spheres, fostering greater collaboration in various sectors. The upcoming visit by President Putin is expected to be a key moment in cementing this enhanced partnership, marking a new chapter in Russia-India relations.



Japan Vows to Explore All Options in Response to U.S. 25% Tariff on Auto Imports

TPN Correspondent | Tokyo

Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba responded to the U.S. announcement of a 25% tariff on automobile imports by stating that Japan would consider "all options on the table" in addressing the issue. U.S. President Donald Trump revealed the tariff on imported cars and light trucks starting next week, marking a significant escalation in the global trade tensions that have been a hallmark of his administration.

In a statement to parliament on Thursday, Ishiba highlighted Japan's substantial investments in the United States, emphasizing that Japan is the largest investor in the U.S. "Japan is making significant investments in the United States and creating jobs," he noted. He also questioned the fairness of applying uniform tariffs to all countries, considering Japan's sizable contribution to the U.S. economy.

Ishiba's remarks reflect the concern that the new tariff could significantly impact Japan's economy, particularly its automobile industry. According to data from Japan's Ministry of Finance, automobiles made up 28.3% of Japan's total exports to the United States in 2024, the largest share of any export category. This heavy reliance on U.S. auto exports makes the potential tariffs a major economic challenge for Japan.

While Ishiba did not provide specific details on Japan's response, he assured that the government would prioritize Japan's national interests in deciding on the most effective course of action. "We need to consider what's best for Japan's national interest," he said. "We're putting all options on the table in considering the most effective response."

This announcement comes amid rising trade tensions between the U.S. and other global powers, and analysts suggest that Japan's auto industry could face significant setbacks from these new tariffs. The situation underscores the complexities of global trade relations and the economic implications of President Trump's protectionist policies.

"Not Closed All Doors": Iran Ready For Indirect Talks With US, Says Khamenei's Aide

TPN Correspondent | Dubai

Kamal Kharrazi, an adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, stated on Thursday that Tehran has not closed the door on resolving its disputes with the United States and is open to indirect negotiations. This shift in tone comes despite Iran's previous firm stance against U.S. President Donald Trump's ultimatum, which demanded a deal or military consequences.

Iran has long rejected Trump's warnings, with Khamenei labeling them deceptive and Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi insisting that talks are impossible unless the U.S. alters its "maximum pressure" policy. However, Kharrazi's comments, made to the semi-official Iranian Students News Agency, indicate that Iran is willing to explore indirect talks to evaluate the U.S. position, present its own conditions, and ultimately make a decision based on those discussions.

The backdrop of this development includes the fallout from Trump's 2018 decision to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear deal, an agreement aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. Following the U.S. withdrawal, Iran began exceeding the deal's restrictions, particularly in its uranium enrichment program, leading to heightened concerns from Western powers about Tehran's potential to develop nuclear weapons.

While the U.S. insists that Iran's nuclear ambitions are geared toward weaponization, Iran maintains that its nuclear program is for peaceful civilian energy purposes.

"Vladimir Putin Will Die Soon": Zelensky Claims Amid Health Rumours

TPN Correspondent | Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has made a bold statement, claiming that Russian President Vladimir Putin "will die soon" and that this will bring an end to the ongoing war between their nations. Zelensky's remarks were made during an interview with European journalists on March 26 in Paris, amid continuing rumors about Putin's health. His comments come as tensions remain high between Ukraine and Russia, and as the world watches closely for signs of a resolution to the conflict.

Zelensky's statement follows a significant development in the war, with Russia and Ukraine agreeing to a partial ceasefire brokered by the United States, aimed at limiting attacks on energy infrastructure and hostilities in the Black Sea. In return, the U.S. agreed to allow Russia expanded



access to global markets. Zelensky stressed that it was crucial for the U.S. to avoid helping Putin escape his international isolation, calling it one of the "most dangerous moments" in the conflict.

During the interview, Zelensky suggested that Putin's ambitions go beyond Ukraine, warning that the Russian leader could seek

"direct confrontation with the West." He also expressed concern that Putin is trying to drive a wedge between Europe and the United States, but emphasized the importance of a united Western front in maintaining pressure on Russia.

Zelensky further discussed Putin's own fears, including his apparent

anxiety over his mortality, which he believes is affecting his decision-making. "He will die soon, that is a fact, and everything will be over," Zelensky said, adding that the end of Putin's leadership would likely lead to a resolution of the war.

While expressing gratitude for U.S. support in the conflict, Zelensky also accused Washington of being influenced by Russian narratives surrounding the war. He reiterated that Ukraine is fighting for its own survival and must continue to push back against misleading narratives, insisting that the only way forward is to reveal the truth through action and continued resistance.

The war, which began with Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, has resulted in Russia occupying about 20% of Ukraine's territory, with ongoing battles along a 1,000 km frontline.

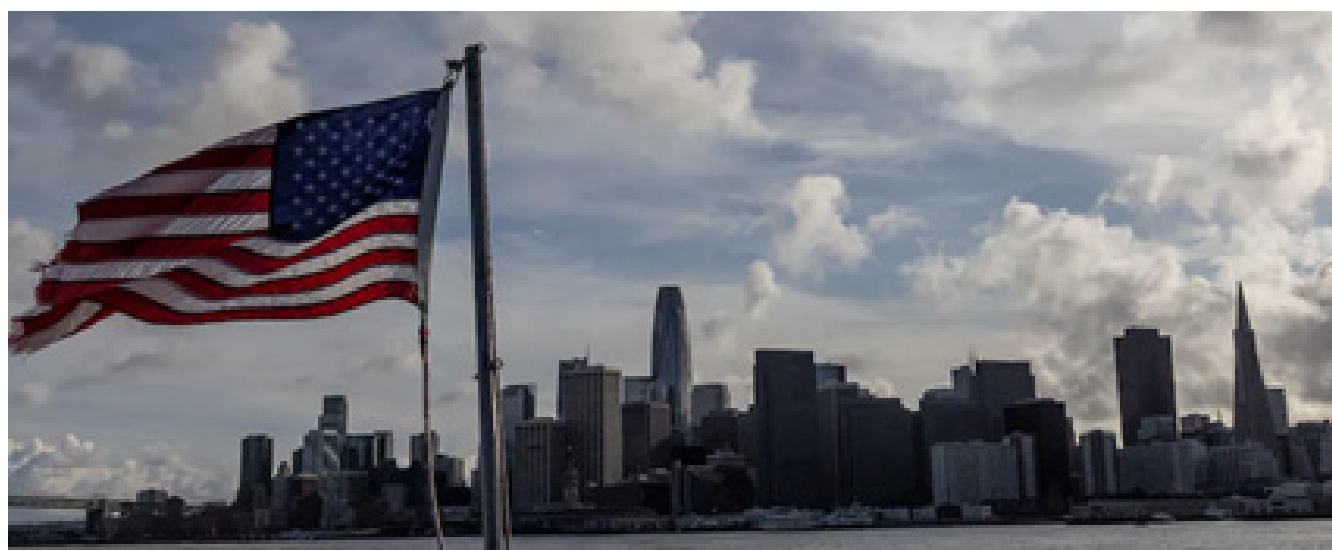
"Have Zero Tolerance": US Cancels 2,000 Visa Appointments By "Bots" In India

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The US Embassy in India has cancelled over 2,000 visa applications following the detection of fraud-related activities involving bots and other "bad actors." On Wednesday, the embassy confirmed that it had identified major violations in its appointment scheduling system and suspended the accounts of those responsible.

"Consular Team India is cancelling about 2,000 visa appointments made by bots. We have zero tolerance for agents and fixers that violate our scheduling policies," the embassy stated in a post on X. It added that all affected appointments have been cancelled and the associated accounts' scheduling privileges have been suspended with immediate effect.

The issue comes amid significant backlogs in visa applications, especially for B1 and B2 visas, which are for business and tourism purposes. The waiting times for these visas had reached up to 1,000 days in



2022-23. In response, the US began offering visa appointments for Indian applicants in cities like Frankfurt and Bangkok.

The visa delays have been a longstanding concern, prompting External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to raise the issue with US officials. In 2022, during a meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Jaishankar was told that the de-

lays were a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The issue was revisited in January 2024 when Jaishankar discussed it with US Senator Marco Rubio, noting the negative impact of long waiting periods on India-US relations.

Beyond business and tourism visas, student visa rejections have also increased sharply. During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the US received 6.79

lakh applications for F-1 student visas but rejected 2.79 lakh, resulting in a rejection rate of 41%. This marks a significant rise from the 36% rejection rate in 2022. In contrast, in 2014, the rejection rate was just 15%. Reports indicate that Indian students faced a 38% drop in visa approvals in 2024 compared to the previous year, further impacting the flow of international students to the US.

Markets Rebound Strongly; Nifty & Sensex Recover from Previous Losses



Domestic stock markets gained heavily on Thursday. They recovered somewhat from yesterday's losses. The benchmark indices gained from the beginning due to mixed signals from global markets, India's negotiations with the US on tariffs, aggressiveness in bank and finance shares, and the arrival of foreign institutional investors. However, auto shares were shaken after Trump announced that he would impose tariffs on foreign cars. It is noteworthy that the indices are currently above the 100 dema level. In total, the Nifty rose by 105 points and the Sensex by 317 points.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 77,288 in the previous session, opened at 77,087 on Thursday. It touched an intraday low of 77,082. It reached an intraday high of 77,747. Finally,

it closed at 77,606 with a gain of 317 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,433, touched a low of 23,412 and a high of 23,646. It closed at 23,591, up 105 points. The Nifty Bank rose 366 points to settle at 51,575.

In the Nifty50, 35 companies gained and 15 lost. PSU bank, media, energy, oil, realty, PSE, commodities, CPSE, finance, bank, metal, infra shares rose. Auto, pharma, healthcare shares were under selling pressure. Hero Moto, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd, Adani Enterprises, HDFC Life were the top gainers. Tata Motors, Sun Pharma, Eicher Motors, Bharti Airtel and Kotak Bank were the top losers.

Market breadth on NSE was evenly balanced between buyers and sellers. Out of 2978 stocks traded, 1382 gained and 1537 lost. 24 stocks touched 52-

week highs. 325 stocks touched 52-week lows. 69 stocks touched the upper circuit and 198 stocks touched the lower circuit.

Rupee weakened marginally against dollar to settle at 85.78. Bharat Forge signs deal with Duma Engineering to set up joint venture in Spain. Nomura has given a buy rating to Ashok Leyland with a target price of Rs 250. JP Morgan maintains overweight rating on Hindustan Aeronautics with a target price of Rs 4958. BEML shares rose 13% on the announcement of setting up a mining equipment plant in Chhattisgarh. Adani Energy Solutions rose to its highest level in 18 weeks today. Macquarie has given an outperform rating to Trent with a target price of Rs 7000. Motilal Oswal has given a buy rating to HDFC AMC with a target price of Rs 4800. Gen Tech company has received an order of Rs 152 crore from the Ministry of Defense. Lupin, Zydus Life and other pharma shares have fallen due to fears of Trump tariffs. Bluestar is reported to be increasing the prices of room air conditioners by 4-5 percent from April. Motilal Oswal has given a Buy rating to Five Star Finance with a target price of Rs 900.

1. Thermax Ltd.
Thermax is a leading provider of energy and environmental solutions. With India's focus on green energy and industrial efficiency, Thermax is well-po-



sitioned for long-term growth. The company is expanding its renewable energy and waste heat recovery projects, which align with government policies on sustainability. It has maintained stable revenue growth, and its order book remains strong. With rising industrialization and infrastructure investments, Thermax is expected to deliver consistent returns over the next decade.

2. IPCA Laboratories Ltd.
IPCA Labs is a well-established name in the Indian pharmaceutical sector, specializing in generics, APIs, and formulations. It has strong international exposure, particularly in the US and Europe. Despite short-term challenges from price erosion and regulatory hurdles, IPCA's R&D investments and focus on specialty drugs should drive future growth. The company has been increasing its share in the domestic and global markets, making it a solid long-term investment.



3. Fortis Healthcare Ltd.
Fortis Healthcare is one of India's largest hospital chains, benefiting from the rising demand for quality healthcare services. The company has been expanding its network and improving operational efficiency, leading to better profit margins. With increas-



ing healthcare spending in India, Fortis is expected to grow steadily. Investors looking for defensive stocks in the healthcare sector should consider Fortis for long-term holdings.

4. JK Cement Ltd.
JK Cement has been growing steadily due to strong infrastructure and housing demand in India. With the government's continued push for infrastructure projects and affordable housing, cement demand is expected to stay high. The company has been expanding production capacity, improving efficiency, and focusing on premium cement products, which should enhance profitability in the coming years.



5. Hero MotoCorp Ltd.
Hero MotoCorp remains India's largest two-wheeler manufacturer, but it faces competition from EV players and premium motorcycle brands. However, the company has been making strides in the electric vehicle (EV) segment with its Vida brand. If it successfully transitions into the EV space while maintaining dominance in commuter bikes, Hero MotoCorp could remain a key player in the long run.



Tata Motors Raises ₹2,000 Crore Through Private Placement of NCDs Amid Market Setback



Tata Motors, a leading blue-chip auto company, announced on Thursday, March 27, that its board had approved the allotment of 2,00,000 non-convertible debentures (NCDs) worth ₹2,000 crore on a private placement basis. This move is part of the company's ongoing efforts to bolster its financial position.

The company detailed in a filing that the Board constituted Committee approved the allotment of the NCDs, each with a face value of ₹1,00,000. The NCDs will be issued in multiple series/tranches and are set to be listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE). The debentures have been assigned an AA+/Stable rating by Crisil, indicating their relatively low risk.

The allotment was made across three tranches. In Tranche I, 50,000 NCDs were allocated to HDFC Bank, while Tranche II saw allocations of 10,000 NCDs to Reliance General Insurance Company and 60,000 NCDs to BNP Paribas. Tranche III involved the issuance of 2,500 NCDs to Care Health Insur-

ance, 52,500 NCDs to HDFC Bank, 5,000 NCDs to Reliance General Insurance Company, and 20,000 NCDs to SBI Short Term Debt Fund.

The company had earlier approved the issuance of these NCDs with a coupon rate of 7.65% on March 19.

Despite this positive fundraising update, Tata Motors faced significant challenges in the stock market. Its shares saw a sharp decline, dropping as much as 6.5% during the trading session, and settling at ₹668.60, a 5.56% drop from the previous day's close. The slump came after US President Donald Trump announced the imposition of 25% tariffs on all imported cars and auto parts, effective from April 2. This development is particularly concerning for Tata Motors, as the US is a key market for its Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) luxury cars, which could face higher costs due to the tariffs.

This setback is compounded by a slowdown in domestic sales, adding further pressure to the company's stock performance.

India to Double Investment Cap for Foreign Individual Investors to 10%

India's central bank is poised to raise the investment cap for individual foreign investors in listed Indian companies from 5% to 10%. This move is aimed at boosting foreign capital inflows, following a significant outflow of over \$28 billion from Indian stocks since September, driven by factors such as high valuations, poor earnings, and concerns over U.S. tariffs.

In response to this outflow, India is expanding investment benefits that were previously restricted to overseas Indians, while also increasing the limits for foreign investors. Senior government officials and documents reviewed by Reuters revealed that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is pushing for the implementation of these changes as soon as possible to address disruptions in capital inflows from the external sector.

As part of these reforms, foreign individual investors will be allowed to



invest up to 10% in any listed Indian company, up from the previous 5% cap that applied only to non-resident Indians (NRIs) and overseas citizens of India (OCIs) under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). Additionally, the combined holding limit for all foreign individual investors in an Indian listed company will increase from 10% to 24%, officials stated. These changes are still under discussion between the government, the RBI,

and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). However, SEBI has expressed concerns about monitoring compliance with foreign investment limits. The market regulator has warned that a single foreign investor or their associates could hold a stake greater than 34%, potentially triggering takeover rules, which would require an open offer for shares held by retail investors.

The government and regulators are currently evaluating these concerns and working on streamlining the rules to prevent potential regulatory arbitrage by foreign investors. Once the rules are finalized, they are expected to facilitate increased foreign investment in Indian listed companies, which is seen as crucial to support the country's economic growth.

Auto stocks slump on Trump tariff; Tata Motors tanks over 6%

Auto stocks saw significant declines on Thursday, March 27, 2025, with Tata Motors leading the fall, plunging over 6% after U.S. President Donald Trump announced the imposition of a 25% tariff on auto imports starting in April. Shares of Tata Motors dropped 6.58%, closing at ₹661.35 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). Other auto companies also faced downward pressure, with Ashok Leyland falling by 4.60%, Mahindra & Mahindra dipping 1.70%, Bajaj Auto slipping 1.48%, and Apollo Tyres losing 1.41%. The BSE auto index was down by 0.86%, settling at 48,286.47.

Auto components and equipment firms also saw losses, with Samvardhana Motherson International declining by 7.59%, Sona BLW Precision Forgings fall-

ing 6.69%, Bharat Forge slipping 4.28%, and ASK Automotive Ltd dropping by 1.82%. The negative reaction was largely attributed to Trump's decision to impose a 25% duty on all car imports to the U.S., a move expected to significantly impact Tata Motors, which exports a large portion of its Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) vehicles to the U.S. V.K. Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited, noted that Tata Motors would be directly affected by these tariffs, given its reliance on U.S. exports for its luxury car brand. In addition to the auto tariffs, Trump also announced that further 25% tariffs would be levied on major automotive parts, including engines, transmissions, and electrical components, starting in



May. These tariffs are expected to add more pressure to auto-related stocks and the broader industry. Despite the challenges in the auto sector, the broader equity market showed resilience. The BSE Sensex rose 427.54 points to reach 77,716.04, and the NSE Nifty climbed 135.30 points to settle at 23,622.15, recovering from early losses.

“Instagram Removes Content Notes Feature for Low Engagement”

Instagram has decided to discontinue its Content Notes feature for posts and Reels due to low user adoption. The feature, introduced in July 2024, allowed users to add temporary notes to their individual posts, photo carousels, and Reels. These notes were visible only to followers for a period of three days. Despite the initial aim of making Instagram a more interactive and social platform, the feature did not gain significant traction among users, prompting its removal. Instagram head Adam Mosseri announced the decision in a post, stating that the company introduced Content Notes to enhance engagement and create a fun way for users to share additional context on their posts. However, as the feature failed to attract widespread usage, Instagram has decided to discontinue it for posts and Reels. While the platform regularly tests new tools and features to improve the user experience, not all experiments resonate with the community. The removal of Content Notes is part of Instagram’s ongoing process of refining its offerings based on user behavior and feedback.



Despite its discontinuation for posts and Reels, the Content Notes feature will remain available in Instagram DMs. In this space, the feature might still serve as a useful tool for users who want to share quick, temporary updates with friends. Instagram has not disclosed whether it plans to enhance or modify Content Notes in DMs to encourage more engagement. This decision aligns with Instagram’s broader strategy of focusing on features that drive high engagement. Over the years, the platform has introduced and removed several features based on user reception. Some tools gain popularity and become inte-

gral to the app, while others do not achieve the desired impact and are eventually phased out. The removal of Content Notes reflects Instagram’s adaptability in responding to user preferences and prioritizing features that contribute to a more engaging social experience. As Instagram continues evolving, users can expect further refinements to existing features and the introduction of new tools aimed at enhancing interaction. While Content Notes did not gain widespread acceptance, Instagram remains committed to exploring innovative ways to improve user engagement and keep the platform dynamic.

Nissan Unveils Plans for Duster-Based SUV and Triber-Based MPV in India

Nissan India has announced the launch of two new models for the Indian market, including a C-segment SUV based on the Renault Duster and a 7-seater MPV derived from the Renault Triber. These additions will expand Nissan’s lineup, which currently includes the Magnite and X-Trail. The Renault Duster has long been a popular SUV in international markets, and rumors of a Nissan counterpart for India have persisted. With the latest teaser image, speculation has intensified regarding Nissan’s version of the Duster-based SUV. This model will compete in the highly competitive mid-size SUV segment, currently dominated by the Hyundai Creta, Kia Seltos, Maruti Suzuki Grand Vitara, Honda Elevate, Skoda Kushaq, and Volkswagen Taigun. Based on the teaser, the upcoming SUV will have a strong and muscular design similar to the latest-generation Duster. The vehicle will feature a flat front fascia, a robust bonnet, and an elegant grille adorned with the Nissan badge. Additionally, inverted L-shaped DRLs

will flank the grille, while the bumper will incorporate silver elements for a more premium look. On the other hand, the Triber-based MPV will be Nissan’s answer to the growing demand for affordable 7-seater vehicles in India. As Renault prepares to introduce a facelifted version of the Triber, Nissan will utilize this updated iteration as the base for its new MPV. The teaser suggests that Nissan’s version will have a more sporty and aggressive design, with larger headlights, prominent DRLs, and a massive grille. The front bumper will feature a refreshed look

with C-shaped silver elements at the lower end, adding a unique touch to the vehicle. Both upcoming models will share their platforms with Renault vehicles but are expected to offer distinct styling elements to differentiate them. With the launch of these two new models, Nissan aims to strengthen its presence in the Indian automotive market by catering to growing demand in both the SUV and MPV segments. More details, including specifications and launch timelines, are expected to be revealed in the coming months.



Digital Creator Calls Chikoo an ‘Exotic Potato,’ Internet Bursts Into Laughter

Social media is no stranger to viral food content, but sometimes, creators unknowingly spark hilarious reactions. Recently, a digital content creator’s unique take on chikoo (sapodilla) has left the internet in splits. Instagram vlogger Sweetie Craft shared a video in which she discovered chikoo and mistakenly called it an “exotic potato.” Her amusing confusion quickly gained traction, with many desis finding the comparison both absurd and hilarious. In the viral clip, the creator expresses her surprise at the fruit being consumed raw. She closely examines it and describes its flesh as a “slightly slimy orange,” noting its soft texture. She then compares the taste to a “pear in syrup,” attempting to explain its sweetness to her audience.

While the comparison of chikoo to a potato may seem far-fetched, her reasoning is based on their similar brown skin, small round shape, and slightly rough texture. However, for those familiar with the fruit, this unexpected description was nothing short of comedic. The video quickly gained attention, with Instagram users flooding the comments section with witty remarks. One user humorously remarked, “I have never seen a chikoo insulted so badly!” Others joked about how ordinary Indian foods often get rebranded with fancy names or misunderstood by those unfamiliar with them. Some even suggested that chikoo might start trending internationally as an “exotic fruit” after this unexpected misidentification. Despite the play-

ful trolling, the video also unintentionally introduced chikoo to a wider audience. Many users, particularly those from countries where sapodilla is uncommon, expressed curiosity about the fruit. Some even mentioned that they would love to try it after seeing her unique reaction. This incident highlights how food content can sometimes lead to surprising and humorous cultural exchanges. While the internet laughed at the “exotic potato” comparison, it also served as a reminder of how different foods can be perceived across cultures. Whether seen as a sweet tropical fruit or mistaken for a potato, chikoo has now found its way into global conversations, all thanks to a viral video.



OpenAI Restricts ChatGPT’s New Image Generation Tool to Paid Users

OpenAI has decided to limit access to ChatGPT’s latest image-generation feature to paid users, despite initially planning to make it available for free-tier users as well. The company cited overwhelming popularity as the reason behind this decision, stating that demand far exceeded their expectations. The image-generation tool, powered by OpenAI’s advanced GPT-4o model, was expected to be accessible to all users. However, on Monday, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman announced on X (formerly Twitter) that the rollout for free users would be delayed. In his post, he acknowledged the unexpectedly high demand, stating, “Images in ChatGPT are wayyyy more popular than we expected (and we had pretty high expectations). Rollout to our free tier is unfortunately going to be delayed for a while.” As of now, only users subscribed to ChatGPT Plus or Pro can access

the new image-generation feature. The Plus subscription is priced at \$20 per month, while the Pro plan costs \$200. This means that free-tier users will have to wait indefinitely before they can use the tool, as OpenAI has not provided a timeline for its availability. Locking features behind a paywall is not uncommon in the tech industry. Many companies implement similar strategies when a tool or service becomes highly popular, requiring additional resources to maintain. OpenAI’s decision follows this trend, prioritizing premium users while limiting access for those on the free plan. The image-generation tool has

gained significant attention for its ability to produce stunning, high-quality visuals, including artistic renderings in styles reminiscent of Studio Ghibli. Given its capabilities, many users were eager to try it out, making the restriction a disappointment for those who had anticipated its free release. For now, OpenAI remains focused on managing the demand and ensuring a smooth experience for its paying customers. While there is hope that free users will eventually gain access, the company has not confirmed when or if the feature will be made available without a subscription.



OpenAI Restricts ChatGPT’s New Image Generation Tool to Paid Users

A picturesque village in northern Italy’s Trentino province is offering an irresistible opportunity for those looking to start anew in the Italian countryside. In a bid to revive its dwindling rural population, the government is offering a free house along with a financial grant of Rs 92.7 lakh. However, there’s a condition attached to this tempting offer. Across the world, declining populations have led to entire villages becoming abandoned, particularly in countries like Japan and Italy. Many residents have migrated to bustling urban centers, leaving behind once-thriving communities that are now struggling to survive. To address this, various governments have introduced schemes to attract new settlers. Italy has previously gained attention for its €1 home initiatives, but this latest relocation package is even more generous. Accord-



ing to a CNN report, the Trentino province—also known as the Autonomous Province of Trento—is rolling out a new scheme to attract people to its sparsely populated villages. The government is offering a total of €100,000 (approximately Rs 92.7 lakh) to those willing to settle in one of the designated areas. This financial aid is split into two parts: €80,000 (around Rs 74.2 lakh) is allocated for home renovations, while €20,000 (approximately Rs 18.5 lakh) is meant for purchasing a property. This initiative aims to breathe new life into rural areas by encouraging people to invest in and restore

old homes. While the offer is attractive, applicants must meet certain conditions. The primary requirement is that those who accept the package must commit to making the village their permanent residence. This means moving to the region full-time and integrating into the local community. Italy has long been known for its creative efforts to combat depopulation, with various towns launching schemes to sell homes at extremely low prices to attract new residents. However, this offer from Trentino stands out due to the significant financial support provided.

LSG Dominates SRH with a Comprehensive Five-Wicket Victory



In a thrilling encounter at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad, Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) cruised to a comfortable five-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in their IPL 2025 clash. Despite SRH posting a competitive total of 190/9, LSG chased it down in just 16.1 overs, thanks to a stunning display of batting from Nicholas Pooran and Mitchell Marsh.

Pooran's blistering knock of 70 off 26 balls, coupled with Marsh's brilliant 52 off 31, made light work of the target. The pair ensured LSG reached the target with plenty of overs to spare, demonstrating their dominance throughout the chase. Their aggressive batting effectively nullified any threat posed by SRH's bowlers, leaving them with no answer to the onslaught.

Earlier in the game, SRH's batting efforts were stymied by a brilliant performance from LSG's Shardul Thakur, who was the standout bowler. Thakur claimed 4 wickets for just 34 runs in his four overs, providing the early breakthroughs that put SRH on the back foot. His twin dismissals in the 3rd over, where he removed Abhishek Sharma and Ishan Kishan off consecutive de-

liveries, rocked SRH's top order. However, Travis Head's explosive knock of 47 off 28 balls kept SRH in the game. His attacking approach put the LSG bowlers under pressure, but Head's dismissal by Prince Yadav shifted the momentum in favor of LSG. The SRH innings faltered further when Aniket Verma's 26 off 13 balls and captain Pat Cummins' cameo of 18 off 4 were not

enough to provide the finishing kick. While SRH's quick-scoring strategy gave them some hope, LSG's bowlers executed their plans well, with Shardul Thakur's crucial spell ensuring that SRH's total was kept within reach. LSG's clinical chase was powered by Pooran and Marsh, securing them a dominant win and further cementing their position in the IPL 2025 standings.

Jessica Pegula Defeats Emma Raducanu to Set Miami Semifinal Clash with Alexandra Eala



Jessica Pegula, the fourth seed from the United States, has secured her place in the semifinals of the Miami Open with a hard-fought 6-4, 6-7(3), 6-2 victory over British star Emma Raducanu. Pegula advanced to her third Miami semifinal in the past four years, overcoming Raducanu for the second time in their three career meetings. The match was a rollercoaster, as Pegula appeared to have control after taking the first set and leading 5-2 in the second. However, Raducanu mounted

a resilient comeback, saving four set points and forcing a tiebreak, which she won 7-3 to level the match. Despite receiving medical treatment during a humid Miami evening, Raducanu continued to fight hard. In the decisive third set, Pegula took an early break of serve and never looked back. Raducanu's only opportunity to break Pegula's serve came early in the third game, but the American held firm and won the final eight points to close out the match. With the victory, Pegula

notched her 19th win of the season. Next up, Pegula will face 19-year-old Alexandra Eala, a wild card entry from the Philippines, in the semifinals. Eala has had a fairytale run at the tournament, upsetting World No. 2 Iga Swiatek in the quarterfinals and defeating three Grand Slam champions to reach her first career tour-level semifinal. While Pegula is the favorite on paper, she won't underestimate her young opponent, who has been in sensational form.

Rohit Sharma To Opt Out Of England Tests



Indian cricket team captain, Rohit Sharma, is reportedly set to opt out of the upcoming Test series against England due to his recent struggles in red-ball cricket. According to India Today, sources have confirmed that Rohit has already made the decision. His poor form during the recent Test series against Australia, where he scored just 31 runs in three matches, appears to have influenced his choice. In fact, Rohit even dropped himself for the final game of the series in Sydney. Despite his absence, former captain Virat Kohli is expected to retain his place in the squad for the se-

ries against England. Meanwhile, some of India's key players may feature in the 'A' squad, which will play two four-day matches against the Lions in the May-June window to prepare for the upcoming Test series. India's 45-day tour of England will begin on June 20 with the first Test at Headingley. The team aims to secure their first away series win in England since 2007. As part of their preparation, India 'A' will play the first four-day match at The Spitfire Ground in Canterbury, starting May 30, followed by the second match at the County Ground in Northampton on June 6.

IPL 2025: RCB Eyeing Batting Performance to Break 17-Year Jinx Against CSK



Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) will look to their experienced batting lineup to break a 17-year jinx when they take on Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in their IPL 2025 clash at Chepauk on Friday. RCB has only defeated CSK once in Chennai, back in the inaugural 2008 season. The only player from the current RCB squad who was part of that victory is Virat Kohli, and he will be eager to repeat the feat. However, defeating CSK at home is no easy task. The Chennai franchise has consistently excelled on their home turf, aided by a pitch that benefits spinners. CSK's spin department is formidable, including Ravindra Jadeja, Ravichandran Ashwin (who returned via last year's auction), and Afghanistan's Noor Ahmad. These spinners combined for an impressive per-

formance against Mumbai Indians recently, bowling 11 overs for just 70 runs and claiming five wickets. RCB's batters, led by Kohli, will need to adjust to the spinning conditions at Chepauk. Kohli, known for his struggles against spin in the past, has made significant strides in his game over the last couple of years. His increased willingness to play sweep shots will be crucial as he leads RCB's charge against the spin-heavy CSK attack. While Kohli will play a pivotal role, he will need strong support from the rest of RCB's batting unit, including Phil Salt, Rajat Patidar, Liam Livingstone, and Jitesh Sharma. Given the nature of the pitch, RCB might consider bringing in his left-arm spin option, possibly replacing Tim David.

India Drawn With Thailand, Mongolia and Iraq in AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers

The Indian senior women's football team has been drawn into Group B for the AFC Women's Asian Cup Australia 2026 Qualifiers. The group, revealed on Thursday during a draw held at the AFC House in Kuala Lumpur, will see India

compete against Thailand, Mongolia, Timor Leste, and Iraq. Thailand will host the qualifiers for Group B, which will take place in a centralised single round-robin format from June 23 to July 5, 2025. The top team from this

group will earn a spot in the final tournament, which is scheduled to be held in Australia from March 1 to 26, 2026, across three host cities. The qualification tournament has a lot at stake as the group winners, along

with top teams from other groups, will vie for one of the coveted spots in the final tournament. Additionally, the tournament will serve as a



qualifier for the FIFA Women's World Cup Brazil 2027, with the top six teams securing their place in the global event.



Ram Charan's Fierce Transformation Sets the Screen Ablaze



Global star Ram Charan is all set to mesmerize audiences with his upcoming Pan India film PEDDI, directed by Buchi Babu Sana. Backed by Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings as presenters, the film is produced by Venkata Satish Kilaru under the Vriddhi Cinemas banner. On the occasion of Ram Charan's birthday, the much-anticipated title and first-look posters were unveiled, setting social media abuzz.

The film's title, PEDDI, signifies a deep-rooted connection to rural life, promising an intense, high-stakes narrative. The first-look poster showcases Ram Charan in a never-seen-before rugged avatar. With long hair, an unkempt beard, a nose

ring, and a cigar between his lips, he delivers a piercing, fierce stare that exudes raw intensity. This dramatic transformation has already captured the imagination of fans worldwide. A second poster further intensifies the intrigue, depicting Ram Charan gripping an old cricket bat in the middle of a rustic village stadium. The backdrop hints at the film's unique blend of intense rural drama, high-octane action, and raw emotions, setting the stage for an unforgettable cinematic experience. The film boasts an ensemble cast, featuring Kannada superstar Shiva Rajkumar and Bollywood sensation Janhvi Kapoor in pivotal roles. With such a star-studded lineup, PEDDI is shaping up to be one of the most

anticipated films of the year. Adding to the excitement is the film's stellar technical team, comprising Academy Award-winning music director AR Rahman, renowned cinematographer R. Rathnavelu ISC, acclaimed editor Navin Nooli, and skilled production designer Avinash Kolla. Their collective expertise promises to elevate PEDDI into a visual and auditory spectacle. With Ram Charan's intense transformation, a gripping storyline, and a powerhouse team behind it, PEDDI is poised to leave an indelible mark on Indian cinema. As anticipation continues to build, all eyes are on this ambitious project, eager to witness the magic unfold on the big screen.

L2: Empuraan Review – High on Style, Low on Substance

Review:
Story:

Kerala Chief Minister Jathin Ramdas (Tovino Thomas) decides to part ways with his political party and align with Baba Bajrangi (Abhimanyu Singh), also known as Balaraj, much to the disapproval of his sister, Priyadarshini Ramdas (Manju Warriar). Meanwhile, Stephen Nedumpally (Mohanlal), aka Khureshi Ab'raam, returns to set things straight, but his global affairs and a conflict with the drug cartel Kabooga complicate matters. How does his return affect Kerala's politics? What is his rivalry with Balaraj? The film unravels these elements.

Plus Points:

Prithviraj Sukumaran presents L2: Empuraan on a grand scale, delivering high-quality visuals and large-scale action sequences. Mohanlal's screen presence is a major asset, with his silent yet powerful performance being a treat for fans. The forest fight sequence and the church battle scene are standout moments. Manju Warriar delivers a



strong performance, and Prithviraj, though having limited screen time, is decent in his role. The film's visual appeal is impressive, with Sujith Vaassudev's cinematography bringing grandeur to the action sequences. The Hollywood-style execution elevates the spectacle.

Minus Points:

Despite its stylish presentation, the film lacks a compelling narrative. The screenplay prioritizes character elevations over storytelling, making it feel stretched. Murali Gopy's writing falls short of the depth expected from a Lucifer sequel. The excessive

runtime and slow pacing dilute the impact of well-crafted moments. Too many underdeveloped characters and multiple subplots create confusion rather than intrigue. The pre-climax and climax transitions feel predictable and lack punch.

Verdict:L2: Empuraan is visually stunning but lacks gripping storytelling. While Mohanlal's presence is a highlight, the slow pace, weak character development, and lengthy runtime hinder its appeal. Unless you're a hardcore Mohanlal fan, temper your expectations before watching.

Japanese Fans Surprise NTR with Heartfelt Gesture!

Cinema is a powerful medium that transcends boundaries, inspiring and connecting people across the globe. This was evident when a Japanese fan made a heartwarming revelation about learning Telugu after watching the global blockbuster RRR, starring NTR and Ram Charan. Directed by the visionary SS Rajamouli, RRR became a phenomenon, elevating Telugu cinema to the world stage. NTR is in Japan to promote his highly anticipated film Devara, directed by Koratala Siva. During his visit, he has been receiving an outpouring of love from Jap-



anese fans and audiences, who have embraced him with overwhelming admiration. However, one particular moment stood out and touched the actor deeply. During a fan interaction, a Japanese admirer shared that she had learned Telugu after being captivated by RRR. The fan ex-

pressed how the film's storytelling, performances, and cultural richness inspired her to explore and understand the Telugu language. This heartfelt revelation moved NTR, who, as a passionate lover of cinema and languages, was deeply touched by the influence of Indian films in bridging cultures and fostering connections worldwide. The emotional interaction reinforced the global impact of Indian cinema, showcasing how stories rooted in culture and emotion can inspire audiences beyond linguistic and geographical barriers.

Salman Khan Opens Up About Delay in Atlee's Film



Bollywood superstar Salman Khan is gearing up for the grand release of his high-budget action entertainer, Sikandar, set to hit theaters on March 30. Directed by acclaimed Kollywood filmmaker AR Murugadoss, the film also stars Rashmika Mandanna and Kajal Aggarwal in pivotal roles.

During a promotional event in Mumbai, Salman interacted with the Bollywood media, where he was inevitably asked about his much-anticipated collaboration with Tamil director Atlee, known for the blockbuster Jawan starring Shah Rukh Khan. Addressing the buzz, Salman revealed that Atlee had penned an ambitious big-budget action film. However, the project has been delayed due to financial constraints. Adding intrigue, Salman hinted that one of the legendary stars, Rajinikanth or Kamal Haasan, would be involved whenever the film takes off. In a surprise announcement, Salman shared

that after Sikandar, he would be joining forces with his "elder brother" Sanjay Dutt for a massive action film. He promised fans that the action sequences in this project would be on a whole new level, describing them as "rustic action. Speaking about pan-India collaborations, Salman acknowledged the challenges of bringing together Bollywood and South Indian stars, stating that executing such projects is easier said than done. Following reports that Salman's film with Atlee had been put on hold due to budget concerns, speculation surfaced that the director might replace Salman with Tollywood sensation Allu Arjun. Adding to the buzz, rumors suggested that Atlee was considering Amaran star Sivakarthikeyan for a role originally envisioned for Rajinikanth or Kamal Haasan. While no official confirmation has been made, more clarity on this high-profile project is expected in the coming days.

Is Teja Sajja's Mirai the 'Silent Storm' of 2025

In an industry where even big-star films struggle to generate pre-release excitement, a relatively under-the-radar project is quietly making waves ahead of its teaser launch. This is all about Mirai, the upcoming action-fantasy starring Teja Sajja. over 25,000 users have already expressed interest in Mirai on BookMyShow—a significant number for a film still months away from release. In this movie, the HanuMan star takes on the role of Super Yodha, and the buzz surrounding the project suggests it could turn out to be the silent storm of the year. The excitement began last year with an intriguing title glimpse that piqued curiosity. While many star-driven films are still working to build hype, Mirai has captured attention with its unique concept and idea-focused presentation. Despite the team keeping plot details and character revelations under wraps, anticipation continues to rise. In today's cinematic landscape, a compelling story often matters more than star power. Teja Sajja, who proved this with the blockbuster HanuMan, might just do it again with Mirai. If the teaser lives up to expectations, the film could join the ranks of 2025's most awaited releases, alongside titles like Raja Saab and War 2. With his latest superhero venture, Teja Sajja has already demonstrated his ability to turn unique, content-driven films into massive hits.

