

# Telangana Families in Distress After Deadly Umrah Bus Crash Near Madinah

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Dozens of families in Hyderabad were plunged into acute distress early Monday morning following the tragic news of a devastating bus accident near Madina, Saudi Arabia, involving a bus carrying 54 Umrah pilgrims who had traveled from the city. The bus reportedly collided with an oil tanker around 1:30 am (IST), resulting in the immediate death of 45 Indian pilgrims. Hyderabad Police Commissioner V. C. Sajjanar confirmed the severity of the incident, stating that the group had traveled from Hyderabad to Jeddah on November 9th with a travel plan spanning from November 9th to the 23rd. Of the original group, 46 boarded the bus from Mecca to Medina, with 45 perishing in the crash. Eight pilgrims in the original group escaped the disas-



**The scale of the tragedy prompted swift diplomatic and governmental responses.**  
**External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who is currently on a visit to Russia, expressed his profound shock over the accident, assuring that the Indian Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulate in Jeddah are providing the "fullest support" to the affected Indian nationals and their families.**

ter by choosing to travel separately. Distraught relatives immediately rushed to the organizing travel agencies across Hyderabad, desperately seeking information about their loved ones.

The scale of the tragedy prompted swift diplomatic and governmental responses. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who is currently on a visit to Russia, expressed his profound shock over the accident, assuring that the Indian Embassy in Riyadh and

the Consulate in Jeddah are providing the "fullest support" to the affected Indian nationals and their families. At the state level, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy also expressed shock and immediately directed Chief Secretary K. Ramakrishna Rao and DGP B. Shivadhar Reddy to gather complete details on the accident. The Chief Minister sought specific information on the number of victims who hailed from Telangana and instructed officials to coordinate seamlessly with

the Union Ministry of External Affairs and the Saudi Embassy to ascertain all facts and implement necessary immediate relief measures.

To coordinate assistance and provide information, the Indian mission in Jeddah quickly established a control room. Similarly, a dedicated control room has been set up at the Telangana Secretariat to serve as a single point of contact for the affected families. The helpline numbers—+91 99799 59754 and +91 99129 19545—have been circulated to provide appropriate information and necessary assistance to the distraught families of the bus accident victims in Saudi Arabia. The incident has cast a pall over the city, with many Hyderabad families awaiting official confirmation on the identity and status of those killed and injured in the catastrophic collision.



## Supreme Court Grants Telangana Speaker Four-Week Deadline in Disqualification Case

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

The Supreme Court of India has granted the Telangana Assembly Speaker a final extension of four weeks to decide on the petitions seeking the disqualification of MLAs who defected from their original parties. The division bench explicitly commanded the Speaker to pronounce a final decision on the matter within this fresh deadline, emphasizing that this is the last opportunity being provided for the completion of the long-pending constitutional process. This development follows a period of in-

tense legal wrangling and repeated delays in the proceedings related to the anti-defection law. The issue was brought before the Supreme Court after the Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) party filed two separate petitions, arguing that the Speaker had failed to take any action despite a previous directive from the Supreme Court setting a deadline of July 31st for a decision.

In their petitions, the BRS not only sought the disqualification of the defecting MLAs but also requested the court to take action against the Speaker for non-compliance with its earlier judicial order. However, the Speaker's office preemptively

filed its own petition before the Supreme Court, acknowledging that the disqualification proceedings had been initiated in accordance with the court's earlier directions but requesting additional time to reach a final decision. The Speaker argued that the complex nature of the deflection cases and the necessity of providing fair hearings to all concerned parties required more time than originally allocated by the court. The Supreme Court bench heard arguments from both sides today, carefully considering the BRS's demand for swift action and the Speaker's request for more time to ensure due process.

After considering the

## BCs to Get 42% Reservation in Party Tickets, Says Ponguleti



TPN Bureau / Hyderabad, Nov. 17

In a significant political announcement ahead of the upcoming local body elections, Telangana Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Sunday declared that Backward Classes (BCs) will be allotted 42% of all party tickets. He said the decision reflects the government's commitment to ensuring stronger political representation for backward communities.

Speaking to reporters after holding a detailed review with the selec-

tion committees, Ponguleti said the party leadership had directed the committees to prioritize BC candidates across constituencies. "We want to make political empowerment a reality, not just a promise. Allocating 42 percent tickets to BCs is a step in that direction," he said.

The minister stressed that the selection process would be conducted transparently and strictly on merit. He added that the party had prepared a clear framework to identify strong BC candidates with grassroots connect, organisational experience and public

acceptance.

Ponguleti also said that the final list of candidates for the upcoming MLC, MPTC, ZPTC and municipal elections would be released after consultations with local leaders. "Chief Minister's instructions are very clear — BC representation must be visible, meaningful and politically effective. We are working accordingly," he added.

Political observers see this move as part of a broader attempt by the ruling party to consolidate its base among BC communities, who form a sizeable share of Telangana's electorate.

## New Hyderabad CP Sajjanar Vows Zero Tolerance on Drugs, Traffic, and Crime



TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Upon officially assuming the charge as the new Police Commissioner (CP) of Hyderabad, V.C. Sajjanar immediately addressed the media,

outlining a determined strategy of zero tolerance against major criminal and social issues plaguing the rapidly developing city. Sajjanar affirmed his commitment to maintaining peace and order, stating his primary focus would be on combat-

The CP also identified cybercrime as a critical area requiring urgent attention, noting that fraudsters are increasingly targeting the elderly due to their lack of awareness and alertness regarding online threats. He stressed the

importance of public awareness to prevent citizens from falling victim to scams, particularly those involving investment in the stock market. Sajjanar highlighted other burgeoning criminal activities, cautioning the public against believing in "digital arrests" and falling for frauds related to medicines for rare diseases. He confirmed that the police would maintain special surveillance on all types of online fraudsters. Furthermore, the new CP announced plans to specifically address adulterated food by establishing a Special Task Force and a Market Intelligence System to take stringent action against those involved in food adulteration crimes.

Addressing the city's

severe traffic problem, which is exacerbated by the purchase of lakhs of new vehicles annually, Sajjanar promised efforts to mitigate congestion, noting that traffic not only wastes time but also negatively impacts public health. In a stern warning, he declared that drunk drivers will be treated as "road terrorists" and dealt with severely, signaling a continuation and possible escalation of the city's famous drunk driving checks. Finally, the CP emphasized that strict action will be taken against those who commit atrocities against women and children, making it clear that any form of harassment against women would be treated with the utmost seriousness.

## CP Sajjanar Warns Pirates After Arrest of iBomma Chief Immadi Ravi; Film Fraternity Applauds



abilities, including Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna, S. S. Rajamouli, and Dil Raju, all of whom extended their appreciation to the police for the successful operation. Commissioner Sajjanar revealed that Ravi was not only running a large-scale piracy racket but was also involved in a betting mafia and selling public data on the Dark Web. Police recovered numerous laptops, hard disks, computers, and pirated film copies during the operation. Sajjanar confirmed that Ravi had amassed nearly 20 crore through the iBomma website alone. He revealed Ravi's sophisticated operation involved maintaining 65

mirror websites and purchasing 110 domains since 2019, ensuring that if one domain was blocked, another would immediately take its place. The police successfully seized 3 crore from his

Ravi under the IT Act and Copyright Act. CP Sajjanar highlighted that Ravi also used his piracy sites and Telegram channels to display advertisements for betting apps, earning him crores of rupees. The Commissioner stressed that the operation succeeded despite iBomma Ravi having challenged the police on social media, emphasizing that the police should never be underestimated. He revealed that Ravi, a BSc Computers graduate from Visakhapatnam, had acquired licenses and PAN cards under different names in Maharashtra and had even secured citizenship in

St. Kitts and Nevis in the Caribbean to evade authorities. Ravi managed his global piracy racket while residing in France and traveling to various countries. The Commissioner issued a strict final warning that all collaborators involved in the piracy racket, including those already arrested like Prashanth and Shivaraj, and those who facilitated the operation via servers in the USA, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, would be tracked down.

Megastar Chiranjeevi praised the police for their "hard work" in apprehending the culprit who dared to challenge the law, noting that mil-

lions depend on the film industry for their livelihood. Actor Nagarjuna revealed that his own family was victimized by a cybercrime, where a family member was subjected to a 'digital arrest' for two days, demonstrating the widespread danger posed by these online criminal networks. Nag cautioning the public that piracy websites are a "big trap" and that they are not just about showing free movies but are part of a massive international scam to steal data from the 50 lakh subscribers and swindle "thousands of crores" from the public and the industry.

# Telangana Government Announces 5 Lakh Ex-Gratia for Saudi Bus Tragedy Victims

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025. The Telangana Cabinet has announced a decision to provide an ex-gratia payment of 5 lakh each to the bereaved families of the Umrah pilgrims from Hyderabad who tragically died in the recent bus accident near Medinah, Saudi Arabia. This decision was

taken at a cabinet meeting following the devastating news of the collision between the pilgrim bus and a diesel tanker, which resulted in the death of 45 Indian nationals, many of whom were residents of specific areas in Hyderabad. In addition to the financial compensation, the cabinet re-

solved to immediately dispatch a government delegation to Saudi Arabia to coordinate relief and assistance efforts. The high-level delegation will include Minister Azharuddin, an MIM MLA, and a senior official from the Minority Welfare Department. Crucially, the government also decided

to make arrangements for two family members from each affected family to be taken to Saudi Arabia. A major decision regarding the last rites was also finalized: the mortal remains of the deceased will be interred in Saudi Arabia according to religious traditions and customs, rather

than being repatriated to India, to ensure a timely and respectful resolution to the tragedy. The measures announced by the state government aim to provide immediate financial relief and necessary logistical and emotional support to the families impacted by this massive loss of life.

## Minister Seethakka Launches 'Vijaya Milk' Pilot Project for Anganwadi Children



TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Minister for Women Development and Child Welfare, Dr. Danasari Anasuya (Seethakka), inaugurated a pioneering pilot project in the Mulugu district, making Telangana the first state in the nation to provide Vijaya Milk to pre-school children attending Anganwadi centers. The

initiative, launched at the Krishna Colony Anganwadi Center in Mulugu district center on Monday, November 17, 2025, involves distributing 100 ml of milk daily to pre-school children. The primary objective of this program is to build a malnutrition-free Telangana by tackling the prevalent nutritional deficiencies among young

children. Minister Seethakka, speaking as the Chief Guest, stated that the government is firmly committed to overcoming nutritional deficiencies and transforming Telangana into a malnutrition-free state. She explained that Mulugu, being one of the most underdeveloped districts, was specifically chosen

for this pilot project due to its urgent need for nutritional support. The Minister stressed the crucial role of Anganwadi teachers in ensuring the program's success. She instructed the teachers to actively engage with parents, informing them about the various services provided by the Anganwadi centers and encouraging dedicated efforts to make the centers function on par with corporate schools. The success of this pilot project in Mulugu will determine its phased expansion across the entire state, significantly broadening the scope of nutritional support provided through the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme. Additionally, during the event, which coincided with Elderly Persons Week, the Minister unveiled posters and issued a stern warning against neglecting parents. She announced that the government would confiscate and transfer the assets of any children found neglecting their parents, ensuring the parents' financial security. Furthermore, in observance of Children's Rights Week, Minister Seethakka unveiled posters promoting the protection of child rights and against child marriages. She labeled child marriage as a hindrance to a child's development and called upon CDPOs, Supervisors, and Anganwadi teachers to work diligently to make Mulugu a child marriage-free district. The launch event was attended by ITDA PO Chitra Mishra, Additional Collector Mahender Ji, District Collector, Library Corporation Chairman Banoth Ravichandra, and various officials from ICDS, DCPU, CHL, Sakhi, and DHEW departments, all pledging their commitment to the program's success.

## Sports Minister Honors Triple Gold Medalist Para-Swimmer Azeem



TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Telangana Sports Minister Vakiti Srihari felicitated International Para-Swimmer Mohammad Azeem for his exceptional achievement of winning three Gold Medals at the 25th Para National Swimming Championship, which took place in Gachibowli, Hyderabad. Azeem, who hails from Kerala, paid a courtesy

visit to Minister Srihari at the State Secretariat, where he was warmly embraced and congratulated by the Minister for his remarkable performance. Azeem secured Gold Medals in the 50-meter and 100-meter Freestyle events, and the 50-meter Backstroke.

Minister Srihari highly praised Azeem's incredible resilience, noting that despite being

born with physical challenges—lacking both hands and having a shorter leg—his ability to excel in swimming and secure three Gold Medals is a monumental achievement. The Minister emphasized that Mohammad Azeem stands as a true inspiration for the current generation of youth. Minister Srihari extended his best wishes to Azeem, who has also

qualified for the 2028 Para-Olympics, expressing his strong hope that the swimmer will bring home many more Gold Medals from the international competition.

Mohammad Azeem expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Minister for recognizing his talent and honoring his achievements. He humbly credited his success to the

continuous support he received from the "Swimmer Queen" Victoria and the meticulous guidance of his coaches. The Minister's warm reception and commendation serve as a significant boost to the morale of para-athletes in the state and the country, highlighting the importance of recognizing and nurturing talent regardless of physical limitations.



## Banakacherla Project Tensions Ease as AP Cancels Tenders

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Tensions between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh regarding the controversial Polavaram-Banakacherla Link Project have temporarily eased after Andhra Pradesh abruptly cancelled the tenders for the scheme.

The project, which was designed to divert up to 200 TMC of Godavari floodwaters to the

Rayalaseema region, had been a major point of contention between the two Telugu states, prompting Telangana's Irrigation Department to prepare a comprehensive strategy for intervention in the Supreme Court. Following the sudden revocation of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) tenders by Andhra Pradesh on November 7, and its apparent decision to shelve the project, Telangana's Irrigation Department has deferred immediate legal action. The department is currently engaged in high-level deliberations to determine its next strategic move, choosing to observe Andhra Pradesh's subsequent actions before escalating the matter to the apex court, as the project's cancellation has temporarily de-escalated the water conflict.

## Minister Surekha Directs Grand Arrangements for Komuravelli Mallanna Kalyanam & Jatara



TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Endowments, Forest, and Environment Minister Konda Surekha directed high-ranking Endowments officials to ensure that the Komuravelli Mallanna Kalyanam and Jatara in Cheryala, Siddipet district, are organized on a grand and magnificent scale, reflecting the spiritual and cultural traditions of Telangana. The Minister conducted a video conference on Monday, November 17, 2025, from her office in the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Telangana Secretariat, reviewing the preparations with Siddipet district authorities. She stressed the need for a robust action plan to accommodate the thousands of devotees expected to attend the Jatara, minimizing the possibility of any inconvenience or error.

The Minister also released the official poster for the Mallanna Kalyanam and Jatara before the review meeting.

Key dates for the religious events were finalized: the Mallanna Kalyanam will be held

on December 14th at 10:45 am, and the Jatara will be held over ten consecutive Sundays, commencing from January 18, 2026, and concluding on March 16, 2026. Minister Surekha instructed the District Collector to ensure perfect coordination among all departments, including Police, Electricity, Medical & Health, RTC, Panchayat Raj, R&B, and Rural Water Supply, to facilitate a comfortable pilgrimage for the devotees. She specifically directed Endowments officials to expand the Kalyanam venue based on issues encountered during the previous year's event.

The Minister inquired about the ongoing temple development works, including the preparation of crowns for the goddesses Balaji Medallamma and Golla Kethamma. Given the high turnout expected from both Telangana and neighboring states, she instructed the Siddipet Depot Manager to enhance RTC services. The Minister mandated comprehensive arrangements for crowd management (barricades, queues), traffic control, high-security surveillance via CCTV cameras, special arrangements for VVIP darshan, proper signboards, and adequate provision of drinking water, medical camps, and lactation rooms. Given the Jatara period overlaps with summer, she called for necessary arrangements like cooling sheds and mats on walking paths, along with the provision of battery-operated vehicles for the elderly, disabled, and pregnant women. The Minister also issued a strict order for the complete prohibition of single-use plastic at the venue. Emphasizing devotee safety, she instructed the Medical Department to ensure doctors trained in CPR are stationed nearby, especially given the possibility of devotees with heart-related conditions attending. Local MLA Palla Rajeshwar Reddy praised Minister Surekha's devotion to Mallanna Swamy, noting her personal practice of participating in the Patanalu ritual during the Jatara.

## BRS Alleges 1,500 Crore Nexus Between CM Revanth Reddy and Tainted Company

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Spokesperson Manne Krishank has leveled a series of serious corruption allegations against Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, questioning the Telangana Congress Government's practice of awarding massive public contracts to KLSR Infratech, a company reportedly facing serious insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings. Krishank, during a press note release, demanded an immediate and transparent explanation for the alleged "unusual favoritism" shown to a firm involved in multiple legal battles, which he claims raises grave concerns about the integrity of public procurement. The spokesperson revealed that the controversy surrounding the company deepened after the Hon'ble Supreme Court admitted a case related to KLSR Infratech on November 14, 2025. Furthermore, he cited the shocking development where an NCLT judge recused himself from a case involving the company,



alleging pressure from "higher authorities" to pass a favorable order.

Krishank pointed out that despite the company's precarious legal and financial standing, the Congress government, in less than two years, has awarded it contracts worth hundreds of crores, totaling an estimated 1,500 crore. He provided a list of high-value contracts given to the company, which includes: 145 crore for the New College of Veterinary Science at Kondangal, 185 crore for road works in Vi-

karabad, 116 crore for the Basheerabad-Mailavar road project, 191 crore for the Paleru Lift Irrigation Scheme, 319 crore for the Rajiv Gandhi Lift Irrigation Scheme in Suryapet, 168 crore for HMWSSB pipeline works, and contracts for the Young India Integrated Residential Schools, a signature project of the Chief Minister. The BRS leader added that when the party sought information through RTI applications, several government departments failed to provide clear responses, deepening the suspicion of a covert

nexus. The BRS spokesperson reiterated previous allegations, stating that the company had once gifted a Land Cruiser vehicle to CM Revanth Reddy, which was later registered in his brother's name after continuous questioning. He also recalled that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had previously labeled the company as a benami entity linked to Revanth Reddy during earlier raids. Krishank asserted that awarding huge contracts to a company facing insolvency and led by an individual suspended from directorship is not only unethical but legally questionable. He demanded that the CM explain the "special preference" and clarify the "real relationship" between himself and KLSR Infratech, stating that the people of Telangana deserve honest answers regarding the use of public funds. The BRS leader also condemned the Chief Minister's reported derogatory remarks against the Ravindra Bharathi Awards, calling the disparagement of the prestigious cultural institution deeply unfortunate.

During the interaction, the Governor and Madhu Yashki Goud presented awards to the participants who demonstrated talent in the cultural competitions organized during the program. Following the Governor's address, Madhu Yashki Goud spoke, highlighting the unfortunate reality that even after 75 years of independence, many Adivasi and tribal regions still lack basic amenities such as roads, schools, hospitals, and safe drinking water. He expressed deep concern that social and economic oppression is driving a significant number of tribal youth towards Naxalism. He reiterated his core message, stating unequivocally that national development can only be realized when the long-neglected Adivasi regions are brought into the mainstream of progress. He acknowledged the abundance of natural resources in tribal areas but lamented the fact that the indigenous people are denied adequate facilities and a fair share of the wealth generated from their lands.

Madhu Yashki Goud advised the Adivasi youth to continuously question any government in power and fight for their rights and equitable compensation for their labor. He stressed that empowering tribal youth with employment, job opportunities, and access to all sectors is essential for their upliftment and advancement. He encouraged the participants to strive for higher positions and dedicate their efforts to the development of the regions where they were born and raised. The visiting youth shared the valuable lessons they learned during their Hyderabad city tour. The program was also attended by Hyderabad Youth Officer Khushbu and Railway Board Member Nirmala Devi, among other officials.

## Madhu Yashki Goud Advocates for Tribal Development at Raj Bhavan

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

TPCC Publicity Committee Chairman and former Member of Parliament, Madhu Yashki Goud, emphasized that the development of Adivasi and Tribal areas is fundamental to the nation's progress. He made these remarks while attending an 'Interaction Program for Adivasi Tribal Youth' (Valedictory) at Raj Bhavan, which he co-hosted with Governor Jishnu Dev Varma. The event was organized under the 'Mera Yuva Bharat' initiative as part of the 17th Tribal Youth Exchange Program, which brought together young men and women from various districts across Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh for a week-long stay in Hyderabad. On the concluding day, Monday, the visiting youth toured the Governor's office and shared their experiences, including the new insights they gained and the discussions they held on innovative ideas, with the Governor.

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## Youth Congress Stages Massive Protest Against BJP-EC "Vote Theft" Alliance

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

The Telangana State Youth Congress, led by its President Jakkidi Shiva Charan Reddy, organized a massive protest meeting at Gandhi Bhavan, the party headquarters, directed against the Central BJP government and the Election Commission (EC). The protest was themed around the strong accusation that the BJP is systematically "stealing the votes of the country's people," while failing to deliver on development. The event served as a major platform for the Congress youth wing to demand transparency and accountability in the electoral process, challenging what they termed a clandestine alliance between the ruling party

and the constitutional body responsible for conducting free and fair elections.

The demonstration was attended by several key political figures, including National Youth Congress President Uday Bhanu Chhib, State PCC President & MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud, State Minister Ponnmar Prabhakar Goud, Rajya Sabha MP Anil Kumar Yadav, AICC Secretary Sampath Kumar, and AICC Member Kota Neelima. The most striking feature of the protest was a dramatic display where activists dressed up as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, symbolizing the alleged nexus and showcasing how the BJP,



in collusion with the EC, is supposedly "hijacking" the people's votes. During

their address, National Youth Congress President Uday Bhanu Chhib

and State President Jakkidi Shiva Charan Reddy vehemently condemned

the Modi government and the Election Commission for their silence on

the issue of vote theft, which they called "shameful."

The leaders cited evidence, previously revealed by Rahul Gandhi, detailing the methods allegedly employed by the BJP government to manipulate voter rolls. These methods, they claimed, include the creation of duplicate votes, fake addresses, instances of large numbers of votes registered at a single address, and invalid photos in voter lists. They specifically accused the BJP of having gained power through "backdoor entry" in the elections of Haryana, Maharashtra, and Bihar by misusing the Election Commission. The Youth Congress leaders issued a stern warning to the

National Election Commission, urging it to immediately cut off its "illicit relationship" with the BJP. They threatened that if the EC fails to wake up and act decisively on the vote theft allegations, the Youth Congress would escalate its agitation into a more widespread and rigorous movement. Following the meeting, the Youth Congress members attempted to lay siege to the BJP office, demonstrating their intense commitment to the issue. The event saw large-scale participation from State Youth Congress In-charge Syed Khalid, National Secretaries Sagarika Rao and Mamata Nagireddy, and numerous other state leaders and party workers.

## Kavitha Vows to Fight for Dependent Jobs and Singareni Workers' Rights

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Kalvakuntla Kavitha, President of Telangana Jagruthi, strongly voiced her commitment to protecting the interests of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) workers, particularly focusing on the crucial issue of dependent employment. Speaking to workers at the JVR OC Singareni project in Sattupalli (Khammam District) on Monday, Kavitha expressed concern that the workers are currently in a vulnerable position,

unable to even safeguard their dependent jobs, which she described as an "insurance for a family." She lamented the ongoing struggle over the last two years to establish a Medical Board, which is vital for facilitating dependent employment cases based on medical fitness.

To push for action on these and other demands, Kavitha announced that Telangana Jagruthi would stage a protest and lay siege to the SCCL CMD office on December 13th. She affirmed



her unwavering determination to lead the fight for the continuation of dependent jobs, which provide crucial social security for the workers' families. Beyond job security, Kavitha raised several other significant demands aimed at improving the welfare and operational stability of the coal company. She called on the government to stop deducting Income Tax (IT) from the wages of Singareni mine workers, urging the workers to support her organization's fight for their rights. Kavitha also demanded that the state government secure new coal blocks for Singareni and strongly opposed the Central Government's policy of auctioning off coal blocks to private individuals. She disclosed that the Singareni company is currently burdened with an outstanding debt of 40,000 crore. Addressing the critical healthcare needs of the workers, the Jagruthi President demanded the construction of a Multi-Specialty Hospital for Singareni workers. In the interim, she insisted that the workers should be provided with medical treatment at corporate hospitals through state arrangements. Furthermore, she pledged to work towards the permanent absorption of contract workers into regular employment roles. Concluding her address, Kavitha advised the mine workers to exercise caution and safety while descending into the coal pits, a customary practice often associated with seeking blessings from the local deity, Mysamma.

# Transgender Conflict Escalates to Self-Immolation Attempt; Eight Injured

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

A violent and deeply disturbing conflict between two rival groups of transgender individuals escalated dramatically on Monday, leading to a desperate and dangerous act of protest at the Borabanda Bus Stand.3 The underlying dispute, details of which were not immediately clear, resulted in one faction staging a demonstration and sit-in, which quickly intensified into a desperate crisis. During the height of the protest, approximately ten transgender individuals poured petrol on themselves in a horrifying attempt at self-immolation as a form of extreme protest.

The intensity of the protest and the subsequent escalation of the dispute. The

quent attempt at self-harm immediately drew the attention of local law enforcement. Police rapidly arrived at the scene to control the situation and prevent further tragedy. Despite their intervention, the act of self-harm resulted in eight individuals sustaining severe burn injuries. They were quickly rushed to a private hospital, where they are currently receiving intensive medical treatment for their critical condition. Following the incident, members of the injured transgender group proceeded to the Borabanda Police Station to file a formal complaint against the rival transgender faction. They hold responsible for the conflict and the subsequent escalation of the dispute. The



police have registered a case based on the complaint and have launched a full investigation into

the dispute. The objective of the police is to ascertain the root cause of the conflict, the exact cir-

cumstances that led to the extreme protest and injuries, and to ensure the safety and security

of the concerned communities while maintaining law and order in the area.



## DCA Issues Show Cause Notices to 196 Medical Shops in Special Inspection Drive4

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

The Drugs Control Administration (DCA), Telangana, conducted a special, intensive inspection drive across the state on Monday, November 17, 2025, primarily targeting retail medical shops to detect and address various regulatory irregularities.5 This special drive was conducted with a prime emphasis on verifying the sale of Schedule H1 drugs, which includes medications like higher-generation antibiotics and habit-forming substances.6 The objective was to ensure that retail medical shops adhere strictly to the law and dispense these critical medications only against a valid prescription issued by a Registered Medical Practitioner.7

The DCA teams carried out comprehensive inspections across the state, meticulously scrutinizing records, prescriptions, and stock of restricted drugs.8 Following the thorough checks, the inspection teams detected

## GHMC Commissioner Orders Swift Resolution of Prajavani Grievances



TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025, GHMC Commissioner R. V. Karnan has issued stringent directives to officials, commanding them to ensure the swift and effective resolution of all complaints and appeals received during the weekly Prajavani program.1 The Commissioner emphasized that negligence in addressing public grievances would not be tolerated and stressed the need for heads of departments (HODs) to proactively work towards solutions so that petitioners are not forced to repeatedly approach the GHMC with the same issue.2 The latest session of Prajavani, held at the GHMC headquarters on

Monday, November 17, 2025, saw the Commissioner personally scrutinize the petitions submitted by citizens from various parts of the city and issue direct instructions to the concerned officials for immediate action. The directives from Commissioner Karnan underscore the administration's commitment to enhancing citizen service delivery and streamlining the grievance redressal mechanism. By pushing HODs to prioritize resolution, the GHMC aims to reduce bureaucratic delays and build public confidence in the municipal administration's responsiveness.

Zone with 18. The remaining zones reported lower figures: L.B. Nagar Zone received 15, Charminar Zone received 5, and Khairatabad Zone received 1 petition.

The review meeting was attended by key GHMC officials, including Additional Commissioners Raghu Prasad, Satyanarayana, and Venu Gopal, CCP Srinivas, Land Acquisition Special Deputy Collector Ramulu, Vigilance ASP Narasimha Reddy, and other additional CCPs, all of whom were tasked with ensuring their respective departments comply with the Commissioner's orders for prompt action on the complaints.

## Deputy Mayor Orders Urgent Action on Dangerous Roads in Tarnaka

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Deputy Mayor of Greater Hyderabad, Smt. Mothe Srikrishna Reddy, held a crucial review meeting with officials from the GHMC Engineering Department at her camp office, demanding immediate and accelerated action to address the dangerous condition of roads in the Tarnaka Division. The meeting was prompted by a flurry of public complaints detailing how roads in several areas within the division are in a highly precarious state, posing significant risks to commuters and residents. The Deputy Mayor issued a clear directive to officials to immediately

complete all pending road repair works and take special measures to ensure the public does not face any inconvenience due to the poor road quality.

Smt. Shobhan Reddy detailed the specific issues that need urgent attention: addressing the tangled problem of potholes, clearing lanes where accumulated garbage has caused deterioration, and immediately repairing large road pits that pose serious accident risks, particularly during night travel. She also instructed the officials to formulate a comprehensive plan to ensure that all main roads and internal lanes in the Tarnaka Division are secured

and safe, even with the monsoon season approaching, indicating a need for preemptive planning. The Deputy Mayor stressed the need for officials to treat public complaints with the highest priority.

She issued a stern warning that any display of negligence in the resolution of these critical infrastructure issues would result in immediate disciplinary action against the concerned officials, reinforcing the administration's commitment to citizen safety. The meeting was attended by Secunderabad GHMC Circle E.E. Suvarna, Deputy E.E. Madhavi, A.E. Venu, and Work Inspector Shiva.



## New Committee Sworn in at Historic Secunderabad Temple

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

A significant ceremony was held at the renowned Sri Venkateswara Perumal Temple in Koneru Street, Shivaji Nagar, Secunderabad, on Monday, November 17, 2025, to mark the official swearing-in of the temple's new governing body and committee. The event, organized by the temple authorities within the premises, saw Cantonment MLA Sri Ganesh attend as the Chief Guest. The temple officials and Vedic scholars extended a traditional and grand welcome to MLA Sri Ganesh, who also received Vedic blessings in accordance with custom.

Following the oath-taking ceremony, where Venkata Raju Mudiraj assumed the role of Chairman along with the new governing council members, MLA Sri Ganesh offered his congratulations. The MLA urged the newly sworn-in members to strive tirelessly for the development of the temple and to earn the trust and confidence of the devotees, stressing that their diligent and dedicated work would also bring a

# Cold Wave Grips Agency Areas; Temperatures Plunge to Single Digits

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

A severe cold wave has gripped the Agency areas of Komaram Bheem Asifabad district for the past week, causing distress among the tribal communities as temperatures have dropped significantly. The sharp fall in mercury, coupled with dense fog in the early hours of the morning, has led tribal residents to shiver intensely. The coldest temperatures in the state have been consistently recorded in the mandals of Lingapur, Sirpus (U), and Tiriyani. On Sunday, the temperature in Sirpus (U) plummeted to 7.4 degrees Celsius, marking the lowest temperature recorded in Telangana so far this season.

The chilling conditions commence as early as 5:00 PM in the evening and persist well past 10:00 AM the following morning. Residents report that the cold is intensely felt not only outdoors but also inside their homes. Officials attribute the severe cold in this region to the imbalance of forest wealth, noting that in areas with depleted tree cover, the ground temperature



cools down much faster during the night, intensifying the cold. Local residents are expressing fear and concern about what the coming days will bring, anticipating a further drop in tempera-

tures as winter peaks. To ensure timely and accurate weather information, the automatic weather stations (AWS) established in every mandal center are providing crucial data.

These AWS units track parameters such as rainfall, wind speed, and temperature, constantly relaying this information to meteorological research centers. This technology aids local ad-

ministration and the public in staying informed about the changing weather patterns, allowing for better preparation against the severe cold gripping the region.

## Medicover Celebrates World Prematurity Day with Focus on 'Science of Survival'

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Medicover Women and Child Hospitals, located in Hitec City, hosted a special event to observe World Prematurity Day on November 17, 2025, celebrating the 'Science of Survival' of premature babies. The joyous occasion brought together premature babies who had undergone successful treatment in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and are now growing healthily, along with their resilient families, the dedicated team of doctors, nurses, and support staff. The core themes of the celebration were the babies' intense fight for life, the extraordinary patience shown by their families, and the unwavering commitment of the medical team.

The event highlighted the serious global issue of prematurity, noting that approximately 15 million babies are born preterm worldwide each year, with a concerning 3.5 million cases registered in India alone. In



this challenging landscape, Medicover has established itself as a leading center, delivering outstanding Neonatology care. The hospital boasts an impressive track record over the last four years, during which it has saved over 1,200 newborns, including 680 preterm babies. This success is attributed to its state-of-the-art 25-bedded Level-III NICU, its expert Neonatology team, and continuous monitoring facilities, which enable the successful management

of highly complex cases. The hospital proudly shared stories of babies born as early as 23–26 weeks of gestation and weighing as little as 550–970 grams, who are now thriving.

Dr. Harikrishna, Executive Director of Medicover Hospitals and the Chief Guest, stated that Medicover's mission extends beyond mere treatment; it is about providing every child with the opportunity for a healthy future. He dedicated the celebration to the children's

courage and their families' steadfast faith. Dr. Ravinder Reddy Parige, Director of Neonatology & Pediatrics, spoke about the unique journey of preterm babies, noting that families spend months in the NICU, and their commitment is the team's greatest inspiration. He affirmed that the hospital achieves excellent outcomes through world-class infrastructure, standardized treatment protocols, and an experienced team. The event was filled with emotion-

al moments as families reunited with the doctors who cared for their children, expressing gratitude for the support received during the most vulnerable phase of their journey. The program concluded with the message that prematurity, though starting with uncertainty, paves the way for a healthy future through advanced medicine, skilled care, and parental support, which includes special programs like games and painting for the children.

## Young Director Kampati Sailu Ready for Debut with 'Raju Weds Rambai'

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

A young man from Komaram village in Illendu mandal, Kampati Sailu, is on the cusp of realizing his long-held dream of achieving recognition in the film industry. After years of dedicated work under various senior directors, his directorial debut film is finally set for release. Sailu, the elder son of Kampati Satyam and Sujatha, harbored a keen interest in cinema from a young age. While excelling in his studies and obtaining an Engineering degree from Karapally, he also gained recognition as a dancer and mimicry artist.

Driven by his passion for filmmaking, Sailu moved to Ramoji Film City in Hyderabad, where he worked under several directors, learning the nuances of production. He first started making short films before taking on the feature-length project. Under the supervision of Virata Parvam director Venu Udgul, Sailu directed 'Raju Weds Rambai'. The film has already garnered praise from film veterans following the trailer release, which was launched three days ago by actor Adivi Sesh. The movie is scheduled to hit theaters on November 21st.

Sailu revealed that the



film is based on a true love story that took place in the villages bordering Warangal and Khammam, and he has crafted the narrative to be deeply touching. The film's lead roles, 'Rambai Nee Mee da Naaku Manasayene,' has already become a viral hit on social media. Raju Weds Rambai is an ETV Win Original Production, starring Akhil and Tejaswi Rao in the lead roles. Sailu's jour-

ney from a small village to the threshold of a directorial career in the Telugu film industry serves as an inspiration for aspiring filmmakers from regional backgrounds.

## Nalgonda Collector Directs Officials to Ensure Zero-Delay Resolution of Prajavani Grievances

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Nalgonda District Collector Ila Tripathi issued clear instructions to all district officials to ensure the prompt and timely resolution of all grievances received during the weekly Prajavani program, emphasizing that any delay in addressing public complaints is unacceptable. The Collector personally received petitions from the public at the Collectorate conference hall on Monday, November 17, 2025. She stressed that district officials must pay special attention to the disposal of these grievances and ensure that every petition is resolved immediately upon receipt, preventing them from accumulating.

The latest Prajavani

session saw the Collector receive a total of 129 petitions. Of these, 73 complaints were directed to various district-level departments, while the remaining 56 petitions fell under the jurisdiction of the Revenue Department.

The Collector, after receiving the public grievances, conducted a separate meeting with the officials to issue follow-up instructions on pressing administrative matters. She specifically directed the officials to take immediate measures to prevent water stagnation in villages following the recent rains. This is a crucial instruction aimed at controlling the spread of Dengue and other vector-borne diseases, ensuring that comprehensive sanitation efforts are implemented

throughout the rural areas to prevent mosquito breeding.

The proactive approach towards sanitation highlights the administration's dual focus: resolving citizen complaints efficiently through the Prajavani system and ensuring public health and safety, especially after weather events. Several key officials were present to receive the petitions alongside the Collector, including Housing Department PD Raj Kumar, Nalgonda RDO Y. Ashok Reddy, Devarakonda RDO Ramana Reddy, and Chandur RDO Sridevi, along with other district officials, underscoring the collaborative effort to streamline public service delivery across the district.



## Deputy Tehsildar and Aide Arrested by ACB for Accepting 30,000 Bribe

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

A significant anti-corruption operation was conducted by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) in the Tehsildar's office in Illendu, Bhadravati Kothagudem district, resulting in the arrest of a Deputy Tehsildar and his assistant for accepting a bribe. The ACB raids were led by Dep-

uty Superintendent of Police (DSP) Ramesh.

The operation successfully caught Deputy Tehsildar Pasha and his assistant Vijay red-handed while they were accepting a bribe of 30,000 from local dealers. The Tehsildar's office has been under scrutiny, and the ACB's swift action confirms the allegations of corruption

## Minister Tummala Directs Completion of Cooperative Society Audits and Oil Palm Cultivation Push

TPN Bureau | Nov 17, 2025

Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao conducted a review meeting on Monday, November 17, 2025, via video conference with District Cooperative Department officials and DCCB CEOs from the Secretariat, focusing on streamlining cooperative society operations and promoting agricultural diversification. The Minister issued a strict directive to Cooperative Department Auditors to complete the auditing of Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) within one week. He also mandated that the audit of cooperative societies operating without government aid must be finalized by January.

A major point of emphasis was on addressing past financial irregularities. Minister Tummala

ordered officials to complete inquiries under Section 51 and inspections under Section 52 of the Cooperative Societies Act within the stipulated time, take immediate action against those responsible, and initiate legal measures to recover the misappropriated funds. He also instructed officials to coordinate with government pleaders (GPs) to ensure the speedy disposal of any related court cases concerning surcharged amounts. The Minister emphasized the responsibility of officials to regularly inspect the functioning of these societies to prevent future malpractices. The meeting was attended by Agricultural Cooperation Secretary Surendra Mohan, Horticulture Director Yasmin, MARKFED MD Srinivas Reddy, and TG CAB officials.



## INDIA Bloc Losing Patience With Congress Amid Electoral Woes



New Delhi: The INDIA bloc appears to be growing increasingly frustrated with the Congress, as the party struggles with repeated electoral defeats and internal disarray. Analysts suggest that the bloc's patience is wearing thin, given Congress's inability to lead effectively despite being the principal partner in the alliance.

Following the Bihar assembly election setback, Rahul Gandhi now has 95 electoral losses under his belt since entering active politics in 2003, according to social media estimates. With the party failing to secure decisive victories in key states, questions are being

raised about its leadership and role within the INDIA bloc, which was conceived in 2023 to unite opposition forces against the ruling NDA.

The bloc, which includes parties like the AAP, Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party, NCP, and Shiv Sena, lacks a formal office, coordination committee, or declared convener. Congress positions itself as the fulcrum, but its dismal performance and lack of consultation with allies on key campaigns and initiatives have strained relations within the alliance. Rahul Gandhi's campaigns, whether around caste surveys, electoral roll revi-

sions, or allegations of "vote chori," have not been discussed collectively, leaving allied parties feeling sidelined.

The Bihar results highlighted these fissures, with senior Congress leaders like Tariq Anwar pointing to "lack of proper coordination and joint campaigning between Congress and RJD" as a key factor behind the debacle. In contrast, the NDA, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, showcased a united front, emphasizing cohesion and collective messaging, which contributed to its strong performance.

Rahul Gandhi's selective engagement with INDIA

bloc leaders has also raised eyebrows. Unlike previous multi-party interactions during Sitaram Yechury's tenure as CPI(M) chief, Gandhi has reportedly shown limited outreach to current CPI(M) leadership and other allies. Observers note that Modi even referred to Congress disparagingly as the "MMC" in a victory speech, alluding to the party's perceived alignment with minority-focused and left-leaning factions, signaling visible cracks within the alliance.

The party's declining influence is evident in state assemblies, where Congress's strength in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar has

dwindled to single digits, despite Rahul Gandhi holding the LoP position in the Lok Sabha. Meanwhile, some INDIA bloc leaders, including Supriya Sule of NCP, are pursuing independent strategies, further highlighting the coalition's fragile cohesion.

With the INDIA bloc's survival contingent on unity and effective leadership, the continued electoral failures and internal disconnects within Congress threaten to weaken the alliance ahead of future national contests. Without decisive reforms and better coordination, the bloc risks losing relevance as an alternative to the NDA.

## BJP Faces Steeper Challenge in Bengal Than Bihar



Kolkata: As West Bengal gears up for the 2026 state assembly elections, the BJP faces a far more complex battle than it did in Bihar. Analysts point out that the party's repeated missteps in understanding Bengal's cultural, historical, and political nuances make its path to victory significantly harder.

West Bengal's electorate is deeply sensitive to identity, language, and historical pride. Unlike Bihar, where the BJP could rely on allied parties like JD(U) and LJP to build a winning coalition, in Bengal, it is largely fighting solo against the entrenched Trinamool Congress (TMC). Mamata Banerjee's party, despite facing corruption allegations and anti-incumbency, remains culturally savvy and politically resilient, able to mobilize Bengali nationalist sentiment effectively.

The BJP's earlier campaigns in 2019 and 2021 revealed both its potential and limitations. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, it won 18 of 42 seats with over 40% of the vote, but in the 2021 assembly polls, it fell short of expectations, capturing 77 out of 294 seats. Its legislative strength has since declined due to defections and by-poll losses.

A key challenge for the BJP is its approach to illegal migrants and identity politics. By linking illegal migration primarily

with Muslims, it alienated Hindu migrant communities, who also form a substantial portion of the electorate. Missteps around the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and misrepresentation of Bengali language and culture have reinforced the narrative of BJP as an "outsider" party. Incidents such as disputes over Rabindranath Tagore's works and mischaracterization of national icons have further fueled local resentment.

Despite strong anti-incumbency sentiment and public discontent over law-and-order issues and corruption in the TMC, Mamata retains a loyal base, especially among women, youth, and targeted beneficiary groups. Her policies and welfare schemes have created a sense of inclusion and voter trust, giving her a structural advantage over the BJP, which lacks an incumbent's administrative leverage in the state.

Experts conclude that while BJP's success in Bihar demonstrates its organizational strength, replicating that in Bengal requires a deeper understanding of local dynamics, sensitive handling of identity issues, and a nuanced campaign strategy. Without addressing these factors, winning Bengal will remain a far more uphill task for the party.

## Chimps Show Reasoning Skills, Challenging Human-Centric View of Intelligence



Recent research on chimpanzees is challenging long-held assumptions about intelligence as an exclusively human trait. Studies conducted at the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary in Uganda reveal that chimps can weigh evidence, draw rational conclusions, update beliefs, and even evaluate the reliability of their own knowledge. The findings, published in Science, suggest that intelligence may be less a unique human property and more a spectrum of cognitive abilities shared across species.

Scientists tested orphaned chimps using tasks involving two canisters that might contain treats. In some trials, chimps could see the treats; in others, they had to rely on auditory clues. Researchers introduced misleading cues, altered evidence, and even "fake news" in the form of "pictures of fruit. The chimps adjusted their choices, demonstrating metacognition—the ability to reflect on what they know and

don't know—and used probabilistic reasoning to make better decisions.

Evolutionary anthropologist Brian Hare of Duke University described the findings as the strongest evidence yet that humans share the planet with another rational being. Alison Gopnik, a cognitive psychologist at UC Berkeley, likened intelligence to nobility, a socially constructed trait historically tied to status rather than measurable ability. She emphasized that cultural notions of intelligence—seen as an innate, magical quality—dive sharply from the scientific approach, which evaluates abilities that can be observed and tested.

The implications extend to artificial intelligence as well. ChatGPT and similar systems, Science reports, lack strong metacognition, often producing confidently incorrect answers rather than acknowledging uncertainty. While AI excels at data retrieval and language process-

## Congress Must Reboot to Challenge Modi



India's political landscape appears once again dominated by Narendra Modi, whose recent wins in Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi, and Bihar have reinforced his aura of invincibility. The BJP's rise has come largely at the expense of the Congress, whose post-Lok Sabha slide has left the Opposition fragmented and ineffective. Analysts argue that without a rejuvenated Congress, any

meaningful national challenge to Modi is unlikely.

Despite retaining around 20 percent of the national vote, Congress struggles to translate this into seats or influence. In most states, the party remains overshadowed by regional allies, and in direct contests with the BJP, it fails to compete effectively. Experts suggest that even a modest 5 percent gain in vote share

could significantly shift India's political dynamics, forcing the BJP into coalition politics and opening leadership debates within the party. Achieving this, however, requires humility and a new strategy, moving away from reliance on historical legacy and inherited voter loyalty.

Rahul Gandhi's approach—focusing largely on criticizing Modi, the BJP, and allied insti-

tutions—has failed to resonate with voters. His campaigns have emphasized issues such as communalism, corruption, and caste politics, but the strategy lacks a compelling positive vision for the future. Analysts note that voters, especially India's young majority, respond better to aspirational agendas rather than anger or nostalgia. Modi's messaging, promising a "Viksit Bharat" or developed India, continues to attract wide support, leaving Congress's negative campaigning ineffective.

The article compares Congress's potential reboot to a startup approach, using its 20 percent base as initial capital. This requires shedding arrogance, resentment, and contempt toward Modi, focusing instead on constructive solutions and a clear, forward-looking agenda. Learning from historical precedents, such as Indira Gandhi's 1971 campaign, experts argue that Congress must offer a positive narrative that resonates with citizens' hopes rather than merely opposing the incumbent.

Failure to adopt this strategy risks further erosion of the party's relevance, alienating regional allies and reinforcing the BJP's dominance. Observers warn that unless Congress demonstrates humility, innovation, and leadership capable of inspiring voters, it will continue to fade, leaving India's political opposition fragmented and the BJP unchallenged.

Congress's challenge is clear: reinvent itself, embrace a positive agenda, and reconnect with voters to remain a credible counterweight to Modi's political machinery.

# VP, PM Modi Condole Deaths of Indian Pilgrims in Medina Bus Accident

TPN Correspondent | Varanasi

Vice President C P Radhakrishnan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday expressed deep grief over the deaths of several Indian Umrah pilgrims in a tragic bus accident near Medina, Saudi Arabia.

The accident occurred around 1:30 am (IST) when a bus carrying around 40 Indian nationals, most of them from Telangana, reportedly collided with an oil tanker. The impact triggered a massive fire, resulting in multiple casualties and injuries. Local authorities and Indian officials are still assessing the full extent of the fatalities.

In a post on social media, Vice President Radhakrishnan said he was "deeply pained" by the tragedy. "My thoughts are with the affected families during this difficult time. Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families, and prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured," he wrote.

Prime Minister Modi also mourned the loss of lives in a message on X. "Deeply saddened by the accident in Medinah in-



volving Indian nationals. My thoughts are with the families who have lost their loved ones. I pray for the swift recovery of all those injured," he said.

Modi added that the Indian Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulate in Jed-

dah are providing all necessary assistance. Indian officials are in continuous touch with Saudi authorities to facilitate relief, evacuation of the injured, and further procedures related to the deceased.

Minority Affairs Minis-

ter Kiren Rijiju also expressed shock. "Shocked and deeply saddened by the tragic bus accident. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families," he posted on X.

The incident has sparked concern among

families in India, particularly in Telangana, where many of the pilgrims hailed from. Indian authorities have set up support channels to assist relatives seeking information as rescue operations continue in Saudi Arabia.

## Calls Grow For Akhilesh Yadav To Lead INDIA Bloc After Congress's Bihar Defeat

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Congress's heavy loss in the Bihar Assembly election has reignited debate over leadership within the INDIA opposition bloc, with fresh voices now backing Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav as the coalition's face. The remarks come as the bloc faces mounting pressure following a string of electoral setbacks.

SP MLA Ravidas Mehrotra, speaking after the Bihar results, said Akhilesh Yadav should lead the alliance, calling him capable of steering the opposition and even forming a government independently in Uttar Pradesh. The SP, which secured 37 Lok Sabha seats last year, is the second-largest opposition party in Parliament after the Congress.

Mehrotra also argued that the INDIA bloc would have performed better in Bihar if traditional ballot papers had been used instead of Electronic Voting



Machines (EVMs), echoing Akhilesh Yadav's long-standing demand for the restoration of ballot voting.

The Congress suffered a major setback in Bihar, winning only six seats, compared to 19 in 2020, despite an extensive campaign by Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge. Its ally, the RJD, also saw

a steep decline, dropping to 25 seats, while the NDA swept 202 seats in the 243-member Assembly.

The repeated electoral failures of the Congress—despite holding 99 Lok Sabha seats—have intensified internal and external calls for a leadership overhaul within the INDIA bloc. The BJP and its partners have dominated

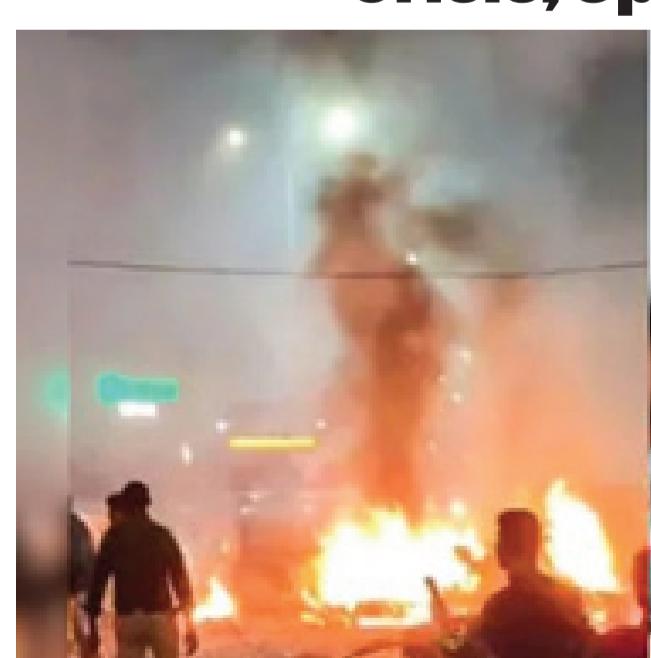
recent state elections, winning six of the eight major polls last year.

Earlier, Trinamool Congress MP Kalyan Banerjee had pushed for Mamata Banerjee to lead the opposition alliance, arguing that the Congress had "failed" in multiple states. Even RJD patriarch Lalu Prasad Yadav endorsed Mamata Banerjee as a po-

tential INDIA bloc head, saying Congress's reluctance "would not make any difference."

With growing discontent and shifting political equations, the leadership question within the INDIA bloc has resurfaced, and Akhilesh Yadav's name is now gaining traction in the post-Bihar landscape.

## Mehbooba Mufti Links Red Fort Blast to Kashmir Crisis, Sparks Political Row



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti triggered a major controversy on Monday after claiming that the blast near Delhi's Red Fort, which killed 13 people, reflected the "problems of Kashmir" spilling into the national

capital. Speaking at a meeting in Srinagar, the JKDP chief accused the central government of creating a "poisonous atmosphere" that has pushed Kashmiri youth towards dangerous paths. Investigators have described the Red Fort blast as a "white-collar" terror

operation, allegedly led by a network of radicalised doctors busted recently by the Jammu and Kashmir Police. The suicide bomber, identified as Umar Mohammad from Kashmir, died after a white Hyundai i20 exploded near the historic monument.

He may have panicked and detonated the device prematurely after two key module members—Dr Muzammil Shakeel and Dr Adil Rather—were arrested in Faridabad along with 2,900 kg of explosives.

Mufti said the government was responsible for

alienating Kashmiri youth. "A poisonous atmosphere has been created... responsible for the youth of Kashmir creating their own dangerous path," she said. She added that despite government claims of normalcy, Kashmir's problems had "echoed in front of the Red Fort."

She also accused the ruling dispensation of prioritising divisive politics over national security. "You may get votes by doing Hindu-Muslim politics, but in which direction is the nation heading?" she asked.

BJP leaders slammed her remarks as "irresponsible" and "provocative." Party leader Ravinder Raina said Mufti was trying to destabilise Jammu and Kashmir, while Abhijeet Jasrotia called her comments "pathetic," particularly at a time when unity was needed.

The investigation into the Delhi blast continues, with security agencies probing the broader terror module and its plans.

## Key Figure 'Madam Surgeon' Linked to D-6 Terror Plot, Say Investigators



TPN Correspondent | Patna

Investigative agencies probing the blast near Delhi's Red Fort are uncovering a complex terror network spanning multiple states and foreign links. Central to the investigation is 43-year-old Shaheen Shahid, known as "Madam Surgeon," who officials say is connected to banned outfits Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind.

According to official sources, Shaheen—arrested recently in Faridabad—is emerging as a key operative in what investigators call the Faridabad Terror Module. Evidence recovered from her residence, including diaries and digital files, has allegedly revealed a plot referred to as the "D-6 mission," reportedly targeting six cities for

coordinated attacks. Details related to recruitment, funding routes, and encrypted communication channels are also being examined.

Investigators claim Shaheen worked at GSVM Medical College until she abruptly left in 2013, later disappearing in 2014. She was officially dismissed from service in 2021 after authorities discovered her registered address to be incorrect. Colleagues described her as soft-spoken and struggling with personal challenges following her divorce.

Officials say Shaheen worked alongside Umar Nabi, the alleged Red Fort bomber, and Dr. Muzammil Shakeel—both suspected to be linked to the same module. Her finances are under scrutiny, with seven

bank accounts in Delhi, Kanpur, and Lucknow currently being audited.

The investigation has also highlighted the network's international reach. Intelligence agencies believe members of the module travelled to Turkey in 2022 to meet an alleged ISI handler known as Uksa—Arabic for "spider." Authorities say Umar and others communicated with this handler on encrypted messaging platforms and stayed in Ankara for two weeks. Officials suspect the green signal for the planned December 6 attack may have been issued during this trip.

Interrogations of suspects arrested in Jammu & Kashmir and Faridabad continue as agencies work to identify additional operatives linked to the network.

## Congress Condoles Death of Indian Pilgrims in Saudi Bus Crash



TPN Correspondent | Chennai

The Congress party has expressed deep sorrow over the tragic death of several Indian Umrah pilgrims in Saudi Arabia and urged the Centre to coordinate closely with state authorities to support the victims' families.

The accident occurred early Monday in Medina, where a bus carrying around 40 Indian pilgrims, mostly from Telangana, collided with an oil tanker at approximately 1:30 am IST. Several passengers are feared dead, while others sustained injuries in the horrific crash.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge offered condolences and prayers for the injured, saying, "Deeply saddened by the heart-wrenching tragedy near Medina, Saudi Arabia have caused 'deep sorrow.' He stated that the state's Chief Secretary and DGP have been directed to liaise with the

condolences to the bereaved families, and prayers for the swift recovery of the injured." He emphasized the need for the Union Government and Ministry of External Affairs to coordinate with state authorities and families in India to provide relief and support during this difficult time.

Kharge also confirmed that he has instructed Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to ensure all possible assistance reaches the victims' families and that the situation is being closely monitored.

Chief Minister Reddy expressed shock over the incident, posting on X that the deaths of Telangana residents during their pilgrimage have caused "deep sorrow." He stated that the state's Chief Secretary and DGP have been directed to liaise with the

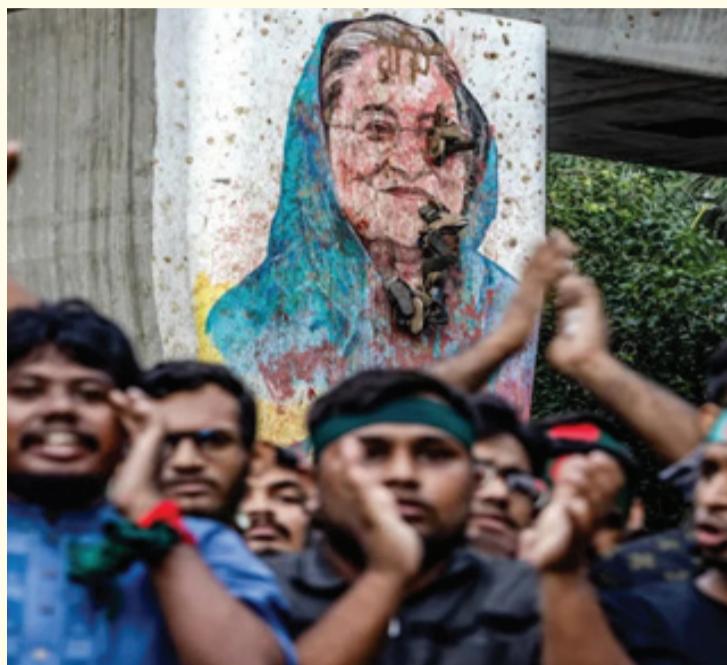
Indian Ministry of External Affairs and Embassy officials in Saudi Arabia to assess the well-being of the survivors and facilitate relief measures.

"The government will stand by the affected families. I urge them to be brave," Reddy added.

Authorities in Saudi Arabia and India are actively working to confirm the exact number of casualties and provide immediate assistance to those affected. The accident has drawn attention to the safety of Indian pilgrims abroad, with leaders calling for swift coordination and support for the bereaved families.

This tragic incident marks another painful chapter in the history of Indian pilgrimages abroad, prompting calls for enhanced safety measures for Indian travelers on religious tours.

## Hasina Sentenced To Death By Bangladesh Tribunal



TPN Correspondent | Dhaka

Bangladesh's political landscape plunged deeper into turmoil on Monday as former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was sentenced to death by the International Crimes Tribunal for alleged "crimes against humanity" linked to last year's student-led uprising that toppled her Awami League government. Tried in absentia, Hasina—currently in exile—dismissed the proceedings as a political vendetta driven by an unelected interim administration.

Security was sharply tightened across Dhaka and several other districts as the Muhammad Yunus-led interim regime prepared for the verdict. Sporadic violence, protests, and reports of crude bomb attacks marked a tense lead-up to the announcement, prompting authorities to deploy additional forces and issue public safety advisories.

Inside the Dhaka courtroom, the moment the death sentence was read triggered claps, cheers, and emotional reactions from sections of the audience. Some attendees smiled and applauded, while others offered prayers or broke into tears. Judges quickly

instructed the crowd to maintain decorum as the brief eruption subsided.

In a strongly worded statement, Hasina condemned the ruling as the product of a "rigged tribunal" overseen by a government she said lacked constitutional legitimacy. "They are biased and politically motivated," she asserted, accusing extremist elements within the interim administration of seeking to eliminate her politically. The verdict, she argued, aims to "nullify the Awami League as a political force" and erase Bangladesh's last elected leadership.

Meanwhile in Odisha's Jagatsinghpur district, Indian authorities demolished an illegally constructed house said to have sheltered suspected Bangladeshi nationals. The action followed an attack on two police personnel, adding a regional dimension to the heightened tensions surrounding the evolving crisis in Bangladesh.

The verdict marks a dramatic escalation in the nation's political conflict, with its implications expected to reverberate across South Asia in the coming days.

## Central Java Landslides Kill 18, Dozens Still Missing



TPN Correspondent | Bhutan

Severe rain-triggered landslides in Indonesia's Central Java have killed at least 18 people, with dozens still missing, authorities said on Monday, as rescue teams continued intensive search operations under challenging conditions.

The worst-hit area was Cibeunying village in Cilacap, where a massive landslide last week buried around a dozen houses under 3 to 8 metres (10 to 25 feet) of mud and debris, according to Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency.

Officials said the depth of the burial made rescue efforts extremely difficult, requiring heavy machinery and slow, careful excavation.

Indonesia, located in the seismically active "Ring of Fire," faces frequent floods, earthquakes and landslides. Authorities have dispatched additional personnel, medical teams, and logistical support to both affected regions.

Rescue teams said their immediate priority remains locating the missing and providing relief to survivors who have lost homes and livelihoods in the devastating landslides.

In a separate incident, another

## Trump Urges House Republicans to Support Release of Epstein Files

TPN Bureau | Washington

US President Donald Trump has called on House Republicans to vote in favour of releasing all government files related to the late convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, marking a sharp reversal from his previous position. Writing on Sunday night, Trump said his party should support the move "because we have nothing to hide" amid a growing push from both Democrats and several Republicans.

The shift comes after Democrats on the House Oversight Committee published a small batch of emails involving Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell, some of which reference Trump. The president, who has long denied any connection to Epstein's criminal behaviour, dismissed the attention as a Democrat-driven "hoax" aimed at distracting from Republican pri-



orities. In one 2011 email, Epstein mentioned Trump in passing, though officials stressed there is no

suggestion of wrongdoing by the president.

House Republicans responded by releasing a much larger tranche

of 20,000 files, accusing Democrats of selectively publishing documents to "create a fake narrative" implicating

Trump. The dispute has escalated political pressure for full transparency.

Support appears to

be growing within the GOP for the Epstein Files Transparency Act, which would compel the Justice Department to publish all unclassified records tied to Epstein and related investigations. Republican Representative Thomas Massie said up to 100 Republicans may vote in favour, suggesting the bill is likely to pass the House this week. Its prospects in the Senate remain uncertain.

House Speaker Mike Johnson echoed Trump's frustration, saying Democrats were using the files as a political ploy. "Trump has clean hands," he told Fox News, adding that the president was unconcerned about the disclosures.

Epstein died by suicide in a New York jail in 2019 while awaiting trial for sex trafficking. Any bill that clears Congress will still require Trump's approval to become law.

## New Evidence Implicates Two US Marines in Haditha Killings, BBC Probe Finds

TPN Correspondent | US

A new BBC Eye investigation has uncovered evidence implicating two US Marines in the 2005 killing of an Iraqi family during the notorious Haditha massacre, raising fresh doubts about the integrity of the original American investigation and military prosecution.

On 19 November 2005, US Marines killed 24 Iraqi civilians in Haditha after a roadside bomb struck their convoy. Among the victims were women, children, and elderly people. Safa Younes, then 13 years old, was the only survivor from her family after Marines stormed her home and opened fire. She survived by lying still among the bodies of her siblings.

Forensic expert Michael Maloney, who investigated the crime scene in 2006 for the Naval Criminal Inves-



tigative Service, told the BBC that newly uncovered recordings—including statements from Lance Corporal Humberto Mendoza and Lance Corporal

Stephen Tatum—indicate both men entered the bedroom and shot Safa's family. Mendoza, who previously denied entering the room, is heard in a newly re-

vealed audio recording admitting he walked inside. Maloney said this places Mendoza at the position of the first shooter.

Tatum, who was granted immunity and never tried, gave multiple statements in 2006 acknowledging he shot women and children, at one point stating he fired even after recog-

nising a child. His lawyers later argued these statements were made under duress, and charges against him were dropped.

Squad leader Staff Sgt Frank Wuterich was the only Marine to face trial, but the case ended in a plea deal for negligent dereliction of duty, resulting in no jail time. Prosecutors had granted immunity to key witnesses, a decision criticised by both defence lawyers and investigators as undermining accountability.

The US Marine Corps said it would not reopen the case without significant new admissible evidence. Safa, now 33 and living in Haditha with her children, said no one has ever been held responsible for the deaths of her entire family, calling the lack of justice "impossible to understand."

## 42 Indians Dead In Saudi Bus-Tanker Collision Near Medina



has been set up in Hyderabad, with helplines +91 7997959754 and +91 9912919545 for families seeking information.

The Indian Embassy in Jeddah has launched a 24x7 control room and issued a toll-free number 8002440003 for assistance.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed deep sorrow, saying his thoughts were with the families of the victims and that Indian officials were providing all necessary support. Foreign Minister S Jaishankar also conveyed condolences and said both the embassy and

as the bus was travelling from Mecca to Medina. Most of the passengers were reportedly from Hyderabad, Telangana. Reports from Khaleej Times and Gulf News indicate that many passengers were asleep when the collision triggered a massive fire, giving little chance for escape. The bus was en-

tirely charred, making identification of bodies extremely difficult. One survivor, Mohd Abdul Shoaib, has been hospitalised, though his condition remains unclear.

Authorities said that among the victims were at least 11 women and 10 children, though final verification is ongoing. Rescue teams de-

consulate were offering "fullest support" to affected families.

Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi said 42 Umrah pilgrims were on the bus when it caught fire, urging the central government to ensure the swift repatriation of bodies and proper treatment for the injured. Reports suggest at least 16 victims had travelled through Hyderabad-based agencies Al-Meeha Hajj and Umrah Travels.

Saudi authorities continue investigations into the collision.

# Markets Slip on Foreign Fund Outflows, Weak Asian Cues

Equity markets opened lower on Tuesday, weighed down by foreign fund outflows and weak cues from Asian peers. The BSE Sensex slipped 55 points to 83,923.48, while the NSE Nifty 50 dipped 40.95 points to 25,722.40 in early trade.

Among the Sensex stocks, Power Grid, Eternal, HCL Tech, Maruti, Tata Motors, and Infosys were the major laggards, while Bharti Airtel, Titan, Reliance Industries, and Mahindra & Mahindra gained ground.

According to exchange data, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) sold equities worth Rs 1,883.78 crore on Monday, continuing a trend of persistent outflows. In contrast, Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought shares worth Rs 3,516.36 crore, providing partial support to the market.

“FIIs’ renewed selling is constraining the rally in the market. In the last four days, FIIs have offloaded equities worth



Rs 14,269 crore. Higher valuations in India and muted earnings growth

are restraining foreign investors, who are now focusing on cheaper

markets with better earnings potential,” said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Investments Limited.

In Asian markets, most indices traded lower, with South Korea’s Kospi, Japan’s Nikkei 225, and Shanghai’s SSE Composite under pressure. Hong Kong’s Hang Seng was an exception, trading in positive territory.

US markets ended mostly higher on Monday, providing mixed global cues. The Brent crude benchmark slipped 0.20% to USD 64.76 a barrel, adding to the cautious sentiment.

In the previous session, the Sensex had inched up 39.78 points to 83,978.49, while the Nifty gained 41.25 points to settle at 25,763.35. Analysts suggest that market direction will continue to be influenced by FIIs’ selling patterns, domestic earnings growth, and global economic cues.

The early weakness highlights investor caution amid valuation concerns and global volatility, even as domestic institutional support offers some cushion to the markets.

## Rupee Rises 11 Paise to 88.66 Against Dollar



The Indian rupee rebounded on Tuesday, settling 11 paise higher at 88.66 against the U.S. dollar amid a mix of domestic and global factors.

Forex traders noted that while the rupee showed signs of recovery, gains remained limited due to a firm dollar, continued foreign fund outflows, and subdued domestic equity markets. These factors tempered a sharper appreciation in the currency.

Early trade saw the rupee hovering around 88.70 before gradually strengthening as selling pressure eased. Analysts attributed the recovery to improved market sentiment and lower demand for dollars in the spot market.

“While the rupee’s rebound is encouraging, persistent foreign capital outflows and a strong greenback globally are preventing more significant gains,” said a senior forex dealer at a leading Mumbai-based bank.

The U.S. dollar index, which measures the greenback’s performance against a basket of major currencies, remained supported by expectations of stable interest rates in the United States. This limited the rupee’s upward movement despite some domestic buying interest.

In the domestic equity markets, the Sensex and Nifty opened lower amid cautious investor sentiment, further restricting foreign inflows and keeping pressure on the currency.

Analysts suggest that in the near term, the rupee is likely to trade in a narrow range, influenced by global dollar trends, foreign institutional investor (FII) activity, and domestic macroeconomic indicators such as trade balance and inflation data.

The rupee had faced pressure in the previous sessions due to large outflows by foreign investors, with equities witnessing net selling. However, improved domestic demand for the currency and easing market concerns provided support, allowing the rupee to recover part of its losses.

With global markets expected to remain volatile, forex traders are closely watching U.S. economic data, crude oil prices, and domestic fund flows to gauge the currency’s trajectory in the coming weeks.

The rupee’s rebound, though modest, reflects resilience amid global uncertainties and ongoing volatility in capital markets.

## India’s 92% AI adoption rate the highest in Asia Pacific: BCG report



India has emerged as the front-runner in workplace ar-

tificial intelligence (AI) adoption in the Asia Pacific re-

gion, with 92% of employees using AI in their daily work,

according to a report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

Across the Asia Pacific, 78% of workers regularly use AI, surpassing the global average of 72%. The report, published by BCG X, the firm’s technology build and design arm, highlights the region’s leadership in integrating AI across workplaces, from offices to frontline operations.

“India’s AI adoption rate, the highest in Asia Pacific, signals not just enthusiasm but readiness for the next phase of transformation,” said Nipun Kalra, India Leader, BCG X. He noted that 58% of frontline Indian employees receive clear guidance on AI use, nearly double the regional average, fostering responsible and scalable innovation.

The study shows AI adoption is no longer confined to managerial roles. Across Asia Pacific, 70% of frontline employees now use AI weekly or more, compared to 51% globally, demonstrating how workers at all levels are driving digital transformation.

Despite optimism, concerns remain. 52% of employ-

ees worry AI may replace their roles, while only a third fully understand how AI tools work.

Additionally, 58% admitted they would use AI without company approval, underscoring the need for better governance and oversight.

BCG emphasized that sustained AI progress will require effective leadership, upskilling, and organizational design. “Organizations must move from experimentation to reimaging operating models, building governance, skills, and structures that turn AI’s promise into measurable enterprise and economic value,” Kalra added.

The findings highlight India’s readiness for large-scale AI adoption and the critical need for structured frameworks to ensure that the technology benefits both businesses and employees while mitigating risks.

This report positions India not only as a regional leader in AI adoption but also as a model for responsible and strategic AI integration across emerging economies.

## SBI Q2 Net Profit Jumps 10% to ₹20,160 Crore

State Bank of India (SBI) reported a 10% year-on-year rise in net profit for the second quarter ended September 30, 2025, at ₹20,160 crore, driven by improved asset quality and gains from strategic investments.

A key contributor to the robust performance was the sale of a 13.18% stake in Yes Bank, which generated a profit of ₹4,593 crore. This exceptional gain significantly boosted the bank’s overall net earnings for the quarter.

The bank’s performance also reflects strengthened asset quality across its lending portfolio, which helped offset pressures from other operational costs. Analysts note that SBI’s proactive approach in managing non-performing assets and strategic stake sales is reinforcing its financial position.

“This quarter’s results highlight SBI’s ability to generate exceptional returns through smart invest-



ment decisions while maintaining healthy lending practices,” said an industry expert.

SBI, India’s largest public sector lender, continues to leverage its wide branch network

and digital banking footprint to drive growth, while balancing risk management and capital allocation.

The gains from the Yes Bank stake sale underscore the bank’s focus

on unlocking value from strategic investments.

With robust capital buffers and improved asset quality, SBI is well-positioned to maintain steady growth in the

coming quarters, even as the broader banking sector faces challenges from fluctuating interest rates and evolving credit demand.

The bank’s strong quarterly performance

also strengthens investor confidence, reflecting its continued dominance in India’s banking landscape and its capacity to capitalize on both operational and strategic opportunities.

Microsoft has entered into a \$9.7 billion contract with data-center operator IREN, securing access to Nvidia’s advanced chips to address the growing demand for artificial intelligence (AI) computing power. The deal aims to help Microsoft overcome bottlenecks that have limited its ability to fully capitalize on the AI boom.

According to IREN’s filing, a portion of the funds from Microsoft’s prepayment will be used to finance part of its \$5.8 billion deal with Dell, which supplies Nvidia’s GB300 chips and other equipment essential for Microsoft’s AI infrastructure.

The announcement had an immediate impact on the stock market. IREN shares surged more than 20% in premarket trading on Monday, reflecting investor optimism about the strategic partnership. Dell’s shares also rose 5%, given its role in providing the AI-server hardware that Microsoft will deploy.

Analysts say the deal underscores Microsoft’s commitment to expanding its AI capabilities at a time when demand for high-performance computing is sky-

rocketing. By securing priority access to Nvidia chips through IREN, Microsoft can accelerate the rollout of its AI products and services while managing supply chain challenges.

“Access to cutting-edge Nvidia chips is critical for Microsoft to maintain competitiveness in the AI sector,” said an industry analyst.

“This deal not only strengthens its data-center capacity but also helps hedge against global semiconductor supply constraints.”

The partnership also illustrates the growing trend of tech giants collaborating with data-center operators to secure hardware essential for AI workloads, signaling the strategic importance of supply chain management in the AI race.

Microsoft and IREN did not provide exact timelines for deployment, but the scale of the contract indicates a significant expansion of Microsoft’s AI infrastructure in the coming months. The move is expected to reinforce Microsoft’s position in the AI market while giving IREN and Dell a substantial boost in revenue from chip-related contracts.

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## Bird Flu Found in Raw Milk Cheese



New research warns that raw milk cheeses may harbor the H5N1 avian influenza virus, even after extended ageing. The study, led by Cornell University and published in *Nature Medicine*, found that cheeses made from milk contaminated with H5N1 can retain infectious virus particles for up to 120 days—double the 60-day minimum ageing period required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Researchers tested cheeses with varying acidity levels and discovered that those with a pH between 5.8 and 6.6, such as camembert, allowed the virus to survive. Highly acidic cheeses, like feta with a pH of 4.6 or lower, showed no detectable virus, indicating that lower acidity may neutralize H5N1.

"Our study focused on the persistence of highly pathogenic H5N1 in raw milk cheeses," said Diego Diel, professor of virology at Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine. "Previous work has shown that infected cows shed high levels of the virus in milk, which can survive refrigerated storage for

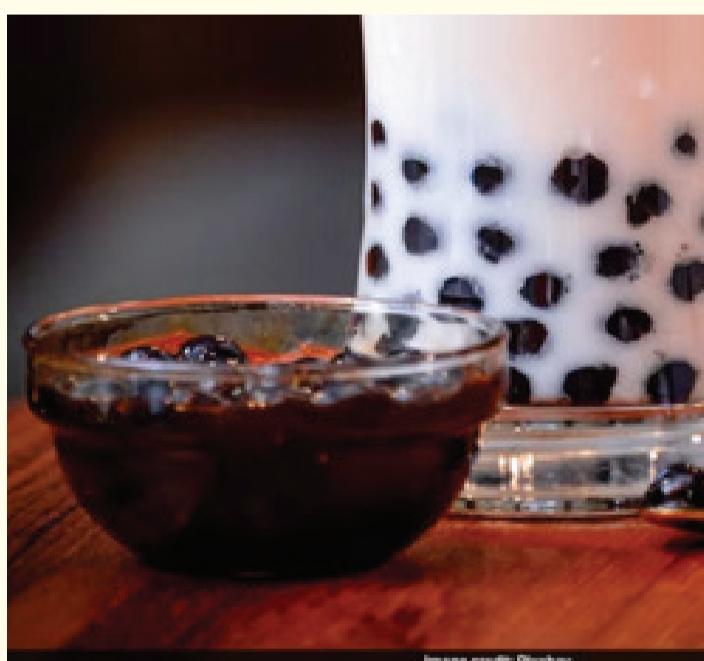
long periods."

The findings raise concerns for consumers of unpasteurized dairy products and suggest that current ageing standards may be insufficient to eliminate avian influenza risks. Researchers recommend testing milk before use and applying mild heat treatments below pasteurization levels. These steps could inactivate the virus while maintaining the characteristics of raw milk cheese.

Nicole Martin, assistant research professor and director of the Milk Quality Improvement Program at Cornell, emphasized the study's practical impact: "This research provides data-driven recommendations to help raw milk cheesemakers reduce risk during outbreaks affecting the milk supply."

The study highlights an overlooked pathway for avian influenza transmission and underscores the need for stricter safety measures in the production of raw milk cheeses, especially amid ongoing H5N1 outbreaks in livestock populations.

## Toddler Dies After Choking on Bubble Tea in China



A three-year-old toddler in China tragically died after choking on tapioca bubbles in his milk tea while playing on a trampoline, according to the *South China Morning Post* (SCMP). The incident occurred on October 19 at a shopping mall in Zhejiang province.

Witnesses reported that the child collapsed suddenly while playing after consuming the drink. His parents rushed him to the hospital, where medical staff performed emergency treatment for over an hour. Despite their efforts, the toddler was pronounced dead.

The cause of death was identified as tapioca bubbles, approximately 10 mm in size, which were too large for the child's airway. The sticky texture of the bubbles also prevented successful removal, even when the mother attempted the Heimlich maneuver.

The child's father, identified as Li, shared security footage from the mall showing the mother giving the toddler the bubble tea before the incident. Li appealed to the milk tea shop

and the shopping center to take responsibility for the tragedy.

The milk tea shop issued condolences to the family and highlighted that its online ordering system included a warning advising that children and elderly individuals consume the drink only under supervision.

The incident has sparked widespread discussion on Chinese social media about parental responsibility and child safety. Many commentators emphasized that young children should not consume sticky foods or beverages while playing.

"Kids cannot eat tapioca bubbles, jelly, or sticky rice, nor can they eat or drink while playing," one person wrote. Another added, "The parents are responsible for letting him play on a trampoline after drinking bubble tea."

This heartbreaking event has reignited conversations around food safety and supervision, with many urging caregivers to exercise extreme caution when children consume potentially hazardous foods.

# Meta Denies Using Porn for AI, Blames Employee Downloads



Meta has rejected allegations that it used pornographic content to train its artificial intelligence models, claiming that any downloads of adult material were made by individual employees for personal use. The statement was made in a legal filing urging a US district court to dismiss a copyright infringement lawsuit filed by Strike 3 Holdings, a company producing adult films.

The lawsuit accuses Meta of using Strike 3's copyrighted videos to train an AI model that powers its video generator, Movie Gen. Meta countered that the lawsuit is based on "guesswork and innuendo," and called Strike 3 a "copyright troll" filing extortion claims.

Meta stated that there is no evidence the company instructed employees to download the content or that it had knowledge of the

alleged 2,400 downloads. The firm also noted that AI research on "Multimodal Models and Generative Video" began in 2022, four years after the reported

downloads, making a connection to AI training "implausible."

According to Meta, activity linked to corporate IP addresses amounted to roughly 22

downloads per year, suggesting "disparate individuals download adult videos for personal use" rather than for AI purposes. Meta also emphasized that its user terms prohibit generating adult content with AI models, contradicting the claim that such material would be used for AI training.

The lawsuit alleges that Meta used a "stealth network" of 2,500 hidden IP addresses to download the videos and is seeking \$350 million in damages. Meta's filing argued that Strike 3 failed to identify the individuals allegedly involved, their roles at Meta, or whether any content was used in AI training.

The case comes amid heightened scrutiny of Meta's AI practices, following reports that internal AI rules allowed chatbots to engage in inappropriate conversations, spread false medical information, and assist in making racist arguments—issues the company has since addressed.

Meta's spokesperson reaffirmed, "We don't want this type of content, and we take deliberate steps to avoid training on this kind of material."

## Death Industry Booms Amid Ageing, Lonely South Korea



even started developing devices to detect unattended deaths, which can cause environmental hazards and pest infestations if left unattended.

The work often goes beyond cleaning. Kim Seok-jung, another professional, turned a late lyricist's unpublished songs into a tribute for the bereaved family. Cho recounted helping a teenage girl living alone in a tiny gosiwon, who later took her own life. He rescued her pet hamster, preserving a fragment of her life.

Veterans like Kim Dooneyeon note increasing recruitment of young people into funeral services. "When someone dies alone, everything must be cleared away," he said. Despite the challenges, students like Im recognize the importance of this growing yet emotionally demanding profession.

giving rise to specialized cleaners who manage the homes of those who die alone. Former classical musician Cho Eun-seok, 47, has handled several such cases, sometimes months after the person's death. He described his portraiture, often filled with neatly arranged belongings, soju bottles, and dusty gifts.

South Korea also records the highest suicide rate among developed nations, and these "lonely deaths" often leave traces requiring sensitive handling. Cho has

## Two Indian Languages Among World's Most Spoken



While English continues to dominate global communication, two Indian languages—Hindi and Bengali—feature prominently among the most spoken languages in the world.

English tops the list with

around 1.5 billion speakers worldwide, though only 390 million are native speakers. The majority use it as a second language, making it the most universal medium of communication today.

Following English, Chi-

nese (Mandarin) is the world's most spoken native language, with an estimated 1.1 to 1.2 billion speakers, mainly in China and neighboring regions. Mandarin's influence continues to grow globally, particularly in business and international diplomacy.

Among Indian languages,

Hindi ranks high with roughly 609 million speakers.

While most are based in India, the Indian diaspora has

contributed to its global reach. Hindi remains the most widely spoken of India's 22 official languages, reflecting its cultural and linguistic significance.

Bengali, the primary language of Bangladesh and India's West Bengal state, has around 280 million speakers. Its rich literary and cultural heritage has helped it maintain prominence both in South Asia and abroad.

Other major languages rounding out the global top list include Spanish, spoken by about 560 million people across Spain, Latin America, and the United States, and Arabic, with 330 to 420 million speakers across North Africa and the Middle East. Portuguese, with approximately 264 million speakers, is noted for its global cultural presence, particularly through Brazil's music, film, and literature.

Experts highlight that these statistics not only reflect native speakers but also account for the growing number of people using these languages as a second or foreign language. As globalization increases, understanding and learning widely spoken languages becomes crucial for cross-cultural communication, trade, and diplomacy.

The prominence of Hindi and Bengali underscores India's linguistic impact on the global stage, joining English, Mandarin, Spanish, and Arabic in shaping the world's communication landscape.

# Jannik Sinner Beats Alcaraz to Retain ATP Finals Title

Italy's Jannik Sinner successfully defended his ATP Finals crown on Sunday, defeating Spain's world number one Carlos Alcaraz 7-6(4), 7-5 in a thrilling final in front of his home fans. The match marked the sixth meeting of the year between the two young stars, who have emerged as the dominant forces in men's tennis in 2025.

Sinner, currently ranked world number two, displayed remarkable composure under pressure, particularly in the tightly contested first set. Both players held serve through most of the set, taking it to a tiebreak, where Sinner edged out Alcaraz 7-4. The Italian maintained his momentum into the second set, breaking Alcaraz at a crucial moment to seal the straight-sets victory.

"This is an incredible feeling, winning again at home in front of my fans. Carlos is a fantastic competitor, and every match with him is a battle," Sinner said after lifting the trophy.



Alcaraz, who has been the world number one for much of the year, acknowledged Sinner's performance, saying, "Jannik played very well today. It was a close match, and I had chances, but he held his nerve at the key moments."

The final further ce-

mented the Sinner-Alcaraz rivalry—a series of high-intensity encounters that has defined the men's tour this year. Their head-to-head clashes have produced some of the most exciting tennis of 2025, with both players consistently pushing each other

to higher levels.

With this win, Sinner not only retains the prestigious ATP Finals title but also strengthens his standing as one of the sport's rising stars capable of challenging for Grand Slam trophies in the coming seasons. Fans in Turin celebrated the victory

enthusiastically, highlighting the growing popularity of tennis in Italy.

Sinner's triumph over Alcaraz at the ATP Finals promises an exciting start to 2026, with both players expected to continue their duel for dominance in men's tennis.

## Kohli's Captaincy Legacy Shines Amid India's Recent Struggles



In recent times, Team India has faced unexpected home defeats, but the contrast highlights the extraordinary impact of Virat Kohli's captaincy. When Kohli led India, victories came consistently, yet the value

of his leadership was often underappreciated. Now, with losses piling up under successors Rohit Sharma

and Shubman Gill, Kohli's strategic acumen and leadership brilliance are being fully recognized.

Kohli is India's most successful Test captain, guiding the team through 68 Tests with 40 victories, a record unmatched in Indian cricket. Under his eight-year tenure, India did not lose a single Test series at home, suffering only two defeats. He elevated India from seventh in ICC Test rankings to number one, finishing the year as the top-ranked team three times and receiving the ICC Test Mace thrice, the prelude to the World Test Championship.

Kohli's approach emphasized balanced pitches to maximize home advantage while allowing spinners to thrive from the third day onward. This strategy, coupled with a disciplined, adaptable squad featuring stalwarts like Pujara, Rahane, and Dhawan, made India a formidable force against top sides including

Australia, England, and South Africa. His consistency held firm despite working with different coaches such as Ravi Shastri, Anil Kumble, and Rahul Dravid.

However, since Kohli stepped down from Test captaincy in 2022, the team's fortunes have fluctuated. Under Rohit, India suffered a shocking 0-3 home series loss to New Zealand, followed by another home defeat against South Africa under Shubman Gill, exposing vulnerabilities against spin that were previously managed effectively by Kohli-era batsmen.

These recent struggles have reinforced the significance of Kohli's leadership. His strategic clarity, consistency, and ability to build a balanced, dominant Test side on home soil are now being fully appreciated, proving that his captaincy was not just about victories, but creating an enduring legacy for Indian cricket.

## Haaland Hat-Trick Sends Norway To World Cup, Italy Faces Playoff Battle



Norway sealed their first FIFA World Cup spot since 1998 with a commanding 4-1 victory over Italy at a rain-soaked San Siro on Sunday, thanks to a decisive brace from Erling Haaland. The Manchester City striker, averaging over a goal per game this season, scored twice within two minutes in the 78th and 79th minutes to put Norway firmly in control. The team finished Group I with a perfect 24 points from eight matches, leaving Italy six points adrift.

Italy initially took the lead through Pio Esposito in the 11th minute, but Norway equalized via Antonio Nusa in the 63rd minute, after which Haaland and Jorginho Strand Larsen's stoppage-time strike completed the rout. Norway coach Stale Solbakken praised Haaland, calling him a "goal machine," while remaining cautiously optimistic about the next stage, noting, "Let's see what the draw brings before we go into those questions."

For Haaland, this qualification is historic: his father, Alf-Inge, was still

playing internationally the last time Norway competed in a World Cup 27 years ago. Haaland scored 16 goals in qualifying, cementing his reputation as one of the world's most lethal forwards.

Italy, meanwhile, faces another challenge. Gennaro Gattuso's side now

heads to the playoffs in March after failing to secure direct qualification: the Azzurri missed the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, following two heavy defeats to Norway in the group. Gattuso admitted concern over Italy's collapse in the second half at San Siro, apologizing to fans and stressing the need for the team to regroup.

The result underscores Italy's recent struggles: the Azzurri missed the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, following two heavy defeats to Norway in the group. Gattuso admitted concern over Italy's collapse in the second half at San Siro, apologizing to fans and stressing the need for the team to regroup.

Norway now looks forward to next summer's World Cup in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, with Haaland expected to spearhead their attack on the global stage.

## Chhattisgarh Retains Crown at All India Forest Sports Meet



Charulata Gajpal securing four golds.

The overall championship trophy was presented at the closing ceremony by Uttarakhand Governor Lieutenant General (Retired) Gurmeet Singh and Forest Minister Subodh Uniyal, received on behalf of Chhattisgarh by Shalini Raina. Additional Chief Secretary Richa Sharma and Forest Force Chief V. Srinivas Rao also congratulated the athletes.

Other top performers included Kerala, which finished second with 31 gold medals, and Karnataka, securing third place with 25 golds. Host state Uttarakhand placed sixth.

A special initiative, "One Sport, One Forest," emphasized environmental conservation by planting a tree in the name of each medal winner, blending sportsmanship with eco-consciousness. This unique approach highlighted the event's dual focus on athletic excellence and nature preservation.

Chhattisgarh's continued dominance reflects the state's robust training programs and commitment to nurturing talent, reinforcing its position as a powerhouse in forest sports competitions across India.

## Satwik-Chirag Lead India at Australian Open



India's hopes at the Australian Open Super 500 rest heavily on men's doubles stars Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who will aim for their first title of the season. The Asian Games champions have been India's standout performers, winning a second World Championships bronze and finishing as runners-up at both the Hong Kong Super 500 and China Masters Super 750.

The pair, former world No. 1 for 18 weeks, had slipped to No. 27 earlier this year but fought back to reclaim the No. 3 spot, aiming to continue their strong run ahead of the World Tour Finals. They will open against Chang Ko-Chi and Po Li-Wei of Chinese Taipei.

India's singles players will look to regain consistency after a challenging season. Lakshya Sen, seeded seventh, has shown promise, reaching the Hong Kong Open final and Japan semi-finals. He opens against Su Li Yang of Chinese Taipei, hoping to build momentum.

HS Prannoy, 2023 World Championships bronze-medallist, returned from injury in Kumamoto

to last week. He defeated Jun Hao Leong of Malaysia but lost to Denmark's Rasmus Gemke and faces Canada's Brian Yang in the first round.

Kidambi Srikanth, a runner-up at the Malaysia Masters, takes on fifth seed Lin Chun-Yi, while US Open champion Ayush Shetty meets Malaysia's Justin Hoh. Other singles entrants include Kiran George against sixth seed Kenta Nishimoto and Tharun Mannepalli facing Denmark's Magnus Johansen.

In women's events, Aakarshi Kashyap is India's sole singles representative, drawn against top seed and Olympic champion An Se Young. Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand return in women's doubles against fourth seeds Yan Fei Chen and Liang Ching Sun of Chinese Taipei. In mixed doubles, Mohit Jaglan and Lakshita Jaglan face Canada's Nyk Yakura and Crystal Lai.

With Satwik-Chirag leading the charge, India will look to make a strong impression on the Australian courts, combining experience and emerging talent to challenge the world's best.

## iBomma Crackdown: 21,000 Films Seized, Rs 22,400 Crore Loss Exposed



The Indian film industry received a major boost against piracy after the arrest of Immadi Ravi, founder of the notorious piracy platform iBomma and Bappam. The crackdown has exposed one of the most organised piracy networks in India, which leaked South Indian films and OTT content within hours of release.

iBomma operated across Hyderabad, Dubai, the Netherlands, and Myanmar, making it difficult for authorities to track. The network caused massive financial losses, with the Indian film industry reportedly losing Rs 22,400 crore in 2023, while Tollywood alone faced Rs 3,700 crore in losses in 2024. Investigations by the Telangana Film Crime Cell (TFCC) and Hyderabad Cyber Crime Police led to the booking of 65 mirror sites linked to the network. Ravi was arrested at Hyderabad airport after returning from France.

Police seized a hard disk containing 21,000 pirated films and personal data of nearly 5 million users, raising serious privacy concerns. Devices,

cheque books, debit cards, and bank accounts with about Rs 3 crore were also recovered. During interrogation, Ravi admitted earning "hundreds of crores" through piracy.

Industry stalwarts including Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna, SS Rajamouli, and Dil Raju met Hyderabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar to commend the crackdown.

The seized user data is now central to ongoing investigations, helping authorities trace offshore partners, track money flows, and identify other members of the piracy network.

Experts warn that users are at risk of spam, scams, fraud, and malware because personal details and browsing patterns were stored without consent. Authorities urge audiences to consume content only on legal platforms, highlighting that piracy harms both the industry and public safety.

The iBomma crackdown marks a significant step in curbing large-scale film piracy in India, sending a strong message that organized cyber-crime targeting entertainment content will face strict action.

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## Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna Thank Hyderabad Police for iBomma Arrest



Hyderabad: Tollywood superstars Chiranjeevi and Nagarjuna met Hyderabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar on Sunday to express their gratitude for the swift arrest of Immadi Ravi, founder of the notorious movie piracy website iBomma.

The iBomma website, which operated across multiple countries including India, the Netherlands, Dubai, and Myanmar, had reportedly leaked thousands of South Indian films and OTT content within hours of release. Police investigations revealed that the platform had stored personal details of millions of users, creating a serious privacy threat.

Following the arrest, authorities seized a hard disk containing 21,000 pirated films and data of nearly 5 million users, alongside bank accounts, devices, and other evidence. The crackdown also led to the closure of 65 mirror sites linked to the piracy network.

Chiranjeevi praised the police for their smart operations, which successfully dismantled a dangerous piracy network that severely impacted the movie business. "Many people have grown accustomed to watching newly released movies illegally because of such operations. This needs to end, and I am happy to see the authorities acting decisively to protect the industry," he said.

Nagarjuna also lauded the Hyderabad Police for their prompt action. "On behalf of Telugu Cinema and Indian Cinema at large, I thank Commissioner Sajjanar and his team for their relentless efforts," he said. He further

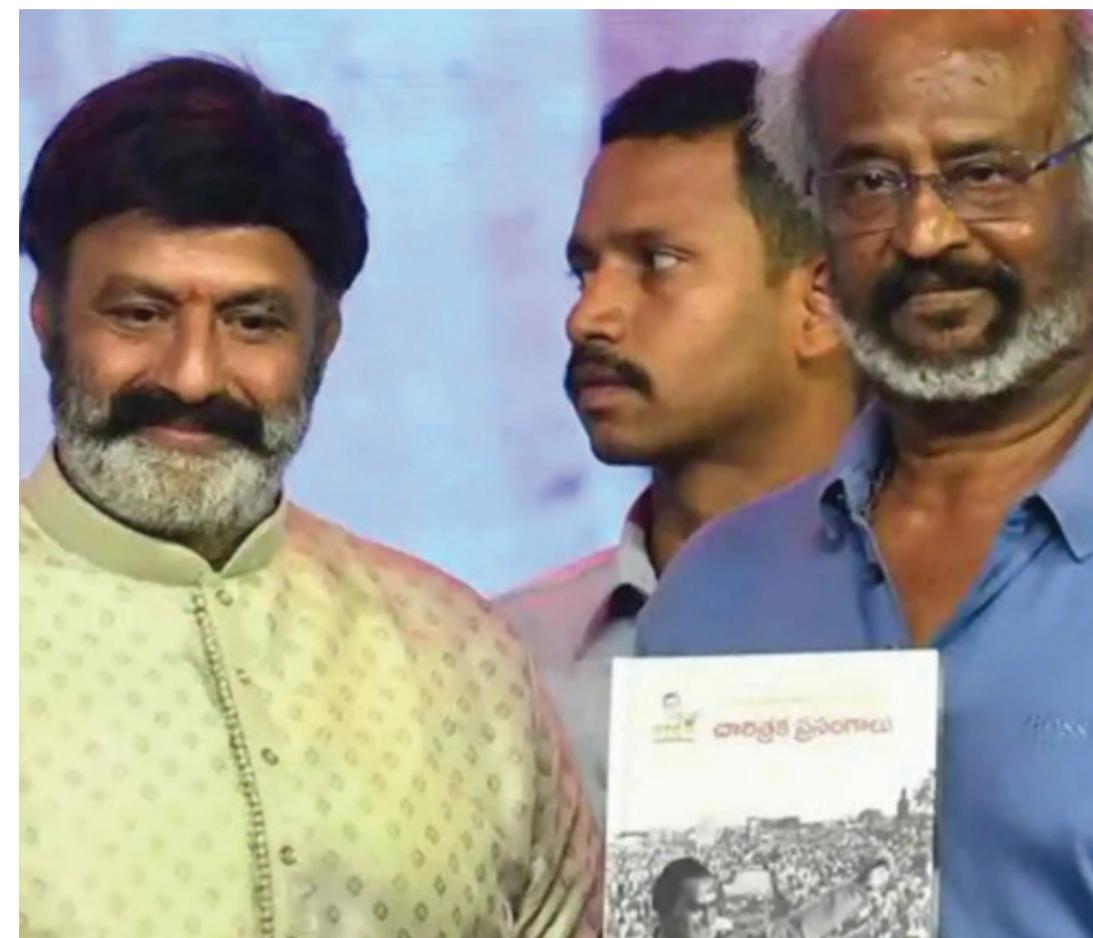
urged the public to refrain from encouraging piracy and to support filmmakers by watching movies in theatres.

The iBomma website, which operated across multiple countries including India, the Netherlands, Dubai, and Myanmar, had reportedly leaked thousands of South Indian films and OTT content within hours of release. Police investigations revealed that the platform had stored personal details of millions of users, creating a serious privacy threat.

Following the arrest, authorities seized a hard disk containing 21,000 pirated films and data of nearly 5 million users, alongside bank accounts, devices, and other evidence. The crackdown also led to the closure of 65 mirror sites linked to the piracy network.

The actions of the Hyderabad Police have been widely appreciated across the film fraternity, with the arrest seen as a significant step toward curbing piracy and protecting the livelihoods of filmmakers, actors, and technicians in the Indian film industry.

# Rajinikanth, Balakrishna to Receive Rare Honour at IFFI 2025



South Indian cinema legends Rajinikanth and Nandamuri Balakrishna are set to be honoured together at the closing ceremony of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2025 in Goa. The rare recognition marks the duo's remarkable achievement of completing 50 years in the Indian film industry, a milestone celebrated by fans across the globe.

Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Dr L. Murugan announced the decision during a media interaction in Goa. He said the government will felicitate both veteran actors at IFFI's closing ceremony in recognition of their "iconic body of work, extraordinary popularity, and their lasting influence on Indian storytelling."

Rajinikanth, who began his cinematic journey with the 1975 Tamil film Apoorva Raagangal, has grown to become one of the most revered figures in Indian cinema.

His unmatched screen presence, unique style, and decades of blockbuster hits have global following. Nandamuri Balakrishna, fondly known as Balayya, has also carved a legendary path with over 100 films to his credit across a career spanning five decades. Apart from cinema, he has a strong political presence as the MLA of Hindupur in Andhra Pradesh. Earlier this year, he was honoured with the Padma Bhushan, adding to his long list of accolades.

IFFI 2025 will be held from November 20 to 27 in Goa, with the closing ceremony scheduled at the Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium. This year, the festival has recorded registrations from 7,500 delegates, and will showcase 270 films from 84 countries, reaffirming its status as one of Asia's premier film events.

The joint honour for Rajinikanth and Balakrishna is expected to be one of the key highlights of the prestigious festival.

## Akhanda 2: Second Single "Jajikaya Jajikaya" to Premiere at Jagadamba Theatre



Tollywood superstar Nandamuri Balakrishna is gearing up for the highly anticipated release of Akhanda 2, directed by Boyapati Sreenu. Following the success of the first Akhanda, expectations for the sequel are high, and the film's promotional activities are in full swing.

After releasing the teaser and the first single, the makers are now set to launch the second single, "Jajikaya Jajikaya", a romantic dance number featuring a younger Balakrishna alongside Samyuktha. Fans have been eagerly awaiting this track, especially after the first single received a

mixed response.

The team has chosen the iconic Jagadamba Theatre in Vizag for the song's launch. The event is scheduled for 5 PM on November 18, 2025, and is expected to attract a large audience. The premiere aims to create significant buzz ahead of the movie's release.

Akhanda 2 also features Aadi Pinisetty as the antagonist, and the music is composed by Thaman. The film is produced under the 14 Reels Plus banner and is slated for release on December 5, 2025. It will be available in multiple languages, and a 3D version is also planned, adding to the

excitement among fans.

The film's combination of Balakrishna's screen presence, Boyapati Sreenu's direction, and Thaman's music has already generated a strong following. With the second single set to drop, audiences are keen to see if "Jajikaya Jajikaya" can match or surpass the popularity of the first track.

With promotional events and teasers keeping the momentum alive, Akhanda 2 is shaping up to be one of the biggest Tollywood releases of the year, promising high-octane action, drama, and engaging music for fans across the country.



## Raveena Tandon's Daughter to Debut Opposite Mahesh Babu's Nephew

Raveena Tandon's daughter, Rasha Thadani, who gained widespread attention with the viral Uyi Amma song in Hindi cinema, is now set to make her Telugu film debut. She will star opposite Jaya Krishna Ghatamaneni, grandson of legendary actor Krishna and nephew of superstar Mahesh Babu, who is also entering the film industry with this project.

The pairing has already created buzz among fans and industry insiders, as both actors hail from prominent film families with deep roots in Indian cinema. Their debut together is being closely watched for the chemistry and performance they bring to the screen.

The upcoming film is directed by Ajay Bhupathi and is described as an intense love story set against the culturally rich and visually captivating backdrop of Tirupati. The director aims to blend strong storytelling with striking visuals to create a memorable cinematic experience.