



**Weather Forecast**

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

# 7.7 Magnitude Earthquake Devastates Myanmar and Thailand

TPN Correspondent | Southeast Asia

A powerful 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck central Myanmar near Mandalay on March 28, 2025, at 12:50 PM local time, causing widespread destruction across Southeast Asia. The earthquake was followed by an aftershock of 6.4 magnitude, further worsening the devastation.

In Myanmar, the quake led to severe damage, including the collapse of several buildings like Mandalay University and a mosque, with numerous casualties reported. Historic temples in the ancient city of Ba-

gan, a UNESCO World Heritage site, also suffered significant damage. The military government declared a state of emergency across six regions and initiated rescue operations, although efforts are hindered by ongoing political instability.

Tremors were felt as far away as Bangkok, Thailand, where the shaking prompted evacuations and panic among residents.

A 30-story government office under construction in the Chatuchak district collapsed, resulting in at least three deaths and trapping approximately 90 workers. Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shi-

nawatra declared the capital an emergency zone, deploying police and emergency services for immediate rescue operations.

The quake also led to the temporary suspension of metro services in Bangkok and the closure of the Stock Exchange of Thailand for the day. Shaking was reported in Chiang Mai and other regions across Thailand, intensifying fears of aftershocks.

The international community has responded swiftly with offers of assistance. India has already begun providing immediate aid to affected areas. Rescue operations are ongoing

- Massive earthquake causes destruction across Myanmar and Thailand
- Bangkok declares emergency zone; rescue operations underway
- Historic sites in Bagan suffer extensive damage



as authorities continue to assess the extent of the damage and provide relief to the affect-

ed populations. The full scale of the disaster remains uncertain, but

the devastation caused by the powerful earthquake has left Southeast Asia reeling.

## KTR Opposes Sale of 400 Acres of Land

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

BRS Working President and former minister K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has strongly opposed the Telangana government's decision to sell 400 acres of government land in Kanche-Gachibowli. Expressing his protest on social media, he warned that such a move would cause irreversible environmental damage.

KTR lashed out at Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's statement in the Assembly, where he claimed that there were no animals on the land in question. Countering this, KTR pointed out that the Hyderabad Central University (HCU) campus is home to over 700 species of plants, numerous animals, reptiles, and more than 200 species of birds. He also emphasized that the rock forma-



tions in the area have a history dating back a billion years, making the land ecologically significant. Expressing outrage over the Congress government's approach, KTR accused them of contradicting their own claims of environmental conservation. "On one hand,

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- Metro MD NVS Reddy, YTDA Vice Chairman G. Kishan Rao dismissed
- Govt aims to replace retired contract employees with in-service officials

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

In a sensational administrative decision, the Telangana government has removed 6,729 officials, including Hyderabad Metro Rail MD NVS Reddy, Yadagirigutta Temple Vice Chairman G. Kishan Rao, Consultant Engineer BLN Reddy, and 10 directors from Transco and Genco. The state's Chief Secretary, Shanthikumari, issued orders directing their removal

## Government Removes 6,729 Contract Employees



by the end of March. Notably, all those dismissed were contract employees who continued in service after retirement.

The government justified the move, stating that it aims

to eliminate the practice of retaining retired officials on contract while in-service employees await appointments. The Revanth Reddy government has identified thousands of

such cases across key departments and has ordered immediate appointments of regular employees in the vacant positions.

The dismissals impact several crucial departments, including GHMC, HMDA, Hyderabad Water Works, Metro Rail, RERA, MEPMA, KUDA, and YTDA. The removal of Metro MD NVS Reddy, who had been in charge for 15 years since the inception of the Hyderabad Metro project, stands out as one of the most significant decisions.

The government intends to appoint an in-service official to lead the Metro expansion plans.

Additionally, G. Kishan Rao, who played a major role in the reconstruction

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## Centre Says No to National Status for Palamuru Lift Irrigation Project



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

In a significant development, the Central Government has stated that granting national status to the Palamuru Lift Irrigation Project is not possible due to the ongoing dis-

pute between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh over Krishna River waters. The Jal Shakti Department made this announcement, clarifying that the matter is currently in court, which prevents the Centre from considering the request.

- Centre cites Krishna water dispute as reason for denial
- Telangana's proposal not returned, but process remains stalled
- Jal Shakti Department clarified position in Lok Sabha

The Telangana government had earlier recommended that the Palamuru Lift Irrigation Project be granted national status. However, in a written reply to MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy's question in the Lok Sabha, the Jal Shakti Department clarified that while the proposal had not been returned, the process had been on hold since December 2024.

Meanwhile, Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy made a key announcement regarding double-bedroom

housing. He instructed district collectors to allocate houses to eligible homeless people and ensure the completion of partially constructed houses. He also stated that if contractors fail to take up the work, financial assistance will be provided to beneficiaries for self-construction. Additionally, he directed officials to begin the construction of Indiramma houses in pilot villages, with an initial installment of ₹1 lakh for beneficiaries who have completed the basement stage.

## Another Young India Skill University in Telangana



TPN Correspondent | Siddipet

Dubbaka MLA Kotha Prabhakar Reddy met Chief Minister Revanth Reddy at his residence on Friday and requested the establishment of a Young India Skill University in Dubbaka. Responding positively, the CM gave the green signal for the university and instructed CMO officials to conduct a site inspection in the town.

Additionally, the MLA re-

quested the construction of a double road between Hublipur and Lachhapet, to which the CM also agreed. ₹35 crore has been allocated for the project, which will be developed under the Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM). Expressing gratitude, MLA Kotha Prabhakar Reddy thanked the CM for approving both proposals. The Telangana government has been focusing

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# Indiramma Housing and Warangal Development Projects to be Expedited

- Immediate payments for Indiramma houses with completed basements
- Drinking water issues to be addressed in villages and cities
- Warangal Super Specialty Hospital to be ready by June

**TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad**  
State Revenue, Housing, Information and Civil Relations Minister and Warangal District In-charge Minister Sri Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy has directed officials to expedite the grounding process of Indiramma houses in pilot villages. He emphasized that immediate payments should be made for houses where the basement level has been completed.

During a review meeting at the Secretariat on Friday, attended by Panchayat Raj Minister Dhanasari Anasuya Seethakka, Atavi and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha, and Chief Minister's Advisor Vem Narender Reddy, along with district officials, the minister stressed the importance of accelerating key projects in Warangal. He stated that the government will provide payments to Indiramma housing beneficiaries in four installments, with ₹1 lakh given to those who



have completed the basement level. He also urged officials to ensure 2BHK houses are allotted to eligible beneficiaries without house plots. Addressing concerns about drinking water shortages during the summer, the minister instructed district collectors to prioritize water supply and ensure officials visit villages

at least three times a week. He ordered immediate repairs of damaged borewells and hand pumps and suggested that water should be supplied through tankers wherever necessary. The minister also directed officials to complete the Warangal Super Specialty Hospital construction within two months and ensure the instal-

lation of medical equipment in another month, making it operational by the end of June. He highlighted that this hospital would provide advanced medical services to the people of North Telangana. On the issue of waste management, he instructed officials to provide a temporary solution to the Madikonda

dumping yard problem within a week and work towards a permanent resolution. He directed CDMA Director Sridevi to visit the site and suggest solutions, while also asking collectors to acquire 150-200 acres along the Warangal-Karimnagar road for a permanent dumping yard. Additionally, he ordered the desilting of Bhadrakali tank before the monsoon season and stressed that Warangal Smart City works should be executed in a planned manner. The meeting was attended by MLAs Kadiyam Srihari, Nayani Rajender, Yashaswini Reddy, Donthi Madhav Reddy, Nagaraju, Murali Nayak, Ramachandra Nayak, Revuri Prakash Reddy, Gandra Satyanarayana, MLC Basavaraju Saraiah, Warangal Mayor Gundu Sudharani, and senior officials from various departments.



## BRS silver jubilee meeting venue finalized at Elkathurthi

- BRS silver jubilee celebrations on April 27
- Warangal district leaders inspect the meeting ground

**TPN Correspondent | Warangal**  
The Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) is set to hold its silver jubilee celebrations with a massive public meeting on April 27, marking the party's formation day. The venue for this event has been finalized at Elkathurthi in Hanumakonda district. Ahead of the meeting, key BRS leaders from the joint Warangal district, including MLC Pochampally Srinivas Reddy, former MLAs Peddi Sudarshan

Reddy and Satish Babu, party general secretary Gyadari Balamallu, and former state corporation chairman Dr. Kethiredy Vasudeva Reddy, inspected the arrangements at the meeting ground. To ensure smooth conduct of the event, BRS leaders have formally applied to the Kazipet ACP under Warangal Commissionerate, seeking necessary permissions for security, traffic control, and other arrangements related to the meeting.

## Another Honor killing in Telangana

**TPN Correspondent | Peddapalli**  
A shocking case of honor killing has come to light in Peddapalli district, Telangana, where a father brutally murdered a young man for being in love with his daughter. The accused attacked the victim with an axe, killing him on the spot. The police have registered a case and launched a manhunt for the accused. The victim, identified as Sai Kumar, was a resident of Muppuritota village in Eligedu mandal. He was in love with a young woman from the same village. Upon learning about their relationship, the girl's father took matters into his own hands and attacked Sai Kumar with an axe on his birthday, leading to his immediate death. The police rushed to the scene and began an investigation into the incident. Meanwhile, another brutal incident was reported in Kamareddy district. A man named Ramesh (35), a resident of Chintamanpalli in Domakonda mandal, was allegedly tortured to death over a financial dispute. Ramesh had sold his car to a man named Palle Pochayya, with an agreement that part of the payment would be made later through a loan or EMI. However, when Ramesh tried to take back the car due to non-payment, a heated argument broke out.

was declared dead. Following a complaint from Ramesh's wife, the police registered a case and arrested the accused. Both incidents have sparked outrage, with authorities under pressure to take swift action against the culprits.



During the altercation, Pochayya's son-in-law Harish, along with brick kiln workers, tied Ramesh to a pillar and beat him severely. Ramesh succumbed to his injuries on the spot. Though his family rushed him to the hospital, he

was declared dead. Following a complaint from Ramesh's wife, the police registered a case and arrested the accused. Both incidents have sparked outrage, with authorities under pressure to take swift action against the culprits.

## Minister Seethakka gets emotional at husband's death anniversary

**TPN Correspondent | Mahabubabad**  
Telangana Panchayat Raj and Women and Child Welfare Minister Seethakka turned emotional while speaking at the death anniversary meeting of her husband, Kunja Ramu, in Mokallapalli, Kothaguda mandal. Overwhelmed by memories, she broke down in tears as she recalled her late husband's struggles and sacrifices. Revolutionary singer Vimalakka, who was present at the event, comforted the minister during the emotional mo-

ment. Seethakka reminisced about her hardships and the challenges she faced throughout her life. She shared that she had once narrowly escaped an encounter while working in a movement, calling it her "second life." She vowed to dedicate the rest of her life to fighting for the rights of the poor, tribals, and marginalized



sections, reaffirming her commitment to social justice and empowerment.

Accompanied by her son Surya and daughter-in-law Kusumanjali, Seethakka paid floral tributes at Ramu's stupa. She spoke about Ramu's early entry into the movement at the age of 17, his relentless participation in struggles, and his lifelong dedication to the upliftment of weaker sections. She credited him for instilling values of service and sacrifice in her, stating that she continues to work for the people with the ideals he lived by. Leaders and activists present at the gathering praised Ramu's contributions and expressed solidarity with Seethakka. The event also saw participation from party workers, local leaders, and villagers, who joined in paying respects to the late leader.

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## Another Young India Skill University in Telangana

on road expansion projects across the state. The Revanth government has already announced plans to construct double roads connecting district centers with mandal headquarters. Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy recently informed the Assembly that rural roads and state highways will be developed under the HAM model, with the state bearing 40% of the expenses. The minister emphasized that improved connectivity is crucial for the state's overall development.

## KTR Opposes Sale of 400 Acres of Land

they speak about protecting nature, but on the other, they are pushing for its destruction. This land is being converted into a commercial hub, filled with high-rise buildings and shopping malls, jeopardizing the city's future," he stated. He reminded people of the BRS government's previous initiatives to protect the environment and criticized the Congress government for neglecting these efforts in the name of development. KTR questioned the real motives behind the land sale and demanded that the government immediately withdraw its decision to prevent further harm to the city's ecosystem.

## Government Removes 6,729 Contract Employees

of Yadagirigutta Temple and was known to be close to former CM KCR, has also been dismissed. The move is seen as part of the government's broader effort to curb excessive spending on contract employees drawing high salaries. The mass removal of officials marks a significant administrative shift under CM Revanth Reddy's leadership.

## Speaker Prasad and Minister Ponnam honored with black belts at National Kiyo Karate Championship

**TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad**  
Speaker Gaddam Prasad and Telangana Minister for Sports Ponnam Prabhakar were honored with black belts at the National 4th Kiyo Karate Championship held in Gachibowli. The prestigious recognition was presented by National Karate Association President Bharat Sharma, General Secretary Shiva, and Telangana Karate Association President in acknowledgment of their contributions to promoting sports in the state. TPCC President and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud was also present at the event. Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Gaddam Prasad emphasized Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's dedication to sports development in Telangana. He highlighted the increased budget allocation for

sports, the introduction of the CM Cup from the village to mandal levels, and the appointment of world champion boxer Nikhat Zarin and cricketer Mohammed Siraj to government jobs. He also commended Mahesh Kumar Goud for his efforts in bringing the National Karate Competitions to Hyderabad. TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud, a former karate player himself, called it an unforgettable day in his life. He stressed the importance of martial arts for self-defense and confidence, urging children, especially girls, to take up karate. He also revealed that CM Revanth Reddy is keen on hosting the 2027 Asian Karate Championship in Telangana and is working to make the state a hub for sports. Goud further stated that the



Congress government is determined to implement a comprehensive sports policy with the 2036 Olympics in mind. He recalled Hyderabad's history of hosting major sporting events like the Afro-Asian and Commonwealth Games and expressed the government's vision of making it an Olympic venue in the future. He also praised the government's ef-

orts in promoting sports, including a budget allocation of Rs. 465 crore and plans to establish a sports university. The event was attended by Speaker Gaddam Prasad, SHAP Chairman Shiv Sena Reddy, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar, National Karate Association President Bharat Sharma, and local corporator Ragam Nandana Yadav.



# 12 Bills, 3 Resolutions Passed in 11-Day Assembly Session

**Budget of ₹3.05 lakh crore approved for 2025-26**  
**12 key bills, including BC reservation and organ transplant laws, passed**  
**Resolution opposing delimitation process passed amid BRS protests**

**TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad**  
The Telangana Legislative Assembly budget session concluded last night with the passage of the State Expenditure Bill 2025, wrapping up an 11-day session that saw intense debates, opposition protests, and crucial legislative decisions. The session, which began on March 12, lasted 12 days and ran for over 97 hours, during which 142 speeches were delivered by various members. The Appropriation Bill 2025, crucial for implementing the state budget, was passed after heated discussions on Telangana's financial situation and debt burden. The government approved an expenditure of over ₹3.05 lakh crore for the 2025-26 financial year.

Among the 12 bills passed, the Telangana Backward Classes, Rural and Urban Local Bodies Reservation Bill 2025 was a key highlight, ensuring 42% reservations for backward classes in local bodies, employment, and education. Another major bill, the Telangana Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Reservation Rationalization Bill 2025, approved the classification of 59 SC castes. The Human Organs and Tissues Act 2025 was also passed to align state transplant laws with central regulations. The session also saw amendments to the Municipal and Panchayat Raj Acts, facilitating governance improvements by merging certain villages into municipalities.

Apart from legislative bills, three significant resolutions were passed. One opposed the delimitation process, urging the central government to revise procedures to protect the interests of southern states. Another resolution sought the inclusion of the Gor Boli language, spoken by the Banjara and Lambada communities, in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution. The session was marked by protests, with BRS members being suspended following remarks made by MLA Jagadish Reddy. The opposition repeatedly clashed with the ruling party over key policy decisions, making this session one of the most intense in recent times.



## CM to launch fine rice scheme in PDS from Huzurnagar on March 30

**CM to launch fine rice distribution under PDS in Telangana**  
**85% of the state's population to benefit from the scheme**  
**New ration cards to be issued; beneficiaries to receive rice from April 1**

**TPN Correspondent | Suryapet**  
Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy inspected the venues in Huzurnagar, Suryapet district, ahead of the Chief Minister's visit on March 30. The CM will formally launch the distribution of fine rice through the Public Distribution System (PDS) across Telangana from this program. Speaking at the Secretariat press meet alongside Civil Supplies Commissioner Chauhan and other officials, Uttam Kumar Reddy stated that this initiative marks a revolutionary change in the lives of the poor in Telangana. He highlighted that many beneficiaries had been selling ration rice due to its poor quality. To address this, the state government is introducing fine rice distribution, ensuring that 85% of the state's population benefits. The minister announced that a draw system is being implemented, allowing beneficiaries to collect ration from any location in Telangana. Additionally, new physical ration cards will be issued based on eligibility. Starting April 1, fine rice will be provided to all beneficiaries listed in government re-



cards, even if they do not yet possess a physical card. At the time of Telangana's formation, there were 89.73 lakh ration cards, and over the last decade, 49,479 new cards have been issued. Currently, the state has around 90 lakh ration cards benefiting 2.85 crore people. The Central and State governments are jointly investing ₹10,665 crore in the PDS. The government also plans to distribute additional essential items like pulses and salt soon. The Chief Minister will officially launch the scheme on Ugadi, ensuring that the people of Telangana receive quality food grains through the PDS.

## Congress misleading Telangana on state debt: BRS MLC Kavitha

**TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad**  
BRS MLC K Kavitha accused the ruling Congress government of misleading the people of Telangana regarding the state's outstanding debt. She stated that Congress had come to power based on false claims and demanded that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy apologize for spreading misinformation. Speaking to the media at the Telangana Legislative Council on Friday, Kavitha pointed out that the Union government, in response to a question in Parliament, confirmed that Telangana's total debt stands at ₹4.42 lakh crore at the end of the current fiscal year. However, she said, Revanth Reddy falsely claimed the figure was ₹8 lakh crore. She also criticized the Congress for misleading the public on other issues, including the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme. "The Congress government tried to create panic by questioning the structural integrity of Kaleshwaram barrages. But Irrigation Minister N Uttam Kumar Reddy himself admit-

ted in the Council that all barrages are intact and do not face any structural issues," Kavitha said. She urged the government to focus on fulfilling its responsibilities instead of blaming the previous BRS regime. "Instead of accusing the BRS, Congress should ensure proper water supply in the state," she remarked. Highlighting BRS's performance in the just-concluded Legislative session, Kavitha said the party effectively played its role as a strong opposition by cornering the government on key issues, including farmers' concerns, women's welfare, and fee reimbursement. She noted that their efforts compelled the Chief Minister to announce that fee reimbursement funds would be released and assured that BRS would continue to apply pressure until the promise is fulfilled. Opposition leader in the Council, S Madhusudana Chari, along with senior MLCs L Ramana, Satyavathi Rathod, and Seri Subhash Reddy, also spoke on the matter.



## High Court refuses immediate relief to MLA Sudheer Reddy



**TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad**  
MLA Sudheer Reddy faced a setback in the Telangana High Court as his plea for relief in a case related to alleged inappropriate remarks against Corporator Banothu Sujatha Nayak was not entertained. The MLA had approached the court seeking dismissal of the case and protection from arrest. However, the court did not grant immediate relief. The case stems from complaints filed against

Sudheer Reddy over his comments on the corporator, which were deemed objectionable. With the legal proceedings underway, the High Court has now directed Sujatha Nayak to file a counter and adjourned the hearing for ten days. As the legal battle continues, Sudheer Reddy will have to wait for further proceedings, while the court examines the matter based on the counter to be filed by the corporator.

## Telangana MLA narrowly escapes earthquake in Thailand

**TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad**  
Telangana Congress MLA McCann Singh Raj Thakur and his family narrowly escaped a devastating earthquake in Thailand. The family, currently on a tour of Thailand, left their hotel just minutes before it collapsed due to the powerful tremors. A massive earthquake struck several East Asian countries, including Myanmar, Thailand, China, India, and Vietnam, with magnitudes of 7.7 and 6.4 on the Richter scale. Thailand and Myanmar were the worst affected, with significant loss of life and property. In Bangkok, many buildings swayed and collapsed, trapping several people under the debris. The Myanmar earthquake also caused widespread devastation, with fears of heavy casualties. Raj Thakur, along with his wife, daughter, and son-in-law, was staying at a hotel in Bangkok when the earthquake struck. Fortunately, they had left the hotel moments before it collapsed, escaping unhurt. The MLA and his family are currently in a safe location and are expected to return to India soon.



## Former MLA Jeevan Reddy appears before Mokila PS in land grab case

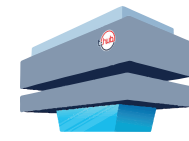
**TPN Correspondent | Mokila**  
Former Armuru MLA Jeevan Reddy appeared before Mokila Police Station in connection with a land grab case involving 114 acres. The case was registered following complaints from landowners who alleged that their properties were illegally occupied. Jeevan Reddy had earlier approached the Supreme Court seeking anticipatory bail and protection from arrest. While the court ruled out immediate arrest, it directed the police to conduct a thorough inquiry into the allegations. Following the Supreme Court's directive, the former MLA appeared before the police for questioning. Meanwhile, Jeevan Reddy's followers have been accused of attacking landowners and media personnel in the past, further escalating tensions around the case. The police are expected to investigate these incidents as well. Authorities have assured that the case will be handled as per legal procedures, and further action will be taken based on the findings of the inquiry.

## Sabita pays tribute to Lawyer Israel, Demands Strict Action



**TPN Correspondent | Rangareddy**  
Former Minister and Maheshwaram MLA Sabita Indra Reddy paid floral tributes to the late lawyer Israel in Tummaluru village of Maheshwaram mandal, Rangareddy district. She garlanded his portrait and expressed deep condolences over his tragic murder. Speaking on the occasion, Sabita Indra Reddy stated that lawyers working in the judiciary often face threats and lack adequate protection. She urged the state government and police officials to take immediate action to ensure that the culprits responsible for Israel's murder receive the strictest punishment under the law. The MLA later met with Israel's family members and assured them of her full support. She emphasized that justice must be served and pledged to stand by the bereaved family in their time of grief. Several TRS party leaders, activists, and local residents participated in the event, expressing solidarity with the lawyer's family and demanding justice for his untimely demise.





# Hyderabad Metro losing ₹1.5 crore per day

Passenger numbers not meeting expectations, adding to financial strain  
State govt unwilling to approve fare hike amid Phase 2 expansion

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Hyderabad Metro Rail is grappling with heavy losses, incurring a deficit of ₹1.5 crore per day. Despite this financial burden, the state government has reportedly refused to approve a fare hike, prioritizing commuter affordability over financial recovery. Officials from L&T and Hyderabad Metro Rail (HMR) argue that increasing fares is the only viable solution, as they are

struggling to repay loans taken from international banks for the project's construction. However, the state government is hesitant to impose an additional burden on passengers, especially in light of the planned second-phase metro expansion. Currently, an estimated 5.10 lakh people travel daily across the metro's three corridors. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, metro operations required ₹1.5 crore per day, with reve-

nues exceeding ₹80 lakh. However, the pandemic-induced lockdown dealt a severe blow, from which the metro has yet to fully recover. Passenger numbers have failed to reach the anticipated six lakh mark, and increasing operational costs have further deepened the financial crisis. Adding to the challenge, the number of women commuters has significantly dropped due to the Telangana government's free RTC bus travel scheme for

women. Metro officials believe that an increase in fares could help offset some of these losses. However, with the state focusing on metro expansion, authorities fear that proposing a fare revision to the central government at this stage could hinder their long-term plans. At present, Hyderabad Metro fares range from ₹10 to ₹60. If revised, the minimum fare is expected to rise to ₹20, while the maximum could go up to ₹80.



## High Court refuses to quash FIR against Vishnupriya

Directs her to cooperate with the police investigation



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad  
The Telangana High Court, on Friday, refused to quash the FIR registered against social media influencer Vishnupriya in the betting apps case. The court also declined to grant a stay on the ongoing investigation, directing her to cooperate with the police as per legal procedures. Vishnupriya had approached the court seeking to quash the FIR lodged against her at Miyapur Police Station for allegedly promoting betting apps. The case was filed based on a complaint that accused several social media influencers of endorsing illegal betting platforms.

During the hearing, the Public Prosecutor informed the court that separate cases related to betting apps were registered at Panjagutta and Miyapur police stations. He further stated that all these cases would soon be transferred to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) for further probe. The High Court, while allowing the investigation to continue, made it clear that the police should proceed as per the law. With this order, Vishnupriya will now have to participate in the investigation while the authorities continue their crackdown on the betting apps racket.

## DRT: Vijaykumar elected as Bar Association President. Sridhar Reddy elected as General Secretary



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

The DRT (Debts Recovery Tribunal) Court Bar Association in Abids in the city held elections on Thursday. In these elections, senior lawyer T. Vijaykumar was elected as the Bar Association President. Kalyan Chakravarthy was elected as the Vice President and T. Sridhar Reddy was elected as the General Secretary.

Naresh Anugula was elected as the Joint Secretary, S. Srikanth as the Treasurer, G. as the Sports & Cultural Secretary. Kiran Raj, Librarian A. Tanuja, Executive Member (Male) K. Suresh, Kranthi Kumar, P. Babu Sainath Rao.. Executive Member (Female) G. Jessica, Mounika were elected. These elections were held from 10 am to 5 pm. All the lawyers congratulated those who won these elections.

Later, they went to the residence of former President G. K. Deshpande and thanked him for winning the elections, President T. Vijay Kumar, Vice President Kalyan Chakravarthy, General Secretary T. Sridhar Reddy and others.

## No breakthrough yet in MMTS woman assault case

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Even after six days, police are yet to identify and apprehend the suspect involved in the sexual assault of a young woman on a moving MMTS train. Despite extensive efforts by four special teams using CCTV footage, inspections, and technology, no significant progress has been made. The victim's inability to provide a clear identification of the suspect has posed a major challenge for the investigation teams from the Government Railway Police (GRP) and Railway Protection Force (RPF). Officials have detained several suspects from villages around Medchal based on the victim's description, but none have been identified as the perpetrator.

A key hurdle in the investigation is the lack of CCTV coverage. While the Secunderabad-Medchal route has 14 railway stations, surveillance cameras are installed only at Secunderabad and Malkajgiri stations, leaving crucial gaps in tracking the suspect's movement. Meanwhile, authorities plan to show the victim photographs of potential suspects again on Friday. When initially presented with suspect images, she was unable to recognize anyone due to her injuries and trauma. Her statement was recorded on Thursday, and she continues to recover at the hospital after undergoing surgeries. Police have detained two individuals for questioning, but the case remains unsolved as the hunt for the attacker continues.



## Minister Seethakka Reviews Drinking Water Supply

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

Minister for Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Smt. Dhanasari Anasuya Seethakka conducted a district-wise review of the drinking water supply at the Mission Bhagiratha office in Erra Manzil. The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer (CE), Superintending Engineer (SE), Executive Engineer (EE), and Deputy Engineer (DE). During the review, Minister Seethakka emphasized that Mission Bhagiratha engineers should be present in the field at least four days a week and report on the ground-level conditions regularly. To ensure a seamless supply of drinking water, committees have been formed at the mandal level, comprising MPDOs, Intra AES, Grid AES, and Mandal Special Officers. These committees will work in coordination to prevent any water supply disruptions. She pointed out that with upcoming festivals, people will be staying in their villages, making it crucial to maintain uninterrupted drinking water supply for three consecutive days. The government has allocated a special budget for emergencies to address any unexpected issues. Minister Seethakka also raised concerns about Mission Bhagiratha pipelines being damaged due to ongoing development works,



including Panchayati Raj roads, R&B roads, and electricity projects. She directed district officials and collectors to coordinate with work inspectors to prevent such damages. In case of any water supply issues, she suggested alternative arrangements such as hiring bore wells in areas with local water resources. She noted that thousands of bore wells had been neglected over the past ten years, but the government has now repaired and made them functional. The Minister also urged officials to educate people on the sufficiency of existing water storage and to discourage unnecessary drilling of new borewells. Additionally, she directed Mission Bhagiratha officials to hold discussions with MLAs and take necessary actions based on their inputs to ensure effective water distribution.

## A. Jagan Wins Telangana High Court Bar Association Elections



TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

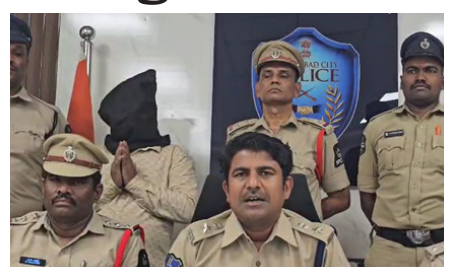
A. Jagan secured a massive victory in the Telangana High Court Bar Association elections. Following his win, court advocates honored him with garlands in a felicitation ceremony. The event saw the participation of several senior advocates, including High Court Advocate JAC Coordinator Venkatesh Indrapalli, along with Raghunath, Srinivas, Balla Ravi, Ameer Shetty, Devender, Ramarao, and others. They extended their congratulations to Jagan and expressed their support for his leadership in the association. Jagan's victory is seen as a significant development in the legal fraternity, with advocates looking forward to his initiatives in addressing key issues concerning the Bar Association. His election has generated enthusiasm among legal professionals, reinforcing hopes for positive changes in the association's functioning.

## Man Arrested for Chain Snatching in Buses

TPN Correspondent | Hyderabad

A man involved in chain snatching while posing as a passenger in city buses was arrested by the Humayun Nagar police on Friday and sent to remand. The arrest was announced by South Western Zone DCP Chandramohan at a press conference held at the DCP office in Mehdiapatnam. According to the police, the accused, identified as Laxman Rathod from Mallepally Mangarabaste, was apprehended while trying to sell stolen gold in Vijayanagar

Colony. Acting on a tip-off, the police took him into custody and questioned him, leading to the discovery of his involvement in multiple chain snatching cases. The case came to light after Mohan Reddy, a resident of Nalgonda, filed a complaint stating that his brother's gold chain was stolen while traveling on a bus to Mehdiapatnam on the night of the 27th. The police investigation confirmed that Laxman Rathod and his gang were responsible for the theft.



DCP Chandramohan revealed that two other members of the gang are still absconding, and efforts are underway to apprehend them. The case is currently under further investigation.



# Telangana building collapse

## Second body recovered as NDRF concludes rescue operation

TPN Correspondent |  
Telangana

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) on Friday, March 28, recovered the body of the second construction worker trapped under the debris of a collapsed under-construction building in Bhadrachalam, Bhadradi Kothagudem district. The deceased was identified as P Upender, and his body was retrieved at around 2:20 am before being shifted to a hospital for autopsy. The building, which was under construction at Super

Bazaar Centre in the temple town, collapsed on Wednesday afternoon, March 26, around 2:30 pm. It was a ground-plus-five-story structure that lacked the required approvals from the authorities. Earlier, at around 2:30 am on Thursday, March 27, rescue personnel found another trapped worker, Ch Kameshwar Rao, under the rubble and managed to pull him out. However, he succumbed to his injuries while being transported to the Government Area Hospital. Rescue efforts were carried out

by personnel from the NDRF, Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), fire services department, and local police. The incident, allegedly caused by structural faults, led to immediate action from authorities, with District Collector Jitesh Patil and Superintendent of Police B Rohith Raju overseeing the operations. The collapsed structure was being built by a man named Srinivas Moula, also known as Sri Pathi, who had reportedly transformed into a seer and was running a trust. While permission was ob-

tained for only two floors, he had proceeded to lay slabs for five additional floors without the required approvals. Locals had repeatedly raised objections about the construction, citing concerns about the weak ground support in the cramped space. Eyewitnesses recalled hearing cries from beneath the rubble moments after the collapse. Police have registered a case against Sri Pathi and arrested him for carrying out unauthorized construction that led to the tragic incident.

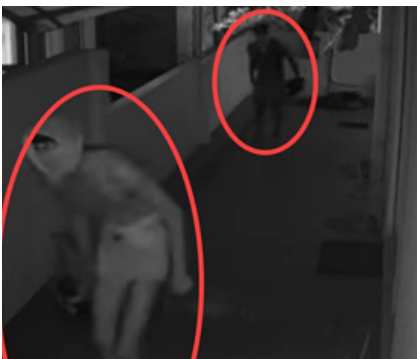


## Fear grips Warangal as Cheddi gang strikes again

TPN Correspondent | Warangal

The notorious Cheddi gang is spreading fear across the joint Warangal district with a series of thefts. In the latest incident, the gang broke into a locked house in Hanamkonda on Thursday night, with the entire act being captured on CCTV. Reports suggest that the gang has been involved in at least nine thefts in the past month, posing a major challenge for the police.

Residents of Warangal are in a state of panic as the gang continues its activities. The burglars have been targeting homes in the dead of night, looting cash and valuables. Similar incidents have occurred in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the past, leaving citizens on edge.



Following the recent spike in thefts, Warangal police have intensified their efforts to track down the gang. Special teams have been deployed to investigate the robberies, relying on CCTV footage and other intelligence to identify and apprehend the culprits. Authorities have urged residents to remain cautious and report any suspicious activities immediately.

## Basar temple earns ₹53.36 lakh in 43 days

TPN Correspondent | Nirmal

The Sri Gnana Saraswathi Devasthanam in Basar recorded an income of ₹53.36 lakh over a span of 43 days, from February 13 to March 28. The counting of hundials (donation boxes) was conducted on the temple premises on Friday.

Temple Executive Officer (EO) K Sudhakar Reddy stated that, in addition to cash donations, devotees also offered 73 grams of mixed gold and 2.10 kilograms of silver ornaments.



The counting process involved Assistant Executive Officer Sudarshan Goud, Telangana Gramana Bank staff, home guards, and members of Rajanna Seva Samithi from Rajanna-Sircilla district and Narasimha Seva Samithi from Secunderabad.

## Adilabad health official caught by ACB while accepting ₹30,000 bribe

TPN Correspondent | Adilabad

A government official in Adilabad was caught red-handed by the Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) while accepting a bribe of ₹30,000 on Friday, March 28. The accused, identified as Macherlaposhetty Ravi Shankar, serves as the District Extension and Media Officer in Adilabad.



According to ACB officials, Ravi Shankar had allegedly demanded the bribe from a complainant in exchange for not sending a report against them in an ongoing inquiry. Acting on the complaint, ACB officials laid a trap and apprehended the officer while he was receiving the money.

Authorities have urged citizens to remain vigilant and report any incidents of corruption by dialing the helpline number 1064. They emphasized that strict action will be taken against any government official found engaging in corrupt practices. The arrest highlights the ongoing efforts by the ACB to curb corruption within government offices in Telangana. Further investigation into the case is currently underway to uncover any additional irregularities.

## Govt transfers ₹3.3 crore to families of Gulf migrant workers

TPN Correspondent | Telangana

The Telangana government has disbursed ₹3.3 crore as ex-gratia to the families of migrant workers from the state who lost their lives in Gulf countries. Each bereaved family received ₹5 lakh under the initiative. Telangana Mineral Development Corporation chairman Anil Eeravatri stated that he coordinated with the state's Special Chief Secretary (Finance and Planning), K Ramakrishna Rao, to ensure the timely release of funds, following Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's directive. The financial aid was credited to 66 families, with district-wise distribution as follows: 28 in Nizamabad, 19 in Jagtial, 9 in Kamareddy, 7 in Nirmal, and one each in Medak, Ranga Reddy, and Sangareddy. Eeravatri further mentioned that ₹5.15 crore had already been distributed to 103 beneficiaries in an earlier phase. With this latest disbursement, the total financial aid given under the scheme in the 2024-25 financial year has reached ₹8.45 crore, benefiting 169 families.



## Villagers oppose Coca Cola unit in Peddapalli

TPN Correspondent | Peddapalli

Residents of Ratnapur in Peddapalli district are standing firm against the proposed industrial park, refusing to part with their remaining agricultural land. Having already given up large portions of land for the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) and a national highway project, the villagers say they cannot afford to lose more.

The industrial park, proposed to be developed in 203 acres near the historic Ramagiri Khila, is part of the state government's initiative to set up industries in remote areas. The Coca Cola Company was among the firms expected to



establish units there. However, with only 38 acres of government land available, the remaining 165 acres belong to private individuals, making large-scale land acquisition necessary. Villagers say they were unaware

of the land survey until a list of affected landowners was displayed at the gram panchayat office in February. They later approached IT and Industries Minister D Sridhar Babu, who assured them that an alternative location

would be considered. Despite this assurance, TGIIC Karimnagar General Manager Maheshwar, a Coca Cola Company representative, and other officials visited the site on March 18, triggering protests from the villagers. They blocked the officials' vehicles, accusing the government of attempting to take their land without proper consultation.

"How can the government decide to acquire our land without seeking our consent through grama sabhas?" the villagers questioned, expressing their anger over the lack of transparency. With tensions still high, the government's next move remains uncertain.

## Security forces neutralize 45 kg IED in Bijapur

TPN Correspondent | Chhattisgarh

Security forces averted a major threat on Friday by detecting and safely neutralizing a 45 kg improvised explosive device (IED) planted by Maoists on the Cherpal-Palnar road under Ganganalor police station limits in Bijapur district. The CRPF 222 battalion, during an area domination patrol from the Palnar camp, discovered the IED approximately two kilometers from Cherpal on their return journey. The battalion's bomb disposal team promptly defused the explosive, preventing a potential attack, Bijapur police confirmed.

The IED was planted using a command switch system, with the switch positioned about 150 meters away. The alert-

ness of the security personnel played a crucial role in preventing casualties. Meanwhile, in a separate incident in Narayanpur district, a jawan of the Bastar Fighters was injured after stepping on an IED planted by Maoists on the Narayanpur Kutul-Bedmakoti road under Kohkameta police station limits. The injured jawan was immediately shifted to Narayanpur District Hospital for treatment.



## Woman's murder case cracked in Sanathnagar; Accused arrested

TPN Correspondent | Medchal

The police have cracked the sensational murder case of a woman found dead near the Bharat Nagar bridge in Sanathnagar. The accused, identified as Kommaraju Kanakaraju alias Raju from Bachannapet village in Jangaon district, was arrested by Sanathnagar police near Balanagar Shobhana bus stop on Friday morning.

The case came to light on the night of the 26th when Sheikh Naeem informed the police about an unidentified woman's naked body found near a chicken shop. Upon reaching the scene, the police identified the



victim as a 55-year-old woman and launched an investigation. CCTV footage from the area led to the identification of the accused, who was previously involved in a theft case in the Balanagar PIS area

and had served a prison sentence. During interrogation, Kanakaraju admitted to having a physical altercation with the woman after engaging in sexual intercourse. When the woman screamed, he allegedly sat on her chest and struck her, leading to her death.

Balanagar DCP Suresh Kumar stated that a case has been registered under Section 103(1) of the IPC, and the accused has been remanded. Efforts are underway to establish the identity of the deceased woman.



# From Asking for Urdu Preference to Mocking Telugu



TPN | G Avinash

**Hyderabad, March 29:** The hypocrisy of AIMIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi is once again on full display. Known for his provocative speeches and controversial remarks, Owaisi has now turned to mocking Telangana Minister Seethakka for speaking in her mother tongue, Telugu. His recent comments questioning her lack of Urdu and English proficiency show not only his arrogance but also his disregard for the very state he operates in.

For decades, Owaisi and his party have demanded preferential treatment for Urdu, lobbying successive governments to accommodate their language preferences. Yet, despite his family's long political presence in Hyderabad, Owaisi himself has failed to embrace Telugu—the language of the land. His inability (or refusal) to learn Telugu, while expecting others to conform to his linguistic preferences, exposes his political opportunism.

There is nothing wrong with Seethakka speaking in Telugu. As an elected leader in Telangana, she naturally communicates in her native language. The real question is—why hasn't Owaisi bothered to learn Telugu despite being in Hyderabad for generations? The answer is clear: political appeasement by successive governments has allowed him to continue with his Urdu-centric approach without any accountability.

This is not the first time Owaisi has stirred controversy with his statements. His past speeches have been infamous for their communal undertones and inflammatory rhetoric. Time and again, he has played divisive politics, using religion and language as tools to polarize the electorate. His latest jibe at a Telugu-speaking minister further cements his double standards—demanding Urdu preference on one hand while mocking those who speak Telugu in a Telugu-speaking state.

If Owaisi truly believes in representing Telangana, he should have learned Telugu by now. His deliberate ignorance of the state's language, coupled with his mockery of those who embrace it, speaks volumes about his priorities. Leaders like him, who thrive on divisive politics, should be questioned for their hypocrisy rather than entertained with continued political indulgence.

# India's \$2.7 Billion Electronics Boost

**A Step Towards Self-Reliance or a Long Road Ahead?**

## THE POINT DESK

The Indian government's latest approval of a \$2.7 billion (₹22,919 crore) incentive plan to boost local manufacturing of electronic components marks another ambitious step toward self-reliance in the tech sector. With a vision to attract \$7 billion in investments and create over 91,600 jobs in six years, this move is part of India's broader goal of establishing a \$500 billion electronics economy by 2030. While the plan has been welcomed by industry leaders, the real challenge lies in its execution and ensuring that India can move beyond assembly to high-value manufacturing.

### Breaking Dependency

For years, India has remained dependent on imports for key electronic components such as semiconductor chips, display modules, and lithium-ion battery cells. While the country has made significant progress in assembling smartphones and electronic gadgets, the lack of a strong component ecosystem has limited value addition within the domestic market.

Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw acknowledged this gap, stating that India has achieved only 20% value addition in electronics manufacturing over the past decade. The new scheme, aimed at manufacturing both active and passive components, is expected to double this value in the next five years. The government's push aligns with its broader semiconductor mission, which aims to strengthen local production of high-end electronic components.

### Key Features of the Incentive Plan

The scheme will provide subsidies of up to 50% for domestic and foreign companies setting up local component manufacturing facilities. The primary focus areas include:

- **Sub-assembly of display and camera modules**
- **Printed circuit boards (PCBs)**
- **Lithium-ion battery cells**
- **Enclosures for mobile and electronics hardware**

Additionally, incentives will also cover the localization of capital goods and other components used in the manufacturing process. However, a senior government official clarified that the



support for these will be below 50% of the company's capital expenditure. The government is also working on reforms in labor laws, customs policies, and taxation to create a more conducive environment for electronic manufacturers.

### A Positive Move for Growth

Industry leaders have responded positively to the initiative. Josh Foulger, president of electronics at Zetwerk, emphasized the importance of building a strong component ecosystem in India, stating that his company is actively seeking partnerships to contribute to this effort.

Ajai Chowdhry, co-founder of HCL Technologies and chairman of Epic Foundation, noted that this move will enable "higher value addition in the country" and attract more investment in system products. He also highlighted the need for a "Design in India" scheme for chips and systems, which would further strengthen India's position in the global electronics industry.

### Can India Compete with China and Taiwan?

While the approval of this incentive plan is a significant move, it is only the first step in a long journey. China and Taiwan dominate the global electronics supply chain, having spent decades developing their manufacturing ecosystems. Simply offering incentives may not be enough to attract global players unless India can provide a seamless and competitive environment.

### Some key challenges that India will need to address include:

- **High Cost of Production – De-**

**spite incentives, manufacturing costs in India remain higher than in China due to infrastructure gaps and expensive logistics.**

- **Lack of Skilled Workforce – The electronics sector requires highly specialized skills, and India will need a focused strategy to train and develop a skilled workforce.**
- **Delayed Implementation of Previous Schemes – India's first semiconductor incentive scheme saw multiple delays, raising concerns about how efficiently the new scheme will be executed.**
- **Uncertain Global Demand – The global electronics market is facing fluctuations, and India must ensure steady demand to sustain long-term investment in the sector.**

### Will This Move Help India Achieve Self-Sufficiency?

The government's larger vision of a \$500 billion electronics economy by 2030 depends on how well India can implement its incentive schemes and attract major investments. The country already manufactures \$120 billion worth of electronics, but to scale up, it will require a strong policy framework, industry collaboration, and consistent government support. If implemented effectively, this initiative could position India as a key player in the global electronics supply chain, reducing dependency on imports and creating a robust domestic manufacturing ecosystem. However, it will take sustained efforts and strong execution to turn this vision into reality.

# Is US-Canada Friendship Damaged Beyond Repair?

## THE POINT DESK

The long-standing partnership between the United States and Canada is facing an unprecedented crisis. With US President Donald Trump's recent decision to impose a 25% tariff on imported vehicles and auto parts, tensions have escalated between the two North American allies. Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's response has made it clear: the "old relationship" with the US is over. As economic and military ties between the two nations deteriorate, a critical question arises—has the US-Canada relationship been damaged beyond repair?

### Trump's Trade War Sparks Outrage

On March 27, President Trump announced steep tariffs on imported automobiles and parts, set to take effect from April 3, 2025. The move has sparked outrage among key US trading partners, including Canada, Germany, the European Union, and Japan, all of whom are now considering retaliatory measures. Trump has even warned that if the EU and Canada cooperate in opposing these tariffs, the US could impose "far larger" economic actions against them.

For Canada, this is not just another trade dispute. The auto industry is a critical part of the Canadian economy, employing thousands of workers. By imposing tariffs, Trump has directly challenged Canada's economic stability.



In response, PM Mark Carney called the tariffs a "direct attack" on Canadian workers and pledged immediate retaliation through trade measures designed to hurt the US while minimizing damage to Canada.

### Mark Carney Declares the 'Old Relationship' is Over

In a sharp departure from the usual diplomatic tone between Canada and the US, PM Mark Carney did not hold back in his criticism of the Trump administration. His statement—"It is clear that the United States is no longer a reliable partner"—marked a turning point in how Canada views its long-time ally. Carney made it clear that Canada could no longer depend on the US as it once

did. He emphasized the need to "dramatically reduce reliance on the United States" and seek new trade relationships. This marks a significant shift from Canada's traditional approach, which has long been rooted in deep economic and security cooperation with its southern neighbor.

Carney also took issue with Trump's past rhetoric about Canada. During his 2024 re-election campaign, Trump repeatedly referred to then-PM Justin Trudeau as "Governor Trudeau" and even entertained speculation about annexing Canada as the "51st state" of the US. Such remarks were dismissed as campaign rhetoric at the time, but in light of the tariff war and diplomatic tensions, they have taken on a more serious tone.

### Is the US-Canada Relationship Truly Beyond Repair?

While Mark Carney has declared that there is "no turning back," he has not entirely ruled out restoring some level of trust with the US. However, he made it clear that any future partnership would be vastly different from the past. The days of deep economic integration and unquestioned military cooperation between the two countries appear to be over.

Carney also emphasized that his government will fight back with "retaliatory trade actions of our own that will have maximum impact in the United States and minimum impacts here in Canada." This signals a more aggressive stance than previous Canadian administrations, which have often sought to negotiate rather than retaliate against US trade actions.

### How Americans View Canada Amid Rising Tensions

The strained relationship between the two nations is also reflected in shifting public opinion. According to a recent Associated Press-NORC poll conducted between March 20-24, 2025, fewer Americans now see Canada as a close ally compared to previous years. Before Trump's second term, 70% of Democrats viewed Canada as a close ally. Now, that number has dropped to just 50%. Across all political groups, only 50% of Americans still consider Canada

a close ally, compared to 60% in 2023. Instead, three in 10 respondents now view Canada as merely "friendly but not a close ally," while two in 10 describe the relationship as "not friendly but not enemies."

These shifts highlight a significant deterioration in the US-Canada friendship. While most Americans do not see Canada as an outright adversary, the perception of the once-strong alliance is weakening.

### What's Next for US-Canada Relations?

The coming months will be crucial in determining the future of US-Canada relations. Mark Carney has vowed to hold direct talks with President Trump in an attempt to address the crisis. However, given Trump's hardline stance on trade and national interests, it remains unclear whether diplomacy will be enough to mend the fractured relationship. If Canada moves forward with its plans to pivot trade relationships away from the US, the long-term consequences could be profound. A weakened North American trade bloc could give economic competitors like China and the EU an advantage.

For now, what is certain is that the trust between the US and Canada has been severely damaged. Whether it can be fully restored—or whether this marks the beginning of a permanent separation—remains to be seen.



# India Ready to Assist Myanmar & Thailand After Devastating Earthquake

- India offers assistance to Myanmar & Thailand
- PM Modi expresses deep concern
- 7.7 magnitude earthquake strikes Myanmar
- Tremors felt in Indian cities
- Skyscraper collapses, workers trapped

India has extended its support to Myanmar and Thailand following a powerful earthquake that struck both countries, leaving dozens dead and causing severe destruction. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep concern over the situation and assured that India is ready to provide all possible assistance to the affected nations. Taking to social media platform X (formerly Twitter), PM Modi conveyed his sympathies and pledged India's support in the aftermath of the disaster. "Concerned by the situation in the wake of the earthquake in Myanmar and Thailand. Praying for the safety and well-being of everyone. India stands ready to offer all possible assistance. In this regard, I have asked our authorities to be on standby. Also asked the MEA to remain in touch with the Governments of Myanmar



and Thailand," he posted. The earthquake, measuring 7.7 on the Richter scale, struck central Myanmar at approximately 12:50 PM local time on Friday. The epicenter was located 16 kilometers northwest of Sagaing at a depth of 10 kilometers, according to the United States Geological

Survey (USGS). The quake was followed by a significant aftershock of 6.8 magnitude. The tremors were strong enough to be felt in various parts of India, including Kolkata and Imphal, triggering concerns among residents. While reports of casualties continue to emerge, no tsunami warning has

been issued so far. Rescue and relief operations are currently underway in the affected regions as authorities assess the full extent of the damage. One of the most shocking visuals from the disaster was a viral video showing an under-construction skyscraper in Bangkok's Chatuchak neighborhood collapsing due to the tremors. Reports indicate that at least 43 workers are trapped under the debris, with rescue teams racing against time to locate survivors. India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has been directed to stay in close contact with both Myanmar and Thailand to coordinate relief efforts. Indian disaster response teams and humanitarian aid are expected to be mobilized as needed to assist in rescue and recovery operations. The earthquake serves as a grim reminder of the region's vulnerability to seismic activity. As affected communities grapple with the devastation, international support and swift response efforts remain crucial in mitigating the crisis. India's proactive stance underscores its commitment to aiding its neighbors in times of need.



## "Jaishankar Slams Pakistan for Minority Persecution"

- India tracks minority treatment closely.
- Jaishankar highlights Pakistan's human rights abuses.
- February saw multiple Hindu persecution cases.
- Sikh community also faced threats.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar addressed the Lok Sabha on Friday, highlighting the "crimes and atrocities against minorities" in Pakistan. He emphasized that India closely monitors the treatment of minorities in the neighboring country and consistently raises concerns on international platforms, including the United Nations. Jaishankar reaffirmed India's stance at the UN, where Pakistan has been criticized for its human rights violations and persecution of minorities. He stated that India remains vigilant and continues to bring attention to these issues at global forums. Citing specific incidents, the minister detailed several cases of atrocities that took place in February. "We follow very closely and track the treatment of minorities in Pakistan. In February alone, there were ten cases of atrocities against the Hindu community—seven involving abduction and forced conversion, two related to abduction, and one incident where police took action against students celebrating Holi," Jaishankar informed the Parliament. The minister also highlighted attacks against the Sikh community in Pakistan. "There were three incidents related to the Sikh community. In one case, a Sikh family was attacked. In another, a Sikh family was threatened over the reopening of an old Gurudwara. Additionally, there was an abduction and forced conversion case involving a Sikh girl," he said. Jaishankar's remarks reinforced India's commitment to advocating for the rights of persecuted minorities in Pakistan. He stressed that India would continue to raise these concerns at the highest levels to ensure that such human rights violations do not go unnoticed. The minister's statement comes amid ongoing diplomatic tensions between the two nations, with India frequently calling out Pakistan on international platforms for its record on minority rights and religious freedom. As global attention remains on human rights, Jaishankar's address in Parliament signals India's firm stance on holding Pakistan accountable for its treatment of religious minorities. India's consistent efforts to highlight these issues at the UN and other international bodies underscore its commitment to protecting human rights and ensuring that the concerns of persecuted communities are addressed on the global stage.

# Electoral Battle in 2026 Tamil Nadu Elections Will Be Between TVK and DMK

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) president and actor Vijay has declared that the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections will be a direct contest between his party and the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). Speaking at TVK's first general council meeting at Thiruvanniyur in Chennai on Friday, Vijay expressed confidence in his party's ability to emerge as a strong political force in the State. Vijay alleged that the ruling DMK government has been creating obstacles for TVK over the past year, making it difficult to organize conferences, meetings, and outreach programs. He claimed that such disruptions were deliberate attempts to hinder TVK's growth and prevent it from reaching the masses. Despite these challenges, he assured his supporters that his party remained committed to its mission and would not succumb to political pressure. Addressing thousands of party members gathered at the event, Vijay reiterated that TVK represents a new era of politics in Tamil Nadu. He



positioned the party as a viable alternative to traditional political forces, stating that the people of the State are looking for change. Vijay emphasized that TVK is not centered around any one individual but is a collective movement driven by the aspirations of the people. He urged party workers to stay united and work tirelessly at the grassroots level to strengthen

TVK's presence across Tamil Nadu. Highlighting the party's focus on governance, development, and welfare, Vijay assured that if TVK is elected to power, his government would prioritize key issues such as education, employment, social justice, and economic growth. He also dismissed claims that TVK was a temporary political experiment, stating that

it was founded on principles of transparency, equality, and justice. Concluding his speech, Vijay called upon the people of Tamil Nadu to support TVK in its political journey. He asserted that the 2026 elections would mark the beginning of a new chapter in the State's politics, with TVK leading the way towards a progressive and inclusive future.

# J&K Seeks Extension for Special Cells



The Jammu and Kashmir government has urged the National Commission for Women (NCW) to extend funding for its special cells supporting domestic violence victims for at least another year. These special cells, established in police stations across J&K under the initiative Violence-Free Home – A Woman's Right, were launched in 2021 to provide crucial psycho-social-legal support to women facing domestic violence. The initiative is a joint effort involving the NCW, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, the J&K Police, and the Social Welfare Department. However, the project was initially set up for a limited period, with funding scheduled to end on March 31, 2025, unless an extension is granted. The J&K Social Welfare Minister, Sakina

Itoo, confirmed that the government has formally requested NCW to extend the project, emphasizing the positive impact these cells have had on women's well-being. "We have written to NCW, requesting them to extend the project by one more year as it would further improve the condition of women. However, even if the project is discontinued, the UT has staff centers operating in every district, which will continue to provide support," said Itoo. Since its establishment in 2021, the initiative has assisted nearly 10,000 women, with each special cell comprising two trained social workers to provide necessary guidance and intervention. The cells have been instrumental in offering women a safe space to seek help against domestic abuse and legal guidance to navigate their challenges. Despite the government's plea, sources within NCW claim that the J&K administration has been reluctant to take over the cells, even though they were aware that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was valid only until March 31. The original plan was for NCW to initiate and support the project before the J&K government assumed responsibility.

# Centre Approves 2% Hike in Dearness Allowance for Government Employees

The Union Cabinet has approved a 2% increase in the dearness allowance (DA) for central government employees, bringing it up from 53% to 55% of basic pay. This move aims to provide relief against inflation and comes ahead of the 8th Pay Commission's implementation. In the last revision, DA was raised by 3% in October 2024, increasing it to 53% of basic pay. The new hike will further enhance government employees' salaries, helping them manage rising costs. DA is a critical component of salary adjustments for government staff, designed to counteract the impact of inflation. The Centre approved the 8th Pay Commission in January 2025 to revise wages and allowances for central government employees. The commission's formal constitution, including the appointment of a chairman and at least two members, is expected soon. While



DA and Dearness Relief (DR) are revised biannually, this is likely the final revision before the commission starts consultations with various stakeholders. Employee forums have advocated merging DA and DR with the basic salary before the next Pay Commission report is implemented. Historically, the 5th Pay Commission man-

dated merging DA with basic pay once it exceeded 50%. However, while the government integrated DA with basic pay in 2004, this practice was discontinued under the 6th and 7th Pay Commissions. The 8th Pay Commission is expected to introduce significant changes in salary structures, benefits, and allowances for government employees. The latest DA hike ensures financial relief for employees while they await broader salary reforms under the new pay commission. The upcoming deliberations will determine how future revisions and pay structures are formulated to benefit employees. With the rising cost of living, these adjustments play a vital role in maintaining the financial well-being of government workers. The DA increase reflects the government's commitment to supporting its employees in managing economic challenges effectively.



## Trump Hosts Iftar Dinner At White House, Thanks Muslims For Support



TPN Correspondent | New York

US President Donald Trump hosted the annual Iftar dinner at the White House on Thursday, marking a significant moment during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. In his remarks, Trump emphasized his administration's ongoing commitment to the Muslim community and its efforts to foster peace in the Middle East.

During the event, attended by Muslim leaders, diplomats, and government officials, Trump began by extending a warm "Ramadan Mubarak" to Muslim attendees. He expressed gratitude to the Muslim-American community for their support in the 2024 presidential election, saying, "The Muslim community was there for us in November — and while I'm president, I'm going to be there for you."

Trump went on to highlight the administration's diplomatic efforts, particularly in relation to the Middle East, underscoring the importance of the Abraham Accords. These agreements, which were brokered during his presidency, aimed at normalizing relations between Israel and several Arab nations. "My administration is engaged in relentless diplomacy to forge a lasting peace in the Middle East, building on the historic Abraham Accords," Trump said, adding that while the agreements had been signed, his administration would work to "fill them out" and continue building on their success. He criticized the Biden administration, claiming that little had been done to further the agreements.

Trump also remarked on the ongoing conflict in Gaza, where violence continues between Israel and Hamas. He expressed a desire for peace for all nations and reiterated the sacred nature of Ramadan for Muslims, who fast and pray during the month. In a final reflection, Trump reaffirmed the importance of peace and cooperation, stressing that his administration remains committed to fulfilling its promises to the Muslim community, both in the US and abroad. The Iftar dinner at the White House has become an annual tradition for Trump, having first hosted such an event in 2018.

## China's Door Will 'Open Wider And Wider', Xi Tells Foreign Executives



TPN Correspondent | Beijing

Chinese President Xi Jinping reaffirmed China's commitment to opening its doors wider to foreign businesses, emphasizing that the country is focused on advancing reform and economic openness. Speaking at a meeting with international executives in Beijing, including hedge fund tycoon Ray Dalio and Samsung Electronics chief Lee Jae-yong, Xi assured attendees that China would continue to push forward with its economic opening. "China is firmly committed to advancing reform and opening up. The door of opening up will only open wider and wider," Xi told the group of executives. His remarks come as China seeks to bolster foreign investments amid growing tensions with the United States, which has imposed significant tariffs on Chinese goods as part of an ongoing trade war.

Xi highlighted the country's focus on "high-quality development" while accelerating green, digital, and intelligent transformations. He emphasized China's strong industrial support capacity, which he believes will benefit foreign enterprises looking to tap into the growing Chinese market. "Foreign enterprises in China can develop their advantages and capabilities and gain an advantage in global competition," Xi said, signaling that China is open to foreign investment and innovation in sectors like technology and manufacturing.

# PM Modi to Attend BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, Followed by Sri Lanka Visit



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend the 6th BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) summit in Bangkok on April 3-4, 2025, as announced by the Ministry of Exter-

- Key focus on security, trade, investment, and connectivity.
- PM to visit Sri Lanka from April 4-6 for bilateral talks.
- Visit aligns with India's 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies.

nal Affairs on Friday. This summit will be the first in-person meeting of BIMSTEC leaders post-pandemic and the first since the military coup in Myanmar on February 1, 2021, which has plunged the country into internal conflict.

The summit, hosted by Thailand, will see Prime Minister Modi's third visit to the country. BIMSTEC, comprising India, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, and Bhutan, is expected to discuss strategies to enhance cooperation in sectors like security, trade, investment, and connectivity. Discussions will also focus on institutional and capacity-building measures to strengthen regional collaboration within the BIMSTEC framework.

Following the Bangkok summit, PM Modi will travel to Sri Lanka for a state visit from April 4 to 6. During his visit, he will meet with top Sri Lankan leadership, including President Anura Kumara Dissanayaka, to review the progress made in areas of bilateral cooperation outlined in the joint vision for fostering

partnerships between the two nations.

The Prime Minister's visit to Thailand and Sri Lanka highlights India's commitment to its 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East' policies, along with the newly introduced 'MAHASAGAR' vision—Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions. This vision aims to strengthen India's ties with the Global South, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

PM Modi's agenda also includes a meeting with Thai Prime Minister on April 3 to discuss strengthening the partnership between India and Thailand, two maritime neighbors with shared cultural, linguistic, and religious ties. Additionally, during his Sri Lanka visit, the Prime Minister will inaugurate development projects funded by India in Anuradhapura, further reinforcing bilateral cooperation.

The tour underscores India's dedication to regional cooperation and its leadership role in fostering peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.

## 7.7 Magnitude Earthquake Strikes Myanmar, Tremors Felt Across Southeast Asia

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A powerful 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck near the city of Sagaing, Myanmar, on Friday afternoon, causing widespread devastation and leaving at least 20 people dead, including 10 who died when a mosque collapsed in Mandalay during prayers. The earthquake's epicenter was approximately 260km from the capital Naypyidaw, where a 1000-bed hospital is feared to be a "mass casualty area," according to AFP. Though the number of fatalities at the hospital remains unconfirmed, scenes outside the building showed injured individuals receiving treatment on the streets, with family members offering comfort.

The quake also caused significant damage in other parts of Myanmar, including the destruction of residential buildings in Mandalay, the collapse of an old bridge over the Irrawaddy River, and the demolition of a monastery near the Thai border. In Mandalay, tremors led to further casualties, and reports suggest that more people may be trapped under the rubble.

The tremors were felt as far as northern Thailand, where buildings swayed, and metro services in Bangkok were temporarily suspended. Videos posted on social me-



dia showed people fleeing buildings in panic, and Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra declared a state of emergency in the capital. Additionally, in Bangkok's Chatuchak district, a 30-floor under-construction building collapsed, trapping 43 people. The building, intended for government offices, was reduced to rubble, and two deaths have been reported so far.

China's Yunnan province also felt the tremors, with the China Earthquake Networks

Center reporting a magnitude of 7.9. Mild tremors were also recorded in Kolkata, parts of Manipur, and Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Residents of Chiang Mai in Thailand recounted their experiences, with one person saying they had to flee their home in their pyjamas as the earthquake shook the city. The extensive damage and aftershocks have left authorities in Southeast Asia scrambling to assess the full extent of the destruction.

## Bangladesh Welcomes Chinese Participation in Teesta River Project Signs Agreements During Yunus' China Visit

TPN Correspondent | NEW DELHI

Bangladesh has welcomed China's participation in the Teesta River Comprehensive Management and Restoration Project, marking a significant step in their growing bilateral relations. This development was announced during the ongoing visit of Chief Advisor Prof. Mohammed Yunus to China. The two countries also signed an agreement for the exchange of hydrological data on the Yarlung Zangbo-Jamuna (Brahmaputra) river, as part of a broader push to strengthen cooperation in various sectors.

In a joint statement issued at the end of the official discussions, both nations agreed to begin discussions for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) "at an early date," aiming to further bolster economic ties. The statement highlighted the commitment to promoting high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, fostering international collaboration on industrial and supply chains, and working toward modernization in both countries.

The two sides also reaffirmed their support for each other's core issues, with Bangla-



desh reiterating its support for China's "One China Policy," underscoring its position that Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory. Prof. Yunus, who also participated in the Boao Forum annual meeting in Hainan, met President Xi Jinping in Beijing and held high-level discussions with Chinese traders

and investors.

Additionally, Bangladesh expressed appreciation for China's efforts in facilitating medical treatment for Bangladeshi citizens in the Yunnan province, reflecting the deepening people-to-people ties between the two nations.

On the economic front, Bangladesh welcomed Chinese companies to invest in the Mongla Port Facilities Modernisation and Expansion Project and confirmed its interest in further developing the Chinese Economic and Industrial Zone (CEIZ) in Chittagong. Both countries agreed to continue discussions on optimizing the China-Bangladesh Investment Agreement.

Looking to the future, the two countries resolved to deepen exchanges in culture, tourism, media, education, healthcare, and youth initiatives, marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Both sides also agreed to intensify cooperation in the blue economy and maritime sectors, including the establishment of a new round of Dialogue on Maritime Cooperation at an appropriate time.



# Markets End in Red Amid Volatility; Nifty & Sensex Face Resistance

Domestic stock markets were in a tight spot today. They ended with moderate losses on Friday. They tested the patience of investors by rising and falling for a while. The indices, which started flat in the morning, reached their lows due to mixed signals from Trump tariffs, the US economy, inflation data and global markets. They recovered slightly in the afternoon and returned to their initial levels. European markets collapsed as soon as they opened. Nifty faced resistance at 23,600 and Sensex at 77,600 twice. FMCG, finance and bank shares gained.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 77,606 in the previous session, opened at 77,690 on Friday. It touched an intraday low at 77,185. It reached an intraday high at 77,766. It ended at 77,414, down 191 points. The NSE Nifty, which



opened at 23,600, touched a low of 23,450 and a high of 23,450. It closed

down 72 points at 23,519. The Nifty Bank fell 11 points to settle at 51,564.

In the Nifty50, 21 companies gained while 27 lost. FMCG and finance stocks gained. Media, IT, realty, auto, metal, pharma, commodities, PSU bank, consumption, health-care and energy stocks rose. Tata Consumer, Kotak Bank, Apollo Hospitals, ONGC and Tata Motors were the top gainers. Wipro, Indusind, Shriram Finance, Cipla, M&M were the biggest losers.

Market breadth on NSE today completely shifted in favour of sellers. Out of 2976 stocks traded, 1807 lost. 1099 gained. 36 shares touched 52-week highs and 312 shares touched 52-week lows. The upper circuit reached 98 and the lower circuit reached 132.

Analysts expect the RBI to cut the repo rate by 25 basis points in the April monetary policy meeting.

The Union Cabinet approved the manufacturing PLI scheme worth Rs 25,000 crore. The rupee strengthened by 32 paise to settle at 85.46 against the dollar today. KPI Green Engineering has received an order worth Rs 756 crore. IRCON gets letter of agreement from RVNL for Rs 872 crore project. HSBC gives buy rating to Glenmark Pharma with target price of Rs 1785. Goldman Sachs maintains buy rating on Reliance Industries at Rs 1640 crore. Asian Paints approves Rs 690 crore capital expenditure. SEBI approves Blackstone-backed Ask Group to start mutual fund business. Hudco is looking at raising Rs 65,000 crore through debt.



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## SBI's C S Setty Elected Chairman of Indian Banks' Association



C S Setty, the Chairman of State Bank of India (SBI), was elected as the new chairman of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) on Friday. Setty's appointment was confirmed during the managing committee meeting of the association, and he will hold the position until the next Annual General Meeting (AGM), according to an official statement.

Alongside Setty, several prominent bankers were elected as deputy chairmen of the association. These include A Manimekhalai, Managing Director and CEO of Union Bank of India, Swarup Kumar Saha, Managing Director and CEO of Punjab and Sind Bank, and Madhav Nair, Country Head and CEO of Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait in India. These leaders will play a crucial role in steering

the association's strategic direction. In addition, B Ramesh Babu, Managing Director and CEO of private sector lender Karur Vyasya Bank, was appointed as the honorary secretary of the IBA. His role will involve managing the day-to-day operations of the association and supporting its initiatives.

The announcement comes shortly after the last AGM of the IBA, which was held earlier this month in Mumbai, the financial capital of India. The AGM was attended by M Nagaraju, the Secretary of the Department of Financial Services, underscoring the importance of the event in shaping the banking sector's future in India.

Setty's election as chairman marks a significant leadership change for the Indian Banks' Association, which represents major public and private sector banks. His extensive experience at SBI is expected to bring fresh perspectives and vision to the association. The appointment of new deputy chairmen and honorary secretary indicates the association's continued focus on strengthening leadership at the helm of India's banking industry.

This leadership transition will likely play a pivotal role in addressing key banking sector challenges and fostering collaboration among financial institutions in India.

## Airtel Brings 2Africa Pearls Subsea Cable to India, Expanding Connectivity to Africa and Europe

Telecom giant Bharti Airtel has successfully brought the 2Africa Pearls subsea cable system to Indian shores, enhancing the country's connectivity with Africa, Europe, and West Asia. This strategic move marks a significant step in Airtel's ongoing efforts to expand and diversify its global network infrastructure.



The 2Africa Pearls cable is part of the larger 2Africa project, which, upon completion, will become the world's longest subsea cable system, stretching over 45,000 kilometers. This ambitious system will link Asia, Africa, and Europe through West Asia, providing robust international bandwidth and improving global connectivity.

According to Airtel, the 2Africa Pearls system will deliver over 100 terabits per second (tbps) of international

capacity to India. This boost in capacity will enhance the country's communication network, enabling faster and more reliable broadband services for users and businesses alike.

Sharat Sinha, Director and CEO of Airtel Business, expressed excitement about the new addition to Airtel's network, stating, "We are thrilled to bring the 2Africa Pearls cable to India, adding to our network resilience. We are aggressively

diversifying our global network and recently landed the SEA-WE-ME-6 cable in Chennai and Mumbai. We will continue investing in global cable systems to future-proof our network and deliver high uptime, reliability, and superior quality services to our customers."

Submarine cables are essential infrastructure that connect countries worldwide, facilitating broadband and communication services. With around 650 submarine cable systems globally, approximately 570 are operational, reflecting the crucial role these cables play in global connectivity.

This expansion is part of Airtel's broader strategy to strengthen its international network, ensuring high-quality services and enhanced connectivity between key global regions.

## SEBI Proposes New Expiry Day Restrictions for Equity Derivatives Products



## India's core sector growth slows to 2.9% in February

India's core infrastructure sectors, which contribute to about 40% of the country's industrial output, showed a slowdown in February 2025, growing by just 2.9%. This marks the slowest monthly growth in five months, compared to 7.1% growth in the same month the previous year.

The latest data, released by the Union commerce ministry on Friday, revealed that only three out of the eight core sectors experienced a rise in production, with cement and fertilizers standing out with higher output compared to the previous year. However, the overall output of these core sectors was weaker than the previous month, as five out of eight indicators, including coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery, and cement output, showed a decline.

In February, cement production grew by 10.5%, and fertilizers output rose by 10.2%, marking a positive year-on-year performance. However, cement production growth slowed down on a monthly basis. Coal output showed a modest rise of 1.7%, its slowest in six months, while refinery output increased by 0.8%. In contrast, the output of crude oil and

natural gas contracted by 5.2% and 6%, respectively. Steel production grew by 5.6%, and electricity output rose by 2.8%, both showing an improvement compared to January. On the other hand, the overall growth of the core sector has moderated, with a significant slowdown seen in coal, crude oil, and natural gas, which contributed to the decline.

This slowdown in core sector output comes as India's manufacturing sector also faced a dip, with manufacturing growth falling to a 14-month low in February, according to the HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI). The moderation in core sector growth is likely to impact the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), with predictions suggesting a dip to 3-3.5% growth for February 2025, down from 5% in January.

As per Aditi Nayar, chief economist at Icria Ltd., the slower growth was partly due to the high base effect of the leap year. Despite this, the sluggish performance in key sectors raises concerns about the sustainability of India's industrial momentum in the coming months.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed a significant change to the settlement schedule of equity derivatives products offered by stock exchanges. The regulatory body has suggested that the final settlement day or expiry day for these products be restricted to either Tuesday or Thursday. This proposal aims to provide greater predictability and stability for market participants regarding expiry days.

Currently, equity derivatives contracts such as futures and options

(F&O) have varying expiry days, which can often lead to uncertainties and market volatility. By limiting expiry days to just two specific days, SEBI intends to streamline the process, reducing the potential for market disruptions while enhancing transparency. This change will help market participants better plan their trading strategies, as they will know exactly when to expect the settlement of their derivative contracts.

The move follows concerns about the current system's complexity

and its impact on market liquidity. With multiple expiry dates across the week, traders and investors can sometimes face challenges in managing their portfolios and adjusting positions. A more standardized expiry schedule is expected to improve the efficiency of the equity derivatives market, making it easier for participants to engage in trading without the added uncertainty of fluctuating expiry days.

If implemented, this new restriction would bring Indian equity derivatives products in line with international markets, where more consistent expiry schedules are commonly followed. SEBI's initiative is also likely to enhance the attractiveness of Indian markets to foreign investors, offering a more predictable trading environment.

This proposal is currently under consultation, with SEBI seeking feedback from market participants and other stakeholders before finalizing the decision. If accepted, it could lead to significant changes in the way equity derivatives are traded in India, with potential benefits in terms of both market efficiency and participant confidence.





## YouTube Tests Notification Reduction System



Google has announced that YouTube is testing a new system designed to reduce notifications from subscribed channels that users no longer watch frequently. This experiment aims to strike a balance between keeping users informed and preventing unwanted alerts without requiring them to unsubscribe. Currently, YouTube users can set notifications to “All,” ensuring they receive updates from their favorite channels via push notifications. However, this can become frustrating when users continue receiving alerts from channels they no longer engage with. The only existing solution is to unsubscribe, which can be tedious if the user follows many channels. The new system aims to resolve this issue by automatically limiting notifications from infrequently watched channels. According to Google, this system will ensure that users who haven’t interacted with a channel recently will stop receiving push notifications from it. However,

these notifications will still be available in the YouTube app’s notification inbox. This change does not impact channels that upload infrequently or those with which users actively engage. Rather than adjusting notification settings for each channel individually or disabling all notifications at the app level, this experiment provides a middle ground. By limiting unwanted alerts, YouTube aims to enhance the user experience without affecting creators’ reach significantly. However, since this feature is still in the testing phase, only a small group of users currently has access to it. In addition to this notification experiment, YouTube recently introduced another test concerning monetization. Earlier this month, the platform began automatically submitting videos with a “Limited or no ads” rating for an additional review. This process ensures that even newly uploaded private videos undergo a monetization assessment, which may take up to 24 hours.

## UK Man Finds Forgotten Lottery Ticket, Wins Over ₹10 Crore



Darren Burfitt, a 44-year-old greenkeeper from Swansea, recently discovered he had won £1 million (over ₹11 crore) in the lottery after checking an old ticket that had been sitting in his car for four months.

According to The Metro, Burfitt unknowingly held a winning ticket but had forgotten about it. He often stored his lottery tickets in the central console of his car for safekeeping but never got around to checking them. His unexpected windfall came when his four-year-old son asked for a snack. Instead of opening a new bag of crisps, Burfitt went to fetch an unfinished packet from the car. While doing so, he remembered the tickets and decided to

scan them using the National Lottery app. To his amazement, one of the tickets turned out to be a jackpot winner. He recalled hearing about a public appeal to find a missing lottery winner but never imagined it could be him.

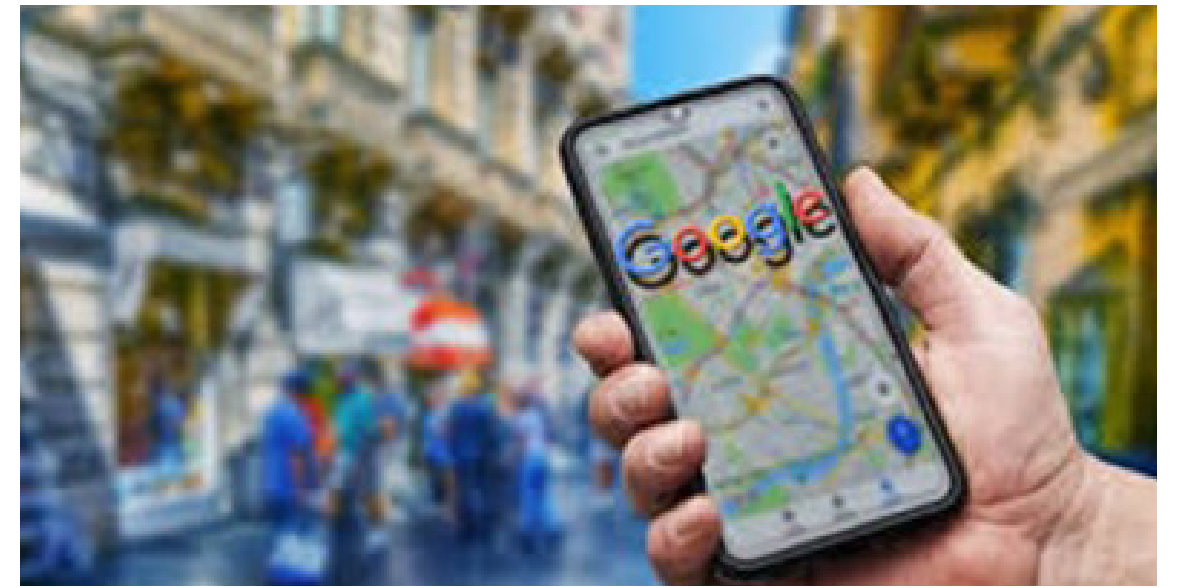
“When my son asked for a packet of crisps, I thought of the one in my car. I went out to get it and grabbed my National Lottery tickets at the same time. When I scanned them on the app, I was stunned,” Burfitt shared.

This stroke of luck turned an ordinary moment into a life-changing one. While it remains unclear how he plans to use his winnings, the fortunate find has undoubtedly changed his future.

## Google Introduces New AI-Powered Travel Planning Features

Google has announced the rollout of several new features across its platforms to simplify travel planning. These updates, some powered by AI, will enhance Google Search, Maps, and Lens, making it easier for users to organize vacations. One of the key upgrades is the introduction of AI Overviews in Google Search, which will now provide trip ideas for cities, regions, and countries. Users can search for customized itineraries, such as “create an itinerary for Costa Rica with a focus on nature,” and receive AI-generated recommendations, photos, and user reviews. An expandable map feature will help users visualize their destinations, and trip details can be exported via Google Docs, Gmail, or saved in Maps. This feature is currently available in English in the US on mobile and desktop.

Google Maps is also receiving an upgrade that allows users to identify locations from screenshots stored on their devices. By adding these images to Maps, Gemini AI will recognize the places and highlight them on the map, enabling users to plan routes or explore nearby attractions. This update is rolling out to iOS users in the US, with Android support coming soon. Additionally, Google is introducing a hotel price-tracking feature. Users can activate a toggle below search filters to monitor price changes for hotels on their selected dates. If prices drop significantly, Google will send an automatic email alert. This feature is now available globally on mobile and desktop browsers. These updates aim to provide a seamless trip-planning experience by leveraging AI and enhancing user-friendly tools across Google’s ecosystem.



## Ghibli AI Trend Takes Over Celebrities and Brands

OpenAI’s latest feature in ChatGPT-4, Image Generation, has sparked a massive trend on social media, allowing users to transform their photos into the enchanting animation style of Studio Ghibli films. People have been sharing adorable, wide-eyed selfies and creatively reimagining their pets, friends, and family in the signature style of Hayao Miyazaki’s beloved movies. The trend has now caught the attention of celebrities and brands. Renowned personalities like Sachin Tendulkar, Devendra Fadnavis, and Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma have shared their Ghibli-inspired portraits. Major brands such as Airbus and India Post

have also embraced the trend, showcasing unique and artistic adaptations of their visuals.

Karan Johar’s Dharma Productions took it a step further by recreating iconic characters from films like Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani, OK Jaanu, Badrinath Ki Dulhania, Shershaah, and Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani in the whimsical Ghibli animation style.

With more celebrities and brands joining in, the Ghibli AI trend is proving to be a viral sensation, merging nostalgia with cutting-edge AI technology.



## “Chaitra Navratri 2025: Kalash Sthapana Ritual”



Chaitra Navratri 2025 is set to begin on March 30 (Sunday) and will continue until April 7 (Monday), marking nine days of devotion to Goddess Durga. This Hindu festival is widely celebrated across India and by devotees around the world. The festival begins with Ghatasthapana, also known as Kalash Sthapana, a sacred ritual that symbolizes the invocation of divine energy. This ritual is considered one of the most significant aspects of Navratri, as it marks the establishment of a holy space dedicated to the goddess. Kalash Sthapana is performed with great devotion, signifying the presence of Goddess Durga and inviting her blessings for prosperity, health, and spiritual growth. Before performing the

ritual, the designated space is thoroughly cleaned and purified to ensure a sacred connection with the divine. Devotees believe that conducting this ritual with sincerity and faith brings positive energy and success throughout Navratri. Observing the Shubh Muhurat (auspicious time) for Kalash Sthapana is considered crucial for ensuring the ritual’s effectiveness. Priests and devotees follow specific guidelines to perform the ceremony correctly, ensuring that the divine energy is invoked in the most favorable manner. With the festival set to begin soon, temples and households across the country are preparing for the grand celebrations, filled with prayers, fasting, and devotion to Goddess Durga.



## RCB Break 17-Year Jinx with 50-Run Victory Over CSK at MA Chidambaram Stadium



Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) secured a historic 50-run win over Chennai Super Kings (CSK) on Friday, breaking a 17-year jinx of never winning a match at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. This victory marked RCB's second-ever win at the venue, with their first coming back in the inaugural season of the IPL in 2008. Invited to bat first, RCB posted a competitive total of 196/7 in their 20 overs. Rajat Patidar was the star with the bat, scoring a well-crafted 51 runs off 32 balls. His knock anchored RCB's innings, and he was well-supported by Phil Salt (32 off 16) and Devdutt Padikkal (27 off 14),

who played vital cameos at the top. Tim David also contributed with a late flourish, scoring an explosive 22 not out off just 8 balls, which included three consecutive sixes in a single over, providing much-needed momentum for the team. For CSK, Noor Ahmad was the standout bowler, taking 3 wickets for 36 runs. Despite his efforts, CSK's bowlers struggled to contain RCB's batting onslaught, with the total being too high for them to chase down. Chasing a challenging total, CSK never really seemed in contention as RCB's bowlers kept up the pressure throughout the innings. Josh Hazlewood was exceptional, finishing with figures of

3/21, effectively dismantling CSK's top order. Yash Dayal and Liam Livingstone also made significant contributions, each picking up two wickets and further tightening the screws on CSK's chase. CSK's batting fell short despite a few individual contributions, and they were ultimately bowled out for 146 runs. RCB's disciplined bowling attack and well-timed batting proved too much for the home side, giving them a much-needed win at a venue where they had struggled for nearly two decades. This victory boosts RCB's confidence as they continue their IPL campaign, looking to push further in the tournament.

## Alexandra Eala's Dream Run Ends at Miami Open, Jessica Pegula Advances to Final

Alexandra Eala's incredible run at the Miami Open came to a heartbreaking end on Thursday as she lost to American fourth seed Jessica Pegula in a thrilling three-set semi-final. After 2 hours and 24 minutes of intense play, Pegula emerged victorious with a 7-6 (7/3), 5-7, 6-3 win, securing her place in Saturday's final against world number one Aryna Sabalenka. Eala, ranked 140th in the world, had already made history by defeating three Grand Slam champions — Jelena Ostapenko, Madison Keys, and Iga Swiatek — to reach the semi-finals. The 19-year-old was the lowest-ranked player to make it this far in the tournament's history and was determined to continue her dream run against Pegula.

The match was a rollercoaster, with Pegula gaining the upper hand in the second set by breaking Eala's serve to go 3-1 up. However, Eala fought back fiercely, breaking Pegula three times in the set and eventually serving to level the match at 6-5. Despite the resilient fight, Eala's forehand faltered in the decider, allowing Pegula to break and serve out the match. After the match, Eala expressed her disappointment but remained positive, acknowledging the incredible week she had. "I gave everything I had, I'm half tape, I'm like a mummy. I did everything and I have no regrets," she said. She also reflected on the alignment of stars that had helped her achieve such a remarkable feat and set her sights on continuing her form.



## FA Cup Quarter-Finals: Manchester City, Fulham, and Nottingham Forest Eye Historic Runs

As the FA Cup quarter-finals approach this weekend, Manchester City, Fulham, and Nottingham Forest are all looking to make their mark in the competition, each with their own unique challenges and aspirations. Bournemouth Pose Threat to Manchester City Manchester City, struggling in the Premier League this season, face a crucial clash against Bournemouth in the FA Cup, their last chance of silverware. The Sky Blues are still reeling from a surprising 2-1 defeat to the Cherries in November, which marked their first-ever loss to Bournemouth. Since that setback, Pep Guardiola's side has only won once in their last 11 games across all competitions, leaving them battling to secure a Champions League spot next season. A further loss to Bournemouth, who have never



reached the FA Cup semi-finals, would further tarnish what has been a difficult season for the

Premier League giants. Fulham Aim to End FA Cup Drought Fulham will host Crystal Palace on Saturday, hoping to end their 50-year wait for an FA Cup final appearance. The Cottagers have not made it to the final since 1975 and have not reached the semi-finals since 2002. After an impressive victory over holders Manchester United in the fifth round, Marco Silva's side will be looking to make a deep cup run, despite a recent 2-0 loss to Palace in the league. Palace, who have never won the FA Cup, could welcome back striker Jean-Philippe Mateta after recovering from a head injury sustained in a previous match. Nottingham Forest Without Chris Wood Nottingham Forest, in the midst of a dream season, are targeting a place in the FA Cup semi-

finals for the first time since 1991. However, they will be without star striker Chris Wood, who is sidelined due to a hip injury sustained on international duty with New Zealand. Forest, currently third in the Premier League, are pushing for a Champions League spot and hope to continue their cup run despite Wood's absence. Preston's Historic Ambitions Against Villa Preston, the only Championship team remaining in the FA Cup, will face Aston Villa with an eye on an upset. With two FA Cup wins in their history, Preston has not reached the semi-finals since 1964. Meanwhile, Villa, aiming to make their first semi-final appearance in 10 years, will look to build on their solid form this season, having already made it to the Champions League quarter-finals.

## Jaismine Clinches Gold Trophy at Railways retain trophy

At the Elite Women's National Boxing Championships in Greater Noida, Commonwealth Games medallist Jaismine Lamboria and two-time Asian Champion Pooja Rani triumphed in contrasting fashion to secure gold medals. The Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) emerged as the overall champions, clinching the team trophy with nine medals, including five golds. Jaismine, representing the Services Sports Control Board (SSCB), maintained her dominance throughout the tournament, delivering a flawless performance in the featherweight final. From the first bell, the Paris Olympian

displayed a mix of relentless aggression and impeccable technique, overpowering Haryana's Priya. The Birmingham CWG bronze medallist's control over the match was undeniable, and she sealed a unanimous decision victory. Following her stellar performance, Jaismine was awarded the top performer prize, which included a ₹50,000 cash award. Reflecting on her victo-



ry, Jaismine expressed satisfaction with her improvement throughout the tournament. On the other hand, Pooja Rani faced a much tougher challenge in the 80kg final against Lalfakmawi Ralte of the All India Police. Despite a hard-fought contest, the Tokyo Olympian edged out Ralte with a 4-3 decision. Pooja, a former Asian Games medallist, claimed her ninth gold at the Na-

tional Championships. She shared her appreciation for the tough competition she faced and praised her ability to overcome the challenges posed by Ralte's power. Railways' strong performance in the tournament, with five golds and four bronze medals, ensured their place atop the team standings. Haryana followed closely in second with two golds, three silvers, and one bronze, while the Police team secured one gold, four silvers, and two bronzes. Services also had a perfect campaign, with Jaismine and Sakshi leading the charge, ensuring a 100 percent win record for their team.



Novak Djokovic showcased his rising form as he secured a 6-3, 7-6 (7-4) win over American Sebastian Korda in the quarterfinals of the Miami Open on Thursday, March 27, 2025. The match, which was rescheduled from Wednesday night, was a pivotal moment in Djokovic's campaign for his seventh Miami Open title and his 100th professional victory. The 37-year-old Serbian was in fine form, particularly in the second set, where he made an impressive comeback from a 4-1 and 5-2 deficit. Djokovic fought back with determination to win the tiebreaker, ending the match in one hour and 24 minutes. He served an ace on match point and posted an 83% first-serve percentage, a major factor in

his victory. Djokovic credited his serving as the key to his second-set resurgence, calling it his best serving performance in a long time. With this win, Djokovic advances to the semifinals, where he will face Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov. Djokovic holds a 12-1 record against Dimitrov, who reached the Miami Open final in 2024. Djokovic is aiming for his seventh title at this tournament, having won all six of his previous titles at the event's former venue, Key Biscayne. Meanwhile, in the women's draw, the upcoming final is set between third-seeded Jessica Pegula and top seed Aryna Sabalenka. The two are set for a rematch of the 2024 U.S. Open final, which was won by Sabalenka.





## Swapna & Priyanka Dutt's Monumental Feat



The inaugural Women in Entertainment Power List by The Hollywood Reporter India highlights some of the most influential women reshaping the Indian entertainment industry. The March cover features five trailblazing women: the dynamic sister duo Swapna Dutt and Priyanka Dutt, alongside Zoya Akhtar, Alia Bhatt, and Nayanthara. In this special edition, they open up about their journeys, early struggles, and the challenges of balancing personal and professional boundaries while redefining excellence in showbiz.

Telugu producers Swapna Dutt and Priyanka Dutt have left an undeniable mark on the industry through their production houses, Swapna Cinema and Vyjayanthi Movies, delivering consistent blockbusters. Their inclusion in The Hollywood Reporter India is a historic achievement, as no Telugu filmmaker has previously received this recognition. Their success further solidifies the growing impact of women in Indian cinema, proving that talent and determination can break barriers and set new industry benchmarks.

## Hrithik Roshan To Make Directorial Debut With Krrish 4



Bollywood superstar Hrithik Roshan is all set to step into the director's chair with the highly anticipated superhero film Krrish 4. The project was officially announced earlier today, marking a significant milestone in Hrithik's career. While it is yet to be confirmed whether he will reprise his iconic superhero role or introduce a new lead, fans are eagerly awaiting further details.

Hrithik began his journey in the industry as an assistant director on his father Rakesh Roshan's films Khudgarzi and Karan Arjun. Rakesh had previously helmed the Krrish franchise, including Koi Mil Gaya, Krrish, and Krrish 3. Now, Krrish 4 will be jointly produced by Rakesh Roshan and Bollywood's leading filmmaker Aditya Chopra under Yash Raj Films.

Announcing the news, Rakesh Roshan shared a heartfelt post on Instagram with Hrithik. "Duggu, 25 years ago I launched you as an actor, and today, along with Aditya Chopra, I launch you as a director for our most ambitious film, Krrish 4," he wrote. Hrithik's girlfriend, actor Saba Azad, reacted with heart emojis, celebrating his new journey.

## Robinhood: A Thrilling Heist with a Social Message



Ram (Nithin), an orphan, grows up witnessing the hardships of fellow orphans suffering from hunger. Determined to help, he devises intelligent schemes to steal from the wealthy and distribute the money to the needy. Meanwhile, a ruthless villain (Devadatta Nage) sets out to

expand his international marijuana business and targets Rudrakonda village, known for its high-demand special variety of marijuana. Reena Vasudev (Sreeleela), the daughter of AV Pharma's Australian head, Abhinav Vasudev (Siju), visits Rudrakonda, setting off a series of in-

triguing events. How are Ram, the villain, and AV Pharma interconnected? Why does Ram accompany Reena? How does the international drug mafia kingpin David (David Warner) play a role in this conflict? The answers unfold on the big screen in this action-packed heist drama.

## Kartik Aaryan & Sreeleela's BTS Sparks Excitement

Bollywood star Kartik Aaryan has shared an exclusive behind-the-scenes (BTS) glimpse from his upcoming untitled film, directed by Anurag Basu. This project is highly anticipated as it marks the Bollywood debut of South Indian actress Sreeleela. In the newly released image, Kartik is seen gazing at Sreeleela as they sit amidst a stunning tea garden, with his rugged new look—long hair and a thick beard—stealing the spotlight. Adding a hint of romance, Kartik holds two cups of tea, suggesting a heartfelt scene. The duo is currently filming in North Bengal's scenic tea gardens, with several BTS pictures surfacing online since Wednesday. One standout image features Kartik riding a bike with Sreeleela behind him, his bandaged hand hinting at intense action sequences.



## Rakul Preet Singh Reveals She Rejected Puri Jagannadh's Offer

MAD Square follows Laddu (Vishnu Oi), who ends up in Tihar Central Jail, striking fear among inmates. Curious about his past, they ask how he got there. Laddu reveals how his friends—Manoj (Ram Nithin), Ashok (Narne Nithin), and Damodhar (Sangeeth Sobhan)—turned his wedding into chaos, triggering unexpected events that landed him in jail. The film thrives on its humor, with

Sangeeth Sobhan, Narne Nithin, and Ram Nithin delivering energetic performances. Vishnu Oi shines, and Muralidhar Goud adds to the fun with his impeccable comedic timing. While comedy is the focus, some jokes feel forced, and the second half lacks the energy of the first. Sunil's character, Bhai, and supporting roles are underutilized. Despite minor flaws, MAD Square remains an enjoyable entertainer.

Actress Rakul Preet Singh recently shared insights about her film journey. She revealed that she entered modeling during college and had little knowledge of South Indian cinema. Her debut opportunity came from the Kannada film Gilli after her father spoke with the filmmakers. She fell in love with acting and decided to pursue it full-time. Rakul disclosed that after her debut, director Puri Ja-

gannadh offered her a film, requesting 70 days of her dates. However, due to her lack of industry awareness, she declined the offer and missed several good opportunities. Speaking about her marriage, she said she and Jacky Bhagnani shared similar values, leading to their union with family blessings. She also confirmed that marriage hasn't affected her acting career, as she continues to take on new projects.



## MAD Square – A Watchable Comedy Entertainer

