

# Governor Approves Prosecution Of KTR In 54.88 Cr Formula E Case

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Telangana Governor Jishnu Dev Varma has officially granted his critical sanction to prosecute former minister and current Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) working president, K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), in the highly controversial Formula E race case. This crucial permission, formally given by the Governor, arrives two months after the State government formally submitted the file requesting his consent to initiate prosecution against the prominent BRS leader. The case revolves around the alleged misuse of public funds amounting to 54.88 crore during the planning and execution of the high-profile racing event. The Governor's nod is a pivotal step that now fully clears the administrative path for the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to proceed with filing a formal charge sheet against KTR and other implicated officials. The ACB had originally submitted its investigative report and a formal request for the Governor's sanction in September, seeking permission to pros-



ecute KTR, along with senior IAS officer Arvind Kumar and others involved in the alleged irregularities.

It is important to note that the prosecution of the IAS officer, Arvind Kumar, requires separate, specific approval from the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), which operates under the Central government. At this moment, it remains strategically unclear whether the ACB will postpone filing any legal documents, waiting for the DoPT's required permission to file a single, comprehensive charge sheet against all accused, or if it will choose to immediately file an initial charge sheet focusing exclusively on KTR. The ACB's investigation, which spanned

nine months into the alleged irregularities in hosting the Formula E race during the previous BRS regime, provided the foundation for these proceedings. KTR faces the grave accusation of receiving 44 crore in the form of an electoral bond from a sponsorship company. This payment is alleged to have been a quid pro quo arrangement for granting the same company the exclusive rights to organize and manage the international racing event.

The ACB originally registered the case last December against KTR, former Special Chief Secretary of Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA&UD) M. Dana Kishore. His complaint specifically highlighted that foreign remittances were executed without the necessary prior approvals from relevant regulatory authorities, which subsequently resulted in an avoidable additional tax burden of 8.06 crore being placed upon HMDA. Furthermore, the complainant alleged serious procedural violation: the significant payment was made while the Model Code of Conduct was actively in effect for the state Assembly elections, and no prior, ma

ndatory approval was sought or obtained from the Election Commission. The FIR includes charges under the Prevention of Corruption Act as well as under the Indian Penal Code's (IPC) Sections 409 (criminal breach of trust) and 120B (criminal conspiracy). The ACB has since carried out multiple rounds of intensive questioning with KTR, Arvind Kumar, and B.L.N. Reddy. KTR, who was questioned four times by the agency, has publicly and consistently dismissed the entire Formula E case as a "bogus case." He has defended his actions, confirming that he did direct the release of 46 crore from the government but emphatically stated that these funds were deposited directly into the designated official account. He has asserted that "Not a single rupee has been misused. Every rupee is accounted for. Where then is the corruption?" The BRS leader has maintained his defiance, asserting confidently that even if the prosecution proceeds and charge sheets are officially filed, the case against him will ultimately "not stand" in a court of law.

## iBomma Mastermind Taken Into Police Custody

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The primary accused in a massive, digital film piracy case, Imandi Ravi, who is publicly identified as the administrator of the highly illegal and widely used iBomma website, has been formally taken into police custody by the specialized Hyderabad Cybercrime authorities. Following his judicial production, Ravi was transferred from the correctional facility to the Cybercrime Police Station located in Bashirbagh. Officials are

currently engaged in an intensive and strategic interrogation of Ravi, focusing on various complex dimensions of the extensive film piracy network he allegedly controlled and operated. The Nampally Court had previously granted the po-

lice permission on Wednesday to hold Imandi Ravi in custody for a period of five full days. This granted time is crucial for investigators to extract detailed operational and financial information related to the digital crime, given the scale and sophisticated nature of the offense. The formal charges against Ravi are extremely grave and illustrate the sheer volume of his illegal digital operations. He was recently arrested by the Cybercrime police of Hyderabad City. The central accusation against him is the illegal large-scale piracy of an enormous volume of content—specifically, over 21,000 films that span various popular Indian languages. The initial police investigation has revealed that this vast and complex piracy operation was run consistently for an extended period of six years. The investigation tracked that the operation utilized the Caribbean Islands as its central operational base, a location often chosen strategically to complicate international law enforcement efforts and to maintain anonymity. Furthermore, authorities have successfully identified that Ravi managed and oper-

ated a complex network of 66 mirror websites. These multiple mirror sites were specifically designed and maintained to continuously upload the pirated films and bypass any attempts by law enforcement, hosting providers, and content owners to shut down the illegal streaming services. This strategic use of multiple sites allowed the operation to maintain a high degree of resilience and ensure a continuous flow of illegal content to millions of users across the globe, severely damaging the financial interests of the Indian film industry.

## CM Revanth Reddy Seeks Central Aid for Hyderabad's Global Vision Projects



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Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy hosted a productive breakfast meeting with Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food, Public Distribution, and Renewable Energy, P. Rajesh Joshi, at the Hotel Taj Krishna on Thursday morning. The high-level meeting saw crucial participation from several key state and central officials, including Telangana Minister for Health and Family Welfare Uttam Kumar Reddy, Chief Secretary to the Government Rajiv Ramakrishna Rao, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister Seshadri, and Principal Secretary of the Civil Supplies Department Stephen Ravindra, along with other senior administrative officials. This meeting followed the Chief Minister's strong pitch for robust economic growth and his active seeking of the Union Government's indispensable assistance to ensure the timely completion of several transformative, game-changing infrastructure projects planned for the state.

During a recent Regional Meeting of Urban Development ministers, which was chaired by Union Minister of Housing and Urban Development Manohar Lal Khattar in Hyderabad, CM Revanth Reddy had explicitly outlined his state Government's ambitious and

comprehensive vision. This vision aims to develop the capital Hyderabad City into the most happening global City in the world by proactively undertaking a diverse range of massive infrastructure development projects. Seeking the Union government's full cooperation and required financial and administrative support, the Chief Minister underscored that many essential development projects are currently stalled, pending formal approval from the Center. He specifically requested Union Minister Khatto to immediately grant necessary permissions and extend critical support to several major initiatives, including the ambitious Metro Rail Phase Two expansion, the vital Musi Rejuvenation project, the necessary scheme for lifting of river Godavari water to Hyderabad, and the ongoing works related to the expansive Regional Ring Road (RRR).

The Chief Minister also took the opportunity to brief Minister Khatto extensively on the state's strategic commitment to zero-carbon emission measures, which includes actively promoting the large-scale adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs) throughout Telangana. He announced the state's plan to decisively press 3,000 new electric buses into public service in Hyderabad over the course of the coming year. Other strategic development initiatives were also discussed in detail during the meeting. These included the proposed Future City project, strategies for attracting increased global investments into the proposed new city development areas, and the establishment of a large-scale Dry Port designed to significantly bolster the state's overall economy and logistics capabilities.

CM Revanth Reddy emphasized his administration's high ambition by stating clearly, "We are not competing with other states in the country. Our competition is with Singapore, Tokyo, and New York cities. It requires the cooperation of the central government" to reach these international standards. The Chief Minister also announced that the State government is preparing to release the Telangana Rising Vision Document 2047 on December 9. He provided a preview of the state's major economic targets: "We are working with the aim of making Telangana a 1 trillion US dollar economy by 2034 and a three trillion-dollar economy by 2047. We expect Telangana to contribute 10 per cent of the country's economy." In setting these ambitious targets, CM Revanth Reddy also referenced and aligned the state's vision with Prime Minister Modi's broader national vision to develop the entire country into a 30 trillion-dollar economy by 2047 in line with the Visions Bharat 2047 initiative.

## Naxalism Hits Dead End After 'Operation Kagar'?

V Krishna Kumar | Nov 20, 2025

A succession of effective police operations, coupled with the crucial surrender of key leaders, strongly indicates that the decades-long, violent Maoist insurgency in the Telugu states may be definitively reaching its climax. Signals from intelligence and law enforcement agencies suggest that the movement's core organizational structure and fighting capability are severely degraded, largely due to the intense counter-insurgency effort known as 'Operation Kagar' and the presence of deep internal rifts. The recent wave of setbacks for the leadership is highly significant. Three core members of the Maoist party's State Committee—Kunkati Venkatai-



ah alias Vikas, Mogicherla Venkata Raju alias Erra Raju, and his wife Gangi alias Gangavali alias Soni—recently surrendered before DGP Siva Dhar Reddy. This adds to the recent, critical loss of the top Maoist leader Hidma in a police encounter, alongside the apprehension of approximately 50 other Maoist cadres. This heavy loss of senior, experienced leaders and the high number of arrests suggest that the Maoist party now suffers from a devastating and potentially irreversible vacuum at the apex of its command.

Historically, states like undivided Andhra Pradesh endured immense suffering due to Naxalism and Maoism. Numerous political figures and public representatives were brutally assassinated by Naxalites, often solely to maintain

the militants' perceived power and visibility. Co

unless security personnel were also tragically killed in various planned attacks. However, the Maoist influence has been steadily dwindling, limiting its activities mai-

nally to the Andhra-Odisha Border (AOB) region.

The current escalation of counter-insurgency, which has pushed 'Operation Kagar' to its most intense level yet, strongly suggests that the final chapter of this con-

flict is unfolding in the Telugu states.

The decline of the Maoist movement is attributed to several critical factors beyond the direct police action. Firstly, the movement's dated and violent fighting me-

thods are now incompatible with modern technology. The old strategy of hiding in remote forests is ineffective in the age of pervasive surveillance and advanced tracking technology, making it easy for authorities to locate individuals. Secondly, the movement's foundational ideology has significantly weakened, leading to chronic internal conflicts and organizational fragmentation. This fracturing has created a surge in informers who are willing to provide crucial intelligence to the police, turning former safe zones into liabilities.

The government has signaled its firm resolve to entirely eliminate the Naxal problem, actively promoting surrenders while systematically neutralizing the remaining operational members. Currently, the movement has virtually no major, recognized leader or organized cadre operating freely on the ground.

The political discourse suggests that those who once publicly supported the Maoists, often termed "sympathizers," are now primarily running financial rackets under the guise of the movement's cause. These groups previously asserted that the Maoist party would eventually rise again as long as Hidma was active. Now that Hidma is confirmed dead, the status of the presumed next leader, Devji, remains unknown, with some reports suggesting he is already in police custody. The Central Government has set an aggressive target to completely dismantle the remaining forces by March 31 of next year. Evidence of the movement's desperation is seen in reports that deci-



# CM Meets Analog AI CEO To Bring 'Physical Intelligence' To Hyd

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Alex Kipman, the renowned CEO of Analog AI and a pioneer behind Microsoft Kinect and HoloLens, met with Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in Hyderabad to discuss a significant technological collaboration. The core of the discussion center

ed on integrating Analog AI's cutting-edge 'Physical Intelligence' systems into the state's most ambitious urban development initiatives, including the proposed Future City and AI City projects. In response to a request from the Chief Minister, Analog AI expressed strong interest in applying its technology

to tackle Hyderabad's most critical urban challenges. The specific problems targeted for intervention include mitigating severe traffic congestion, predicting and preventing devastating urban flooding events, and significantly enhancing capabilities in climate change prediction and modeling for

the metropolitan area. The potential partnership also extends to the crucial Musi Riverfront Development project, positioning advanced technology as a foundational component across urban renewal and planning. The integration of 'Physical Intelligence'—which merges digital analysis with real-world, physi-

cal data—promises to create a truly smart and responsive urban environment, enabling proactive, rather than reactive, municipal response. The Chief Minister extended a formal invitation to Kipman to attend the upcoming Telangana Rising Global Summit scheduled for December 8 and 9, underscoring the high value the state government places on this potential collaboration. If fully realized, this partnership could establish Hyderabad as a global benchmark for utilizing advanced technology to achieve sustainable and resilient development goals.



## Harish Rao Honours Educationist Chukkah Ramaiah on 100th Birthday

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Former Minister Harish Rao paid a deeply respectful and personal visit to the residence of the renowned educationist, Chukkah Ramaiah Garu (popularly known as I.I.T. Ramaiah), to felicitate him on the momentous occasion of his 100th birthday. Harish Rao honored the centenarian with a traditional shawl and extended his sincere, heartfelt birthday wishes. Speaking during the event, the former minister conveyed his profound sense of privilege at offering greetings to an extraordinary individual who commands respect from every single person in Telangana society, emphasizing that Ramaiah's goodwill effortlessly cuts across all party lines and political affiliations. He stated emphatically that Ramaiah's immense services to the nation and the education sector are truly invaluable, lauding his singular

achievement in guiding and equipping countless students and providing society with innumerable engineers. Harish Rao noted that Ramaiah's name became synonymous with the highest standards of technical education, to the extent that "I.I.T. means Ramaiah Garu and Ramaiah Garu means I.I.T." A crucial aspect of Ramaiah's character, as highlighted by the former minister, is his utter selflessness, pointing out that Ramaiah never sought political power or personal wealth, dedicating his entire life instead to the greater good of social service and public welfare. This dedication, he asserted, is what distinguishes him as a truly great man. Harish Rao concluded by conveying heartfelt wishes to Ramaiah, his students, and his admirers, celebrating a life of extraordinary service and dedication to the cause of education and society.

## Minister Seethakka condoles Malavath Poorna's Family on Father's Demise

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Minister Seethakka, a prominent member of the Telangana Cabinet, undertook a deeply sympathetic visit to the family of Malavath Poorna, the youth icon and world's youngest girl to successfully summit Mount Everest. The purpose of her visit was to offer profound and personal condolences following the recent and unfortunate death of Poorna's father. The Minister was accompanied by Government Advisor Shabbir Ali and Nizamabad Rural MLA Bhupathi Reddy, during the visit to Poorna's ancestral residence in the erstwhile Nizamabad district. Minister Seethakka spent time with the grieving family, offering personal words of comfort and courage to Malavath Poorna. The Minister's message was one of solidarity and

emotional support during their difficult period of bereavement, noting that Poorna's extraordinary achievement had effectively raised Telangana's fame to the height of Everest itself. She made a crucial and categorical assurance to the family, stating that the Telangana government would stand firmly by the family and provide all necessary forms of support in their hour of need. This commitment of comprehensive assistance goes beyond a simple gesture of condolence, indicating a governmental pledge to safeguard the welfare of the family who has brought such honor to the state. The visit reinforces the administration's image as one that is sensitive to and supportive of its citizens, particularly those who have achieved distinction on the world stage.



## CM Highlights Government's Resolve at NABARD Summit

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Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Malu served as the Chief Guest at the inaugural NABARD EARTH Summit held at HITEX, Madhapur, delivering a powerful address focused on the Telangana government's strong commitment to champion the cause of farmers. He affirmed that under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, the government has already implemented a significant debt relief measure, providing a colossal 21,000 crore in financial relief to approximately 22 lakh families. The Deputy CM detailed a series of strategic, farmer-centric initiatives currently being implemented, including the expansion and transformation of the agricultural procurement system and the active implementation of the 'Rythu Bharosa' scheme, designed to ensure timely financial support. He

also pointed to substantial government investments in expanding and modernizing irrigation facilities, maintaining

digital crop records, and developing post-harvest infrastructure. These efforts, he stated, are vital in restoring robust confidence among the entire farming community. Bhatti Vikramarka emphasized that the government's dedication is to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with farmers throughout their daily journey of development. He praised NABARD, calling it a great institution born during the period of nation-building, standing as the "silent force" behind the rejuvenation of rural India. He highlighted that Telangana is not just hosting the summit; it is a living testament to rural transformation achieved by combining innovation with political resolve, citing the T-Fiber project and the introduction of India's first Gold Standard Carbon Credits for farmers practicing water-saving methods. He strongly asserted that the application of technology like drone-based crop management and AI soil analysis is now an absolute necessity for achieving national food security.

## MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy Orders Immediate Action on Water Scarcity

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Maheshwaram MLA and former Minister Smt. Sabitha Indra Reddy convened an urgent review meeting with officials from the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) at her residence today. The meeting was primarily focused on addressing the persistent and widespread drinking water supply issues within the jurisdiction of Badangpet Municipal Corporation, Jalgatty Municipality, and Tuk-

uguda Municipality. The MLA brought to the attention of the HMWSSB officials the fact that residents in several colonies have been facing severe difficulties due to the inadequate supply of drinking water in recent days. Recognizing the serious nature of the public inconvenience, she issued a direct and firm directive to the officials, ordering them to take swift action and ensure the instantaneous restoration of water supply to the affected areas. She emphasized the critical

need for providing a continuous and sufficient flow of clean water to the residents. Officials informed the meeting that an additional pipeline system has been installed to ensure a continuous and sufficient supply of clean water to the public. MLA Sabitha Indra Reddy issued clear guidelines and instructions to the water board to further strengthen the water supply system and prevent residents from facing any future problems related to scarcity. She also inquired about

## Narrow Escape For Passengers After Bus Hits Tanker On NH 44

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A major disaster was narrowly averted in Mahabubnagar district, Telangana, when a private sleeper bus collided with a chemical tanker on the Hyderabad-Bengaluru National Highway (NH 44) near Macharam village, Jacherla mandal, around 6:30 a.m. The collision caused an immediate and dangerous breach, leading to a widespread leakage of Hydrochloric Acid (HCl). Dense, toxic chemical fumes quickly enveloped the scene, creating panic among the 30 to 40 passengers aboard the Jagan Travels bus. Their quick thinking was crucial; the passengers successfully used the emergency exit to escape to safety. Law enforcement officials confirmed the most important outcome: no injuries were sustained by any individual in the collision or from the chemical exposure. The incident caused a substantial and protracted traffic jam near the Macharam Flyover, disrupting transit for several hours. Emergency services, inclu-

## Jeh Aerospace Commits \$50M to Launch Manufacturing Unit in Telangana

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Aerospace and defence manufacturing startup Jeh Aerospace officially inaugurated its second large-scale manufacturing unit in Telangana on Thursday, accompanied by a massive financial commitment. The company announced plans to invest a substantial USD 50 million (approximately 445 crore) into this brand-new facility over the next 6 to 12 months. Named Mach 2, the facility is strategically situated within the Horizon Industrial Park near Hyderabad and covers an expansive 2-lakh square feet, nearly quadrupling its existing Hyderabad footprint, bringing its total manufacturing capacity within the city to over 250,000 square feet. Founder and CEO Vishal Sanghavi stated that Mach 2 is engineered as a software-defined, AI-augmented system, designed to execute manufacturing processes with unparalleled precision at a massive scale. This investment, backed by investors like General Catalyst and Elevation Capital, is expected to create numerous high-skilled jobs, further solidifying Telangana's reputation as a burgeoning hub for advanced manufacturing and defence technology.

## Ethiopian Delegation Visits Telangana DCA to Study Regulatory Model

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A significant, high-level Ethiopian Delegation, including representatives from the country's Ministry of Health, the Ethiopian Investment Commission, and the World Bank, visited the Office of the Drugs Control Administration (DCA) in Telangana. The primary objective of the visit was to gain detailed, first-hand insights and practical knowledge into the effective



regulatory framework and robust operational methodologies employ

ed by Telangana's DCA, as the Ethiopian government seeks to significantly enhance and modernize its own pharmaceutical regulatory systems. During the visit, DCA Telangana provided a thorough overview of its core regulatory functions, covering licensing, inspections, and stringent quality assurance protocols. A significant focus was placed on the administration's extensive field enforcement activities and the measures taken to ensure the consistent availability of quality drugs

to the public throughout the state. This successful model of balancing industry promotion with the crucial responsibility of protecting public health was keenly observed. The Ethiopian Delegation expressed profound appreciation for the depth of the insights shared, recognizing the high standards and operational efficiency demonstrated by the DCA's team and systems. They explicitly stated their intention to

# BRS Leaders Accuse Congress of Vengeance in Formula E Case and Welfare Schemes

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Former MLA Gandra Venkataramana Reddy (BRS) strongly criticized the Congress Government's actions, accusing the ruling party of engaging in political vendetta and misallocating welfare benefits. He alleged that the government has unjustly withheld Double Bedroom houses from the originally intended beneficiaries in the Bhupalpally constituency. Reddy stated that the official code of conduct for the Assembly elections came into effect on the very day the houses were ready for inauguration. He alleged that, instead of allocating these houses to the rightful, poor beneficiaries, the Congress Government, acting under police control, has misappropriated the houses and allocated them exclusively to Congress party workers. Furthermore, he claimed that the government officials



are engaging in corruption, having collected 1 lakh from each of the deserving beneficiaries only to deny them the homes later. He cited an RTI Act response from the MPDO, which allegedly stated that houses were not allocated due to the objection raised by the local MLA, confirming the political interference. Reddy accused the government of promoting a policy of allocating schemes only to Congress workers, effectively snatching schemes

meant for the poor and distributing them among their own party cadre. He further alleged that the Bhupalpally District Collector is acting solely under the direction of Congress leaders to gain favor with the local MLA. On the Formula E car race case, Venkataramana Reddy questioned the new investigation, stating there is "nothing new to investigate" since KTR has already appeared for questioning by the ACB in the past. He accused the government of re-

sorting to "vendetta politics" against KTR, who he credited with significantly enhancing Hyderabad's global image. He maintained that no corruption occurred in the Formula E race and asserted that the government's current attempts to find evidence, even by forming new committees, have failed to yield any proof of wrongdoing. Former MLA Balka Suman (BRS) also weighed in, acknowledging the news of the Governor's sanction for KTR's prosecution and calling it a "new drama" orchestrated by the Chief Minister. He accused CM Revanth Reddy of practicing "third-class politics" and engaging in political vendetta due to his own anxiety following KTR's recent visit to Adilabad to address cotton farmers' issues and Harish Rao's visit to Warangal. Suman pointed out the immediate problem of cotton purchases being halted across the

state, with the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) harassing farmers over moisture content and limiting purchases to only 7 quintals per farmer. He reiterated KTR's earlier claim that the Formula E case is a "Lottapisu Case." Suman drew parallels between the current situation and the infamous 'Cash for Vote' scandal, claiming that Revanth Reddy, having been caught with 50 lakh cash bundles, now wants to send KTR to jail because he himself had to go to jail. He accused Revanth Reddy of seeking revenge against the previous BRS government. He questioned the administration's technical knowledge regarding the Kaleshwaram Project and the power sector. He also mocked the case's complexity, likening the Formula E investigation to a never-ending TV serial like 'Chakravakam' or 'Mogali Rekulu'. Suman alleged a "dark deal" between CM Revanth Reddy and PM Modi, leading to the Governor's delayed sanction. He claimed there is a wider conspiracy to target young regional leaders across the country (like Akhilesh Yadav, Udayanidhi Stalin, and Tejaswi Yadav) with false corruption cases. He highlighted that the Formula E race was praised by Central Ministers and BJP CMs and brought 700 crore in investments, including from the Amara Raja Company for the battery sector. He criticized the Congress Government for wasting time on organizing beauty pageants without any vision or tangible benefit to Telangana, stating that the government is running without a clear direction. He concluded that KTR will "tear Revanth Reddy apart" in a political battle, alleging that the current administration is an "addiction to corruption" and is threatening industrialists.



## BRS MLA Counters Congress, Calls Formula E Case a Political Vendetta

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Former MLC Karne Prabhakar of the BRS strongly condemned the Congress Government's actions, labeling the entire Formula E car race case as a direct act of "vendetta politics" against BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao (KTR). He alleged that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy is pursuing these "useless cases" (Bekaar Cases) to strategically cover up the failures of the state government, divert the growing public discontent against his administration, and specifically seek revenge against KTR. Prabhakar defended KTR's original decision to host the event, stating that the Formula E race was organized by KTR to significantly enhance Hyderabad's brand image and attract crucial investments. He accused the Congress government of halting the race mid-way and fabricating a charge of corruption through an "illegal case." He reiterated KTR's earlier dismissal of the case as an "empty shell case" (Lottapisu Case), asserting that Revanth Reddy is fully aware of this but is using the case temporarily to "mislead the public".

## MP Vaddiraju Condemns Formula E Case as Retaliation Against KTR

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BRS Parliamentary Party Deputy Leader and Rajya Sabha MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra (Ravichandra) strongly condemned the Congress Government's decision to pursue the Formula E car race case against BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), labeling the action as unwarranted "vendetta politics." Speaking on November 20, 2025, the MP stated that even though the

Formula E race was conducted with complete transparency and was free from any evidence of corruption or irregularities, the Congress Government's decision to resort to retaliatory action against KTR is regrettable and a matter of serious concern. MP Ravichandra lauded KTR's relentless dedication and efforts in working tirelessly to enhance the brand image of Hyderabad globally. He expressed his deep

distress that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has not only filed what he claims are "illegal cases" against KTR but is also actively engaging in political vengeance. The MP expressed his profound pain and sadness, stating that CM Revanth Reddy appears to have prioritized filing cases against KTR to damage his reputation and honor, seemingly making it his sole purpose in power, particularly because KTR has been consist-

ently and publicly exposing the anti-people policies of the current Congress administration.

MP Ravichandra issued a strong warning to the Congress leadership, making it clear that their tactics—which include threats, intimidation, filing false cases, and other harassments—will not succeed in demoralizing the spirit and resolve of the dedicated BRS cadre. He firmly reiterated the BRS party's unwavering

faith and complete confidence in the judicial system of the country. He concluded by asserting that the BRS is prepared to fight and resolve the illegal cases filed against KTR through the appropriate legal channels in the court of law, trusting that justice will ultimately prevail. This statement underscores the BRS party's decision to legally challenge the prosecution initiated by the Governor's sanction, maintaining their stance that the entire case is baseless and politically motivated.



## Union Minister Kishan Reddy Highlights GSI's Role in Viksit Bharat

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Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy delivered a key address during the 175th Foundation Day celebrations of the Geological Survey of India (GSI), held in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The Minister lauded the GSI for its continuous and indispensable service to the nation's geological heritage over its 175-year history, since its establishment in 1851. He highlighted GSI's critical historical role in identifying vital minerals such as coal and iron, which were absolutely essential for catalyzing the initial growth of India's domestic industries.

Beyond mineral identification, GSI's work has also been instrumental in supporting crucial national efforts in infrastructure development, energy security, efficient water management, environmental preservation, and effective disaster management.

Minister Reddy pointed out the dramatic growth in the domestic industry, which was valued at just 58 crore in 1947, but has now scaled up massively to an estimated 1.2 lakh crore. He projected that GSI's role will become even more vital in achieving the nation's ambitious goal of becoming a Developed Nation by

2047 (Viksit Bharat). He stressed the immense global need for minerals in the 21st century, particularly Critical Minerals—those essential for India's transition to a net-zero emission economy. He noted the massive worldwide demand for key minerals such as Lithium, Cobalt, Nickel, Rare Earths, Graphite, and Copper. Minister Reddy framed this global demand as both a significant challenge and a huge opportunity for India.

The Minister commended GSI for its outstanding work, which aligns perfectly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's core philosophy of "Reform, Perform, and Transform."

He urged GSI to enhance its capabilities to meet future challenges and play a key role in achieving the Viksit Bharat goal. To support this direction, the Central Ministry of Mines has introduced a National Mineral Policy and brought about significant amendments to the Mines and Minerals Development and Regulation Act. Furthermore, the government has launched the comprehensive National Critical Mineral Mission. Minister Reddy highlighted the successes achieved through the introduction of the auction

process for the allocation of mines, noting that over 500 mines have been auctioned since the process began. This shift has successfully brought greater transparency to the allocation process and significantly increased investor confidence in the mining sector. He proudly announced that 34 Critical Mineral blocks have been successfully auctioned, and the rate of mineral extraction has seen a remarkable growth of 160% over the last ten years.

He also mentioned that India is actively securing mining leases abroad to diversify its mineral sources.

Minister Reddy stressed the urgent need for GSI to technologically upgrade its systems and capabilities to effectively compete with major international organizations in the global race for mineral resources.

He stated that the GSI's past history and current work are laying the crucial foundations for a glorious future. As India accelerates towards the Viksit Bharat goal, GSI must focus on extracting more resources, promoting sustainable mining practices, and rapidly developing indigenous technologies. He also emphasized the importance of maintaining high preparedness for responding to any geological disasters.

## Telangana NRI Advisory Committee Discusses Overseas Mobility Bill and Gulf Welfare

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A pivotal meeting of the Telangana NRI Advisory Committee was convened at the Manjeera IAS Guest House in Hyderabad, focusing primarily on key legislative and welfare issues affecting the Telangana diaspora worldwide. The meeting saw active participation from Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar, the committee's Chairman Vinod, Vice Chairman Bheem Reddy, and other dedicated committee members. A significant portion of the discussion was dedicated to the forthcoming Overseas Mobility Bill - 2025, which is currently being introduced by the Central Government. Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar strongly affirmed the Telangana Government's unwavering commitment to comprehensively support its citizens, particularly the Gulf emigrants and other Telangana residents residing in various countries.



contemporary trend now shows people migrating across all sectors, including those with advanced technical skills. The discussion on the Central Government's Overseas Mobility Bill - 2025 was timely, especially since the Centre is actively soliciting suggestions from all states. Chairman Vinod and Vice Chairman Bheem Reddy, along with other committee members who wish to contribute to the development of Telangana, actively participated in this detailed consultation.

Minister Prabhakar highlighted that the current government has initiated several specific, dedicated programs aimed at Gulf welfare, fulfilling the promises made before the elections. These initiatives include the reservation of special

seats in educational institutions for the children of Gulf workers, recognizing the importance of their education. To ensure timely resolution of their grievances, the government has established a dedicated platform called 'Pravasi Prajapavani' (NRI Public Grievance Forum). A key welfare measure announced is the provision of financial assistance amounting to 5 lakh to the families of Gulf workers who unfortunately die abroad, effective from December 7, 2023. Minister Prabhakar recounted a personal experience from his Husnabad constituency: when he brought the difficulties faced by residents abroad to the attention of NRI representatives, they successfully communicated with the concerned Embassy office.

angana's experiences, urging the committee members to bring all relevant issues concerning the NRI community to the attention of the state government. The Minister also recalled organizing an NRI meeting in Shankarapatnam during his padayatra in the Karimnagar district in 2021. He linked the increase in youth migrating abroad since the 1990s to the Naxalite movement, suggesting it offered a path to employment and prevented them from being misled. He concluded by directing the NRI Advisory Committee to actively consider the issues of Telangana residents living abroad, emphasizing the need to visit Gulf-affected regions in the districts, understand their problems, and incorporate their advice and suggestions.



# Excise Principal Secretary Mandates Crackdown on Non-Duty Paid Liquor

TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

The newly appointed Principal Secretary of the Prohibition and Excise Department, Raghuandan Rao, held a comprehensive review meeting with senior officials from key wings of the department at the Excise Bhavan on Thursday. Taking over from his predecessor, Rizvi, Principal Secretary Raghuandan Rao presided over a lengthy session to address critical issues concerning departmental perfor-

mance, revenue generation, and staff welfare. He is central directive focused on a robust enforcement strategy: he instructed the enforcement teams to intensify their efforts to curb the flow of Non-Duty Paid (NDP) liquor across the state. This crackdown is intended not only to secure government revenue but also to directly boost the sales and business viability of the liquor shops established under the new excise policy. Commissioner C. Hari Kiran and

other officials presented a detailed performance review via a Power Point Presentation (PPT), covering the department's operations, Telangana Beverages sales, liquor manufacturing company processes, usage, labeling, and the performance of the Excise Enforcement wing, which the Principal Secretary meticulously reviewed for the first time since taking charge. Principal Secretary Raghuandan Rao directed the preparation of special, target-

ed plans to eliminate the NDP liquor that is currently causing a significant dent in Telangana's excise revenue. He explicitly linked the suppression of NDP liquor to an increase in excise revenue and, simultaneously, a rise in sales for legitimate liquor shops, urging a concrete, planned approach to move forward on this matter. The meeting also addressed pressing welfare issues concerning Geetha Karmikulu (Toddle Tappers), including time ly com-

pensation payments for workers who die or are injured in accidents. When officials admitted that budget shortfalls had prevented some payments, the Principal Secretary immediately instructed them to take measures to ensure that all due compensation is disbursed promptly, providing essential support to the families of the Geetha Karmikulu. He also emphasized the necessity of officials conducting periodic checks to confirm that pension payments



are reaching the beneficiaries, rather than merely recording the details in registers, and ordered efforts to facilitate the swift enrollment of new eligible members in place of those who have passed away. Furthermore, he issued a series of directives to strengthen departmental operations, including enhancing the label and barcode system for liquor supply, making amendments to the process of issuing event permits, accelerating the issuance of licenses for new industrial units, inspecting arrangements prior to inaugurating new excise stations, strengthening check posts, and conduct-

## Farmer Commission Praises Ranga Reddy Drip Rice, Reports on Kerala Model

TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

The State Farmer Commission Chairman, Kodandareddy, along with members K.V.N. Reddy and Bhavani Reddy, recently visited Choudapalli village in Yacharam Mandal, Ranga Reddy district, to inspect groundbreaking agricultural techniques. The commission's focus was the paddy field of model farmer Kasmalla Venkata Rama yya, who has successfully cultivated rice using drip irrigation, an innovative method traditionally reserved for horticulture. Chairman Kodandareddy lauded the achievement, stating that utilizing drip technology for paddy with such minimal water consumption is a significant breakthrough and highly commendable. The commission then at-

tended a meeting with farmers and officials at the Farmer's Platform (Raitu Vedi) in Yacharam, where Kodandareddy shared key findings from the commission's recent study tour of Kerala. He highlighted that Kerala employs advanced agricultural methods, noting that horticulture farmers there organize into strong cooperative groups for cultivation, benefiting from effective market mechanisms that closely align vegetable production with consumer demand. He also praised Kerala's successful system for tenant farmers. Kodandareddy announced that the commission would shortly submit a detailed report on the Kerala study tour to the State Government, recommending the implementation of similar advanced practices and policies in Telangana to modernize the

## Jupally Extends Centenary Wishes to Legendary Educator Chukka Ramaiah



TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

Tourism and Culture Minister Jupally Krishna Rao extended profound and heartfelt birthday wishes to the revered educator Chukka Ramaiah, affectionately known as "Lekkala Mastaru" (Maths Teacher), as he successfully completed his hundredth year and entered his centenary life. The Minister lauded Ramaiah as the guiding beacon for the development of the education sector in the Telugu region and an embodiment of continuous intellectual curiosity. Minister Rao paid tribute to Ramaiah's distinguished career, describing his classroom as his life-blood, where he not only passionately taught Engineering subjects but also stood as a symbol of

integrity and honesty in society. The Minister highlighted that Ramaiah's most enduring legacy is the IIT Coaching Institute he founded, an institution that has successfully guided and positively transformed the lives of thousands of aspirants over the years. Through his inspirational teaching, Minister Rao noted that numerous IIT students have gone on to achieve distinguished positions across the world. He emphasized that Chukka Ramaiah's deeply held thoughts, exemplary personality, principled conduct, and philosophical outlook serve as a significant inspiration for the current generation. Concluding his message, Minister Jupally sincerely wished Ramaiah good health and a long life.

## Mallu Ravi Underscores Libraries' Role at Nagarkurnool

TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

The National Library Anniversary Celebration was held with great fanfare in the Nagarkurnool District Centre today, an event that highlighted the vital importance of reading and knowledge dissemination in contemporary society. The program, which was organized under the leadership of District Library Chairman Rajender, saw the presence of Nagarkurnool Member of Parliament (MP) Dr. Malla Ravi as the Chief Guest. Addressing the large gathering of students, job seekers, officials, and enthusiastic readers, Dr. Malla Ravi



eloquently elaborated on the crucial role that libraries play in societal progress. He described libraries not just as buildings filled with books, but as true "Oceans of

vancement. The MP emphasized the pressing need for governmental bodies and public organizations to collaborate effectively to further promote and cultivate the crucial habit of reading among the populace, arguing that a strong reading culture is fundamental to intellectual and social development. Dr. Malla Ravi also made a firm commitment to the district, assuring the attendees that he would exert his full efforts to secure the necessary funds and resources for the holistic development and modernization of libraries across the entire district. This commitment was met with encourage-

ment from the audience who understand the necessity of updated library facilities. The annual celebration was also graced by several other notable political figures and legislative members, including Achampet MLA Chikku Vamshikrishna, Kalwakurthy MLA Kasireddy Narayana Reddy, Legislative Council Member Kuchkulla Damodar Reddy, along with members of the Library Association and senior officials. Their significant presence underscored the political will and commitment to bolstering the library sector as a key driver of literacy and education.

## Talasani Srinivas Yadav Distributes CMRF Aid, Urges Health Precaution

TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

Former Minister and Sanath Nagar MLA Talasani Srinivas Yadav stressed the critical need for preventative healthcare, urging every individual to take adequate precautions concerning their well-being. On Thursday, the MLA held a program at his camp office in West Marredpally where he

distributed financial assistance cheques to constituents. A total of 7.5 lakh was sanctioned from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF) and handed over to 15 beneficiaries from various divisions within the Sanath Nagar constituency. During his address, Talasani emphasized the financial repercussions of poor health, warning that fail-

ure to take precautions often leads to suffering and the eventual necessity of spending lakhs of rupees on medical treatment. He highlighted the pervasive issue where many individuals, despite suffering from various health problems, are unable to seek improved medical care due to debilitating financial difficulties. The MLA appealed to

the community to not neglect their health and seek the best possible medical treatment promptly and within a timely manner. He specifically encouraged the maximum utilization of the Chief Minister's Relief Fund for medical treatment, positioning it as a vital resource for those facing financial hardship during health crises. The cheque

## 7.5 Lakh

## MLA Madhusudan Reddy Accuses BJP of Shielding KTR in Corruption Probe

TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

Devarkadra MLA G. Madhusudan Reddy launched a scathing attack from Gandhi Bhavan, squarely targeting former Minister K. T. Rama Rao (KTR) and accusing the BJP of deliberately attempting to obstruct the corruption probe against him. Reddy forcefully argued that if KTR genuinely maintained his innocence, he should forgo legal challenges and actively cooperate with the investigation. He specifically suggested that BJP leader Kishan Reddy is attempting to protect his "friend KTR." The controversy centers on a joint charge sheet involving two primary accused: KTR (A1), for whom the Governor has already granted permission for inq-

uiry, and Arvind Kumar (A2), a central service officer. The crucial sticking point, according to Reddy, is that the investigation into Arvind Kumar requires permission from the Central Government's Department of Personnel and Training (DPT), which is reportedly being withheld despite formal requests. Reddy posited that this delay is conclusive evidence of the Central Government's involvement in preventing KTR's eventual arrest. He criticized KTR's past confidence in delaying the arrest, even as the BJP itself had demanded the Kaleshwaram case be handed over to the CBI—a move which he suggested now appears hypocritical given their lack of current enforcement action.

## Wanaparthy AE in ACB Net For Rs 40,000 Bribe

TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) successfully arrested another government official in Telangana, spotlighting the persistence of corruption within the public sector. The latest arrest involves N. Harshavardhan Reddy, an Assistant Engineer (AE) with the Electricity Department in Gopalpeta Mandal, Wanaparthy district. The AE was caught red-handed by the ACB after he demanded a bribe of 40,000 in exchange for

completing work related to a current transformer. He was apprehended while accepting a partial payment of 20,000. This incident fuels the public's growing perception that paying bribes may be a necessity for citizens seeking to have their work processed in government offices. The arrest is particularly notable as it comes on the heels of reports that the AE had recently held his engagement ceremony to the sister of another electricity official, alleg-

## Woman Murdered by Estranged Husband Suspecting Infidelity

TPN Bureau | Nov 20, 2025

A shocking crime has created turmoil in Khammam city, where a 36-year-old woman was brutally murdered by her estranged husband, who was reportedly consumed by suspicion of her infidelity. According to the police, the victim, Gogul Saivani, originally from Nerada village, Chintakani Mandal, had separated from her husband, Bhaskar, due to ongoing domestic disputes. Saivani suffered severe and fatal injuries, dying instantly at the scene. Tragically, her

daughter, Harshavardhini, was also injured when she bravely attempted to intervene and save her mother; the child was immediately rushed to the hospital for treatment. CI Balakrishna of Khammam II Town Police inspected the crime scene. The police have registered a case of murder and are currently searching for the accused husband, Bhaskar, who fled immediately after committing the horrific act.

# Telangana's New Focus: Becoming a Top Eco-Tourism Spot



Telangana is aggressively pursuing its vision to become a major Eco-Tourism Hub, an effort spearheaded by the State Minister for Forests, Environment, and Endowments, Smt. Konda Surekha. Her detailed efforts are quickly turning this strategic goal into a reality. The Minister Surekha views eco-tourism not just as travel, but as a commitment to explore while actively protecting nature. Her strategy is clear: link environmental conservation with economic growth by creating jobs for local people and boosting environmental awareness among visitors. Working alongside Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, Minister

Surekha integrates her duties, seeing her work for the Forest Department as deeply meaningful, which underscores her serious approach to green development.

The core purpose of this plan is to protect Telangana's natural resources—its forests, water bodies, and wildlife. The benefits are substantial: it provides essential economic support to rural areas, helps preserve unique local cultures, promotes mental and physical well-being, and instills a deep sense of environmental responsibility. Crucially, the Minister Surekha has mandated that all revenue generated from these activities will be reinvested

directly into forest development and community welfare.

Action is already underway. A committee has selected 12 priority locations for development, including well-known spots like Ananthagiri, Kanakagiri, Kaval, and Amrabad. These projects, managed by the Telangana Forest Development Corporation, feature activities such as trekking, safari rides, and kayaking, supported by approved plans for guest houses and resorts. Significant progress is evident: the final Eco-Tourism Policy was approved in March 2025, development is progressing at

sites like Kanakagiri, and key projects like the Nehru Zoological Park are showing increased income. Furthermore, this systemic approach is complemented by a powerful green focus: The state gives special policy priority to the Vana Mahotsavam (tree planting festival). Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and Minister Surekha's personal involvement ensures this initiative moves beyond symbolism, showcasing a serious commitment to increasing Telangana's green cover. This effort gains immense strategic strength from Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's, also known as Nallamalla bidda, back-

ground. His deep, firsthand understanding of forest conservation, particularly his connection to the Nallamalla forest region, provides crucial, knowledgeable insight for policy-making. This synergy between the CM's experience and the Minister's dedication is creating a potent environment, driving the state towards unprecedented green growth and cementing its position as a leading eco-tourism destination. People appreciate Minister Konda Surekha's vision, suggesting Telangana is heading toward a bright, green future.

-Sagar Vanparthi, Policy Analyst.

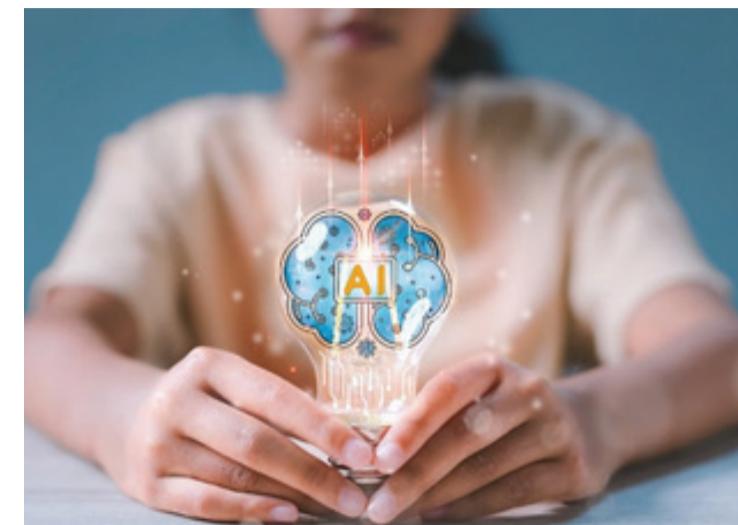
British literary magazine Granta's latest India issue delves deep into the complexities of progress—or *vikas*—in the country, presenting a collection of essays that examine how development intersects with culture, politics, and personal lives. The issue resists simple narratives, highlighting instead India's jagged, restless, and often contradictory evolution.

Snigdha Poonam's essay, *The Thin Red Corridor*, introduces *Vikas*, a former Maoist commander from Jharkhand who moves from planting landmines to supervising road construction decades later. *Vikas* becomes both a man and a metaphor, reflecting how India's idea of progress is uneven, improvised, and shouldered largely by those who never asked to become symbols. Through his story, Poonam frames a central question: what does progress truly look like on the ground?

Other contributors explore different facets of this ten-



## India Faces Challenge of Equitable AI Education in Schools



India is at a critical juncture as it prepares to introduce AI education from Class 3 in 2026-27, but experts warn that a rush to replicate global models could deepen existing educational inequalities. While states like Punjab and Odisha are piloting innovative programs, the majority of India's schools remain ill-equipped for such technological leaps.

Punjab's initiative emphasizes immediate, hands-on learning. Its three-year AI curriculum encourages coding exercises, hackathons, and science fairs where students apply machine learning to real-world problems. The state benefits from strong digital infrastructure, with over 95% of government schools equipped with functional computers.

Odisha, in contrast, adopts a long-term, inclusive approach. Its AI Policy 2025 outlines a decade-long roadmap, combining free online courses, AI labs, and teacher training, while promoting lessons in Odia and tribal languages. Both models highlight state-level innovation but also underscore India's uneven preparedness. Nationally, only 57% of schools had computers and 54% had internet access in 2023-24, with figures in poorer states like Bihar and West Bengal dropping below 25%. A 2021 survey indicated less than 27% of Indian youth aged 6-14 had basic internet skills.

China's nationwide AI curriculum sets a global benchmark with its top-down approach, substantial funding, and uniform educational sys-

tem. India, however, faces systemic constraints: fragmented infrastructure, low digital literacy, and wide socio-economic disparities. Experts caution that blindly following China's model risks widening the gap between urban, elite schools and resource-poor government institutions.

Beyond infrastructure, regulatory gaps pose additional risks. India lacks comprehensive frameworks to address student data privacy, algorithmic bias, and ethical use of AI in classrooms. Without safeguards, technological integration could lead to surveillance, profiling, or discrimination, particularly affecting vulnerable students.

Specialists recommend a phased, context-specific rollout emphasizing equity. Key priorities include ensuring nationwide access to electricity, internet, and devices; digitally literate and ethically trained teachers; and national standards for data protection and accountability. Pilot programs to train 10 million teachers under CBSE's framework are a step forward.

India's challenge is not simply teaching AI, but teaching it justly. Initiatives like Punjab's and Odisha's demonstrate that innovation can coexist with inclusion, but scaling these models requires patience, investment, and careful planning. The country must bridge aspiration with capacity to ensure the AI revolution in education empowers all students, rather than leaving the most vulnerable further behind.

## Granta Explores India's Uneven Path of 'Vikas'



## Trump-Munir-Sharif Photo Signals Pakistan's Enduring Military Influence



A recent White House photograph featuring former US President Donald Trump flanked by Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehzad Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir has become a defining image for India's geopolitical watchers, offering a window into how Pakistan navigates power and survives politically.

The photograph highlights the persistent dominance of Pakistan's military in shaping the country's political landscape. Munir, Pakistan's

army chief, sits prominently alongside the prime minister, underscoring the army's decisive role even in ostensibly civilian-led governments. This visual continuity reflects a return to what analysts call the "old normal" in US-Pakistan relations, where the military remains central while civilian leadership assumes a subordinate, symbolic role.

Historically, Pakistan's civilian leaders have struggled to assert authority independently. Former Prime Minis-

ter Nawaz Sharif famously posed the "partridge or quail" dilemma in the 1990s, questioning whether Pakistan would be governed by its military or an elected government. Today, the photograph illustrates how that tension persists: the military remains firmly in control, while elected leaders navigate within the constraints imposed by generals like Munir.

Experts note that Pakistan's political culture, shaped by repeated military

interventions, instills public acceptance of army dominance. Citizens often elect leaders only to witness their removal or suppression, yet the cycle of popular unrest followed by military consolidation continues. Strategic crises, particularly with India, are frequently leveraged by the army to reinforce its authority and restore public credibility. Events like 26/11 and repeated skirmishes along the Line of Control exemplify this pattern.

Munir's tenure marks a more explicit intertwining of religion and military ideology. A Hafiz of the Quran, Munir openly incorporates Islamic scripture into his speeches, projecting a vision of Pakistan that views India's internal contradictions as opportunities to assert influence. Analysts argue this approach combines religious legitimacy with strategic posturing, using proxy forces and alliances with other powers, notably China, to keep India off balance.

The photograph of Trump, Munir, and Sharif is more than ceremonial. It visually confirms that Pakistan's military, under leaders like Munir, remains the ultimate arbiter of policy, both domestically and internationally. For India, the image underscores the enduring challenge of engaging with a state where civilian authority is conditional and the military operates as a self-reinforcing institution with long-term strategic ambitions.

# Nitish Kumar Takes Oath As Bihar Chief Minister For Record 10th Time

TPN Correspondent | Varanasi

Nitish Kumar was sworn in as Chief Minister of Bihar for a record-extending tenth term on Thursday at the historic Gandhi Maidan, following a decisive victory in last week's Assembly election. His Janata Dal (United) won 85 of the state's 243 seats, contributing to a resounding victory for the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, which secured 202 seats.

Critics who had questioned Kumar's longevity and fitness for office were silenced as he returned to power, demonstrating his enduring political acumen and ability to forge alliances effectively. With this term, Kumar is set to become India's longest-serving chief minister if he completes the full tenure, surpassing Sikkim's Pawan Chamling, who served 24 years.

The swearing-in ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several chief ministers from BJP-ruled states, and leaders from NDA allies. Modi congratulated the new government on X, saying, "My best wishes to all those who have taken oath as



ministers in the Bihar government. This is a wonderful team, with dedicated leaders who will take Bihar to new heights."

Alongside Kumar, nineteen MLAs, including senior BJP leaders Samrat Choudhary, Vijay Sinha, and Dilip Jaiswal, were

sworn in to form the core of the new cabinet. Experienced leaders like Choudhary and Sinha, who served as Kumar's deputies in the previous administration, are expected to reprise key roles. Other notable ministers include Pramod Kumar, Sanjay Kumar Singh,

Lakhendra Raushan, and two-time MLA Shreyasi Singh, the 34-year-old Commonwealth Games gold medallist.

Senior leaders Ram Kripal Yadav, formerly with RJD and JDU, and ex-Roadways Minister Nitin Nabin also took oath. The new government emphasizes a mix of experience and proven leadership, signaling continuity and stability for Bihar's administration.

The NDA's sweeping victory and Kumar's historic return underline both the political strength of the alliance and his enduring influence in the state.

## Sonia Gandhi Presents Indira Gandhi Peace Prize to Michelle Bachelet

TPN Correspondent | Patna

Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Wednesday presented the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2024 to Michelle Bachelet, Chile's first woman President and former United Nations Human Rights Chief.

The award, instituted in 1985 in memory of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, recognises individuals and institutions making outstanding contributions to peace, social progress, and sustainable development. While presenting the award, Sonia Gandhi highlighted Bachelet's "exemplary commitment to human rights, democracy, and social justice globally."

Michelle Bachelet, who has held leadership roles both in Chile and at the United Nations, expressed her gratitude for the honour, calling it "a recognition of the ongoing struggle for equality, peace, and



sustainable development across the world." She emphasized the importance of international cooperation and dialogue in addressing challenges such

as inequality, climate change, and human rights violations.

The award ceremony coincided with the birth anniversary of Indira

Gandhi, and several Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge, paid tribute to the former Prime Minister at a commemorative event.

The presentation of the Indira Gandhi Prize 2024 to Michelle Bachelet underscores India's continued recognition of global leaders who champion human rights, equality, and sustainable development initiatives worldwide.

## SC Clarifies It Will Not Overrule TN Governor Case in Presidential Reference



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Supreme Court on Wednesday clarified that its ongoing hearings in the Presidential Reference concerning the Tamil Nadu Governor case are not an appeal against the April 8 verdict, nor do they intend to overrule the two-judge Bench ruling.

The two-month-long proceedings before a five-

Judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai were initiated after the President invoked the advisory jurisdiction of the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Constitution. The reference seeks the Court's opinion on 14 questions, including whether the apex court can "impose" timelines or prescribe the manner in

which Governors and the President should act under Articles 200 and 201 when dealing with State Bills sent for assent or reserved for consideration.

Incidentally, the Presidential Reference was issued on May 13, barely a month after a Division Bench led by Justice J.B. Pardiwala set a three-month timeline for the

President and the Governors to clear State Bills. The case has drawn attention due to its implications on the balance of power between the state executive and the Centre, as well as the procedural obligations of Governors.

During the hearings, the SC Bench repeatedly emphasized that its role in the Presidential Reference is

advisory and not appellate. "This is a reference, not an appeal. We are not here to overrule the prior judgment but to provide clarity on the broader constitutional questions posed by the President," the Court stated.

Legal experts note that the Presidential Reference is significant in interpreting the discretionary powers of Governors and the President in legislative processes and could shape future interactions between state governments and the Centre. However, the apex court's repeated assurances make it clear that the April 8 verdict, which set guidelines on timelines for Governor and Presidential actions, remains intact.

The Supreme Court is expected to deliver its opinion on the Presidential Reference in the coming weeks, which will provide authoritative guidance on the constitutional provisions governing the legislative assent process in India.

## Why India's AQI Stops at 500 Despite Higher Pollution Readings



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

As Delhi grapples with hazardous air pollution, a growing question arises: why does India's official Air Quality Index (AQI) stop at 500, even when independent monitors report far higher levels?

On Wednesday morning, Swiss air-quality company IQAir recorded Delhi's AQI at a staggering 506, while India's Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) reported a lower figure of 399, categorised as "very poor."

The discrepancy highlights differences in methodology rather than accuracy, experts say.

The AQI is a public health tool designed to simplify air pollution data for citizens. It combines readings of eight

major pollutants—PM10, PM2.5, ozone, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, lead, and ammonia—to generate a single number indicating air quality. According to Mohan George, consultant at the Centre for Science and Environment, the AQI uses color-coded ranges to communicate risk levels to the public.

"An AQI between 401 and 500 falls under the 'severe' category, meaning the air is hazardous even for healthy people, and outdoor activity should be avoided," George explained. "It's designed for the common man to understand and act upon."

CPCB's AQI framework does not report beyond 500, even if pollutant levels are technically higher. This is primarily because the system aims to trigger public health advisories rather than provide exact numerical extremes. Independent monitors like IQAir; however, provide actual calculated readings, which can exceed the official cap.

As Delhi's residents struggle with rising pollution, many are forced to take precautions like masks and air purifiers.

Parents, in particular, express frustration at having to choose between their children's health and daily life. The capped AQI serves as a general warning, but experts stress that actual pollution can be far worse, reinforcing the urgency of mitigation measures.

## Taliban Trade Minister Visits Delhi to Boost Afghanistan-India Connectivity



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Afghan Industry and Commerce Minister Al-haj Nooruddin Azizi arrived in New Delhi on Wednesday for a five-day official visit, accompanied by a large business delegation, amid ongoing clashes between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The visit underscores Afghanistan's efforts to strengthen trade ties with India and reduce dependence on Pakistani ports for its imports and exports. Official

sources said Azizi's agenda includes enhancing sea connectivity and exploring alternative trade routes.

India, in turn, is keen on importing Afghan agricultural produce and minerals, signaling growing economic engagement despite geopolitical tensions in the region. The visit also reflects mutual interest in deepening bilateral trade and investment opportunities.

Azizi was welcomed warmly upon arrival,

highlighting the importance India places on Afghanistan as a trade partner. Discussions during the visit are expected to focus on logistics, port access, and expanding connectivity initiatives.

Analysts view the trip as part of Afghanistan's broader strategy to diversify its trade channels and strengthen economic resilience, while India continues to support regional connectivity initiatives.

## Keir Starmer's Leadership Under Threat Amid Political Turmoil



TPN Correspondent | Dhaka

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer faces mounting challenges as his government navigates turbulent political waters barely a year and a half after its landslide victory in July 2024. Despite Labour securing 411 of 650 parliamentary seats—a commanding 174-seat majority—Starmer's position is increasingly precarious due to a combination of electoral paradoxes and policy missteps.

Labour's overwhelming seat count belied the party's low popular vote of just 33.7%, highlighting a fragmented political landscape. The Conservatives trailed with 23.7%, while the resurgent Reform Party and Liberal Democrats captured 14.3% and 12.2%, respectively. This fragmentation means that many Labour MPs occupy constituencies with narrow margins, putting their seats—and the government's majority—at risk in future elections. Polling suggests Labour could be reduced to just over 100 seats if trends continue, creating significant pressure on Starmer's leadership.

Compounding the challenge, the government has faced backlash over a series of controversial policy decisions and perceived U-turns. Starmer's next moves will be closely watched, as the stability of his government—and his own political future—hang in the balance.

## "Whatever You Need": Russia Offers "5th Generation Fighter" Tech To India



TPN Correspondent | Australia

Ahead of Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to India next month, Moscow has extended a landmark defence proposal that could significantly influence the future of India's aerial warfare capabilities. Russia has offered New Delhi unrestricted access to its fifth-generation Su-57 stealth fighter technology—an unprecedented move in India's defence partnerships.

A senior Rosoboronexport representative added that the offer includes transfer of technology, licence production, and integration of Indian weapons, covering next-generation capabilities such as AESA radar, AI systems, low-signature materials and advanced air weapons.

Defence analyst and retired IAF officer Vijayender K. Thakur noted that a potential Su-75 production line in India would fit perfectly alongside the indigenous AMCA project, filling the fifth-generation gap with a cost-effective light/medium stealth fighter.

Reports further indicate that Russia may also offer India its single-engine Su-75 Checkmate stealth fighter. If accepted, India would gain access to cutting-edge aircraft technologies that Western nations have consistently declined to share. The deal could allow India to independently develop upgraded stealth aircraft, boosting its self-reliance and expanding its air-combat capabilities.

Speaking at the Dubai Air

administration proposed welfare cuts affecting Personal Income Payments (PiP), prompting over 120 Labour MPs to sign a "wrecking amendment" opposing the flagship welfare bill. Critics argue that increased defence spending is being prioritised at the expense of vulnerable citizens, further eroding public trust.

Starmer's leadership team, including figures such as Rachel Reeves, who has positioned herself as a fiscally strict chancellor equivalent, has also faced criticism for failing to communicate a coherent vision for economic and social policy.

The combination of fragile constituency majorities, internal dissent, and unpopular policy choices has created a perfect storm that threatens Starmer's premiership. Analysts warn that unless the Labour government regains public confidence and addresses internal fractures, the "change" promised during the 2024 election could be overshadowed by a leadership crisis and potential electoral losses.

Starmer's next moves will be closely watched, as the stability of his government—and his own political future—hang in the balance.

## Trump Says U.S. Needs Skilled Immigrants to Build Chips and Missiles

TPN Bureau | Washington

U.S. President Donald Trump said he is prepared to face criticism from his conservative base as he pushes for the country to welcome more skilled immigrants, arguing that America cannot manufacture complex products like semiconductors and missiles without foreign expertise. Speaking at the U.S.-Saudi Investment Forum in Washington on Wednesday, Trump stressed that advanced plants being built across the country will require highly skilled workers from abroad to help train the American workforce.

Trump said industries involved in producing telephones, computers, chips and missile systems demand specialised knowledge that the U.S. workforce has not yet developed at the scale required. "I may take a little heat... from the people that



love me," he said, acknowledging opposition from right-wing supporters who back strict immigration limits. "But companies have to bring people to get those plants opened... and teach our people how to be brought in, and he would "welcome those people," drawing applause from the audience, which included

thousands of skilled workers may need to be brought in, and he would "welcome those people," drawing applause from the audience, which included

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. He added that critics of this approach are "unbelievable patriots" but argued that America

cannot succeed unless workers are trained by experienced specialists from abroad.

Trump cited recent immigration raids, including one at the Hyundai battery plant in Georgia, and noted that such actions could hinder industrial growth. "Batteries are very dangerous to make... they brought in people, spent a billion dollars, and were told to get out. I said, 'Stop it. Don't be stupid,'" he said, claiming foreign experts are now training American workers there.

Defending visa programmes such as H-1B and L1, Trump reiterated that the U.S. lacks certain specialised skills. "You can't take people off an unemployment line and say we're going to make missiles," he said, urging support for immigration policies that bolster technological and manufacturing competitiveness.

## Massive Fire in Japan Destroys 170 Homes, Forces Large-Scale Evacuations

TPN Correspondent | Tokyo

A massive fire swept through a residential neighbourhood in Oita, southwestern Japan, destroying more than 170 homes and forcing over 170 residents to evacuate. The blaze, which began on Tuesday evening near a fishing port amid strong winds, continued burning for nearly 20 hours before authorities managed to bring it partially under control on Wednesday.

According to the Oita prefectural disaster response team, one person—an elderly man in his 70s—was reported missing, and firefighters later discovered a body believed to be his. A woman in her 50s sustained minor injuries during the incident. The fire also spread into nearby forested land, affecting approximately 12 acres, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency (FDMA) reported.



Efforts to contain the blaze involved a large-scale mobilisation of resources, including more than 200 firefighters,

dozens of fire engines, and two UH-1 helicopters dispatched by the Ground Self-Defense Force. Despite

these efforts, the fire remained difficult to control due to strong winds that rapidly carried flames across densely packed wooden homes.

The affected area, located near Oita's mackerel fishing zone, is not close to the region's

owned hot spring resorts or historic thatched-roof structures, but the damage to local residences and infrastructure has been extensive. Around 260 homes remained without electricity by Wednesday afternoon.

Television footage showed thick plumes of smoke rising over charred remains of houses, though flames had subsided by mid-day. Residents described the ordeal as overwhelming, with one woman telling Kyodo News that the fire "spread in the blink of an eye," leaving little time to gather belongings.

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi expressed her condolences on X and pledged full government assistance to affected families. Authorities are investigating the cause of the blaze and the factors that contributed to its rapid spread.

## Elon Musk's 'Thank You' Note To Trump After "You Are So Lucky" Reminder



TPN Correspondent | UN

After months of public disagreements, former US President Donald Trump and

billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk appear to have mended fences.

The two reunited at a White House dinner attended by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin

Salman, signalling a renewed camaraderie between the influential figures. During his

business-centered address at the event, Trump referenced Musk three times, even jokingly questioning whether the Tesla chief had ever "properly" thanked him.

"You are so lucky I am with you, Elon," Trump said while highlighting new tax incentives designed to boost domestic car manufacturing. Musk later responded with appreciation, writing on X that he would like to "thank President Trump for all he has done for America and the world," sharing images from the U.S.-Saudi Investment Forum in Washington, DC, where the two were photographed alongside the Saudi Crown Prince and NVIDIA CEO Jensen Huang.

Musk's presence at the event comes months after his stint as the head of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), a role he held from January until the end of May. His departure

from the post had been followed by a sharp public critique of Trump's spending plans, particularly the administration's massive "Big Beautiful Bill."

Despite that tension, signs of reconciliation have grown increasingly visible. According to a report by The New York Times, Musk's allies are organising a large reunion party in Austin to celebrate his time with the DOGE team. Dozens of former staffers are expected to attend the two-day gathering at a luxury hotel, a location Musk frequents. Though Musk is anticipated to join the event, the report notes his plans may still change.

The renewed warmth between Trump and Musk suggests their political and business interests may again be aligning as both continue to wield significant influence across technology, policy and global investment circles.

# Sensex Jumps Over 700 Points, Nifty Regains 26,000 Level in Early Trade

Mumbai: The Indian stock markets opened strong on Thursday, with the benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty posting significant gains in early trade. The Sensex surged over 700 points, while the Nifty reclaimed the psychologically important 26,000 mark, reflecting renewed investor optimism.

The upbeat sentiment was largely driven by positive developments around the U.S.-India trade negotiations, which have sparked hopes of a potential deal that could boost bilateral economic ties. This optimism encouraged fresh foreign fund inflows into the Indian markets, providing additional momentum.

Information Technology (IT) stocks led the rally, with robust buying interest propelling gains in the sector. Investors are optimistic about the growth prospects of IT companies amid improving global demand and increasing digital transformation



initiatives worldwide.

Market analysts noted that foreign institutional investors (FIIs) played a crucial role in the early surge, channelling funds into Indian equities, which helped boost liquidity and confidence. The renewed foreign inflows

come at a time when global markets are cautiously watching geopolitical and economic developments.

Broader indices also followed the positive trend, with mid-cap and small-cap stocks witnessing buying interest. Market partici-

pants remained hopeful that the trade deal and strong corporate earnings could sustain the upward momentum in the near term.

The early session gains reflected a shift in market sentiment after recent volatility, with investors focusing

on favorable policy cues and potential easing of trade tensions. The move above the 26,000 level on the Nifty is seen as a key technical milestone that could pave the way for further upside.

Overall, Thursday's early trade suggested a

bullish start for Indian equities, supported by strong foreign participation and sectoral buying, particularly in IT stocks. Investors will be closely watching developments on the trade front and upcoming economic data for further direction.

## Reliance Industries Recalibrates Russian Oil Imports to Follow India's Guidelines



Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), one of India's largest importers of crude oil from Russia, has announced that it will recalibrate its Russian oil imports to comply with the Government of India's latest guidelines. This move comes in the wake of fresh sanctions imposed by the United States and European

countries targeting Russian oil firms amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

A company official confirmed that Reliance is adjusting its procurement strategy to align with the directives issued by Indian authorities, ensuring compliance with evolving international and domestic regula-

tory frameworks. The recalibration aims to balance Reliance's operational requirements with India's broader geopolitical and economic considerations.

The U.S. and European sanctions, which target Russia's major oil producers, including Rosneft and Lukoil, have led to increased scruti-

ny and pressure on companies globally to reduce their exposure to Russian oil. India, being one of the largest buyers of discounted Russian crude since the onset of the Ukraine conflict in 2022, has faced significant diplomatic and economic challenges due to these sanctions.

Reliance Industries' deci-

sion to adjust its imports reflects the broader impact of these international sanctions on India's energy sector and highlights the government's efforts to navigate the complex geopolitical landscape while ensuring energy security. The recalibration also indicates India's intent to maintain a balanced approach in its trade relations amid the intensifying global focus on Russia's energy exports.

Industry sources suggest that while India continues to rely on Russian oil due to cost advantages, companies like Reliance are taking measured steps to align with international expectations and avoid secondary sanctions risks. The recalibration is expected to be a phased process, with companies closely monitoring the evolving situation to adapt their import strategies accordingly.

Reliance's move underscores the dynamic nature of the global oil market and the challenges faced by major importers in managing geopolitical risks while securing their energy needs.

## Rupee Strengthens by 13 Paise to 87.80 Against US Dollar in Early Trade



The Indian rupee appreciated by 13 paise to trade at 87.80 against the U.S. dollar in early trade on Thursday, October 23, 2025. Market participants attributed the gain to positive developments surrounding the U.S.-India trade deal, coupled with strong for-

eign fund inflows and upbeat domestic equity markets.

Forex traders highlighted that increased foreign investment inflows into Indian markets, alongside a broader risk-on sentiment globally, helped boost investor confidence and

supported the rupee's upward momentum. The ongoing optimism around trade relations between the U.S. and India has played a key role in improving market sentiment and strengthening the local currency.

In addition to the

trade deal, domestic equities saw positive trends during the initial trade session, with benchmark indices like Sensex and Nifty rising sharply, further encouraging foreign portfolio investors to pour money into Indian assets. This inflow of foreign capital

is a critical factor that has underpinned the rupee's gains in recent sessions.

The rupee's appreciation is also seen as part of a global risk-on environment, where investors are willing to take on more risk amid hopes for easing geopolitical

tensions and improved economic prospects. This positive risk appetite has benefited emerging market currencies, including the Indian rupee.

Currency analysts note that while the rupee remains influenced by multiple external factors such as crude oil prices, U.S. dollar strength, and global economic conditions, the current positive trajectory reflects growing confidence in India's economic outlook and trade diplomacy.

Overall, the early trade session's gain in the rupee marks a continuation of cautious optimism in the financial markets, supported by improving bilateral ties and steady foreign investments.

Traders will continue to watch global cues and domestic developments closely to gauge the rupee's trajectory in the coming days.

## HUL Q2 Profit Rises 3.8% to ₹2,694 Crore



FMCG giant Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) reported a 3.8% rise in its consolidated net profit for the second quarter ending September 2025. The company's net profit climbed to ₹2,694 crore, up from ₹2,595 crore during the same quarter last year, according to a regulatory filing released on October 23.

HUL's revenue for the quarter also saw growth, increasing by 2.1% to ₹16,034 crore compared to the year-ago period. The modest rise in revenue and profit reflects steady performance amid a competitive and inflationary market environment.

The company's board approved an interim dividend of ₹19 per share for the fiscal year 2025-26, underscoring HUL's commitment to rewarding shareholders amid consistent earnings growth.

HUL, one of India's leading fast-moving consumer goods companies, operates across diverse product categories including personal care, home care, and foods. Its steady quarterly results suggest resilience in the face of fluctuating raw material costs and changing consumer demand.

The company continues to focus on innovation and market expansion to drive sustainable growth. HUL's performance in Q2 also signals confidence in navigating macroeconomic challenges, maintaining market share, and tapping into evolving consumer trends.

Industry experts view HUL's steady profit and revenue growth as a positive sign for the FMCG sector, indicating underlying demand strength despite economic uncertainties.

With its robust portfolio and strategic initiatives, HUL remains well-positioned to capitalize on long-term growth opportunities in India's vast consumer market.

The company is expected to maintain focus on cost efficiencies and digital transformation as it gears up for the remainder of the fiscal year.

HUL's second-quarter results come at a time when FMCG companies are adapting to shifting consumer preferences and inflationary pressures, making these figures a closely watched indicator for the sector.

## Infosys Promoters to Skip ₹18,000 Crore Share Buyback



Infosys Ltd announced that its promoters and promoter group will not participate in the company's ₹18,000 crore share buyback program, the largest buyback the tech giant has undertaken to date. The company revealed this in a stock market filing on Wednesday, October 22, 2025.

Infosys plans to buy back 10 crore shares at an average price of ₹1,800 per share, marking its fifth buyback in the last decade. This significant move reflects the company's strong cash position and confidence in its long-term prospects.

However, the promoters — including Sudha Gopalakrishnan, wife of co-founder Kris Gopalakrishnan, who holds the largest promoter stake with 9,53,57,000 shares — have chosen not to participate in this buyback exercise. The company clarified that promoter-held shares were excluded when calculating the entitlement ratio for the buyback.

This decision means that only non-promoter shareholders are eligible to tender their shares in the buyback, potentially increasing the percentage of shares bought back from the public and institutional investors.

Share buybacks are a common way for companies to return capital to shareholders, often signaling confidence in the firm's future performance and improving key financial metrics like earnings per share (EPS).

Infosys' buyback comes amid a phase of robust business performance and growth in the IT sector, with the company continuously expanding its global client base and digital services portfolio.

Market analysts view the buyback positively, suggesting it could provide support to Infosys' stock price while delivering direct returns to shareholders.

Investors will closely watch the buyback process and its impact on the stock, as well as any further corporate actions from Infosys in the near term.

The company's announcement underscores its commitment to prudent capital management while maintaining flexibility for future investments.

## Google Launches \$15-Billion AI Hub in Visakhapatnam



In a major boost to India's growing tech ecosystem, Google has announced the launch of a \$15-billion Artificial Intelligence (AI) hub in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The initiative aims to drive AI-led innovation, research, and economic growth across the country.

The announcement was made by Google CEO Sundar Pichai during a virtual address, where he emphasized the importance of inclusive AI development and India's role in shaping the future of technology.

"India has always been a global talent hub. With this new AI centre in Visakhapatnam, we aim to empower local talent, collaborate with academic institutions, and create scalable AI solutions for real-world challenges," said Pichai.

The AI hub will focus on several key sectors, including healthcare, agriculture, education, and climate tech. Google plans to partner with Indian startups, researchers, and government bodies to build tools

### Own iPhone 17 Pro Max for ₹7,670/Month, Upgrade to iPhone 18 Next Year



Apple enthusiasts in India can now own the latest iPhone 17 Pro Max at just ₹7,670 per month, thanks to a new upgrade program introduced in partnership with select retailers and finance partners. The offer makes it easier for users to experience Apple's flagship device without bearing the full upfront cost.

The iPhone 17 Pro Max, launched in September 2025, features the powerful A19 Pro chipset, a stunning Super Retina XDR display, and a 48MP triple rear camera setup designed for pro-grade photography and video recording. With this EMI plan, customers can enjoy the premium smartphone with minimal initial payment.

What makes the deal even more attractive is the guaranteed upgrade option. Customers enrolled in the program will have the opportunity to upgrade to the upcoming iPhone 18 in 12 months by simply trading in their iPhone 17 Pro Max.

provided the device is in good working condition.

The financing scheme is available through major retailers, Apple Authorised Resellers, and select online platforms. The ₹7,670 monthly EMI typically spans 12 to 24 months depending on the plan chosen, with the upgrade window kicking in after the first year. No-cost EMI options and bundled device protection plans are also being offered.

This move is expected to boost Apple's market penetration in India, where high upfront costs often discourage users from buying flagship devices. By offering a subscription-style model, Apple is making its premium smartphones more accessible while also locking in customer loyalty with yearly upgrades.

For those seeking the best of Apple without a steep one-time investment, this could be the smartest way to get on board—and stay upgraded.

## From Ashes to Wine: Canary Islanders Turn Volcano Ruins into Liquid Gold



In the Canary Islands of Spain, where volcanic eruptions once scorched the earth and left vast stretches covered in black ash, locals have accomplished something extraordinary. What was once a symbol of destruction has now become the foundation of one of the world's most unique wine cultures.

On the islands of Lanzarote and Tenerife, grapevines grow in soil enriched by volcanic minerals, producing wines renowned for their distinct flavour and rarity. This transformation didn't happen overnight. Islanders have cultivated this harsh terrain for centuries, digging pits into the volcanic ash to plant grapevines, shielding them from strong Atlantic winds while allowing them to absorb the rich nutrients hidden beneath the surface.

This method of viticulture is as practical as it is poetic. The ash

retains moisture and regulates temperature, creating ideal

conditions for grape growing in an otherwise unforgiving climate. The result?

Wines with unmatched minerality, complexi-

ty, and a story as deep as the lava fields themselves.

In 2024 alone, the Canary Islands produced around 3.5 million litres of wine, much of which was exported to Europe and the Americas. These wines, often described as earthy, vibrant, and full of character, are increasingly sought after by connoisseurs and collectors alike.

Locals take immense pride in this legacy—turning devastation into opportunity. What once buried their homes and farmlands now sustains their economy and preserves their culture.

The vineyards of the Canary Islands are a testament to human resilience and ingenuity. They remind the world that even in the wake of natural disasters, there is room for rebirth—sometimes, even in a bottle of volcanic wine.

## British Vlogger's Viral Video Slams Trash Crisis at Indian Tourist Spot



A British travel vlogger has sparked a heated conversation online after posting a candid video exposing the severe littering problem at a tourist hotspot in India. The video, shared on Instagram by content creator Alex, has gone viral with nearly 80,000 views and hundreds of comments, many supporting his frustration over the country's growing waste issue.

While travelling between Darjeeling and Kalimpong in West Bengal, Alex visited the scenic Lover's Viewpoint—a location known for its breathtaking river confluence and natural beauty. However, what greeted him was a familiar sight: heaps of trash scattered by careless tourists.

"It just frustrates the sh\*t out of me," he said in the video. "I keep hearing people say, 'Come to the mountains in India, that's where the true beauty is.' But it's the same here—the same treatment of the land. Maybe there's no hope."

In the now-viral clip, Alex points out the contradiction between the natural beauty of the location and the irresponsible behavior of visitors. "There's always going to be trash where there are people. And I guarantee

you, there's a bin super close. You are only trashing your own country," he added.

The video, captioned "When will it end India", has resonated with many viewers who praised Alex

for calling out the issue so bluntly. "Thanks for raising awareness," commented one user. Others echoed his sentiments, calling for stricter enforcement and public responsibility.

As India continues to pro-

mote tourism both domestically and globally, Alex's video is a stark reminder that preserving the country's natural beauty must be a shared responsibility—not just for locals but for all who travel through it.

## Microsoft Unveils MAI-Image-1, Its First In-House AI Image Generator



Microsoft has introduced its first natively developed image generation model, MAI-Image-1, marking a significant milestone in its generative AI journey. The announcement was made via the company's official newsroom post on Monday.

MAI-Image-1 is part of Microsoft's MAI (Microsoft AI) initiative, which focuses on building purpose-built models for enhanced integration within its products. The model debuted on the public AI leaderboard LMArena, where it ranked 9th among

top-performing text-to-image models. Although still in pre-release testing, the model's performance has already attracted attention.

This release follows a string of in-house AI developments by Microsoft this year. In July, the company

unveiled MAI Diagnostic Orchestrator (MAI-DxO), designed for medical diagnosis, and in August, it launched MAI-Voice-1, a voice generation model praised for its natural and expressive speech output.

While Microsoft hasn't re-

leased technical specifications for MAI-Image-1, it emphasized the model's ability to generate high-quality photorealistic images—including lighting effects, landscapes, and dynamic visuals. The company claims the model is faster than many existing large-scale models, making it more efficient for everyday use.

Microsoft says its goal is not to compete in the race for general-purpose megamodels, but to build AI tailored for real-world applications. MAI-Image-1 is expected to be integrated soon into Microsoft's Copilot and Bing Image Creator, bringing advanced creative tools to a broader audience.

The model was trained using carefully selected datasets and underwent rigorous evaluations, focusing on real-world use cases. Microsoft also incorporated feedback from professionals in the creative industries to refine its performance.

As competition in generative AI intensifies, MAI-Image-1 represents Microsoft's growing independence in AI innovation, moving beyond partnerships and into proprietary development that aligns with its product ecosystem.

# England Aim to End Long Ashes Drought in Australia

As the 2025 Ashes series prepares to kick off on Friday, November 21, in Perth, anticipation is building around whether England can finally break their long-standing drought on Australian soil. The last time England won an Ashes Test series in Australia was during the 2010-11 tour, and since then, Australia has maintained a dominant unbeaten run at home.

Ahead of the first Test, captains Steve Smith and Ben Stokes posed with the Waterford Crystal Ashes Trophy in Perth, marking the beginning of what promises to be a fiercely contested series. The rivalry has been simmering since the dramatic and contentious 2023 Ashes in England, which was marred by heated exchanges, controversial dismissals and intense scrutiny of both teams' tactics.

England, led by Stokes, capped off the 2023 series with a victory at The Oval. However, the win was not enough to reclaim the urn, as Australia had already secured the advantage by win-



ning the first two Tests and drawing the fourth. That series left England with renewed belief in their aggressive "Bazball" approach but also exposed vulnerabilities they must address in Australian conditions.

The 2025 challenge looks even steeper. Australia en-

ters the series with a squad that many have labelled ageing and somewhat under-strength, but their home record remains formidable.

With experienced campaigners like Smith, Marcus Labuschagne and Pat Cummins still forming the backbone of the team, Aus-

tralia aims to extend its dominance and silence concerns about its depth.

England, on the other

hand, arrive with a clear

mission: to end a 14-year

drought and prove their at-

tacking brand of cricket can

succeed on the fastest,

bounciest pitches in the

world. With Stokes at the

helm and a motivated squad

behind him, the visitors be-

lieve this could finally be

the year they rewrite

history.

The stage is set in Perth

as cricket's most storied ri-

valry resumes with high ex-

pectations and renewed fire.

## South Africa A Defeat India A by 73 Runs in Final Unofficial ODI



South Africa A ended their three-match unofficial ODI series on a high by defeating India A by 73 runs in the third and final game at the Niranjani Shah Stadium in Rajkot on Wednesday. Despite India A having already sealed the series 2-1, the visitors delivered a domi-

nant performance to avoid a whitewash.

Opting to bat first, South Africa A got off to a dream start as openers Lhuan-dre Pretorius and Rivaldo Moonsamy stitched together a massive 241-run opening partnership. Pretorius was the star performer,

smashing a brilliant 123 off 98 deliveries with nine fours and six sixes, earning him the Player of the Match award. Moonsamy complemented him with a composed 107 off 130 balls, striking 13 boundaries and two sixes.

After the dismissal of the

openers, India A bowlers managed to pull things back and restricted South Africa A to 325/6 in 50 overs. Khalieel Ahmed (2/82), Prasidh Krishna (2/52) and Harshit Rana (2/47) were among the wickets for the hosts.

Chasing a challenging

target, India A faltered early as openers Ruturaj Gaikwad (25) and Abhishek Sharma (11) failed to provide stability at the top. Captain Tilak Varma (11) and Riyan Parag (17) also fell cheaply, leaving India A struggling at 82/4 within the first 17 overs.

A resilient fifth-wicket partnership between Ishan Kishan and Ayush Badoni revived hopes. Kishan scored a gritty 53 off 67 balls, while Badoni added an equally impressive 66 off 66 deliveries. Their 88-run stand kept India A in the hunt, but South Africa A struck back with crucial breakthroughs.

South Africa A's disciplined bowling attack proved decisive, bundling out India A for 252 in 49.1 overs. Nqabayomzi Peter led the attack with figures of 4/48, while Tshepo Moreki (3/58), Bjorn Fortuin (2/48) and Delano Potgieter (1/23) contributed effectively to secure a convincing victory.

## Italy Storm Into Davis Cup Semi-Finals After Dominant Win Over Austria



equally dominant display, defeating Austria's top-ranked player Filip Misolic 6-1, 6-3. Cobolli, ranked 22nd in the world, controlled the match from the outset with aggressive baseline play and sharp

movement, ensuring Italy sealed the tie without needing the doubles encounter.

As a result, Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori were not required to take the court against Austria's Alexander Erler and Lucas

Miedler.

Italy will now face Belgium in the semi-finals as they continue their campaign to defend the Davis Cup title. The remaining semi-final spots will be decided when Argentina meet

## Hakimi Creates History with African Footballer of the Year Win



Paris Saint-Germain star Achraf Hakimi etched his name into African football history after being crowned the African Footballer of the Year at the 2025 CAF Awards held in Rabat on Wednesday. The Moroccan full-back achieved a remarkable milestone, becoming the first defender in 52 years to win the prestigious honour, finishing ahead of Liverpool's Mohamed Salah and Nigerian striker Victor Osimhen in the final voting.

Hakimi enjoyed a sensational 2025 season with PSG, lifting four major titles — the UEFA Champions League, Ligue 1, Coupe de France and the UEFA Super Cup. His consistent brilliance on both ends of the pitch made him one of the standout players in world football. He is the first Moroccan to win the award since Mustapha Hadji claimed it in 1998, and the first defender to do so since Zaire's Bwanga Tshimen in 1973.

Speaking after receiving the award, an emotional Hakimi said it was a proud moment not

## Jaismine, Nikhat Advance to World Boxing Cup Finals



Greater Noida: India's boxing stars Jaismine Lamboria and Nikhat Zareen booked their spots in the finals of the World Boxing Cup 2025 with dominant performances in their respective semifinal bouts at the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathak Indoor Stadium on Wednesday.

Jaismine, the reigning world champion in the 57kg category, faced Kazakhstan's Ulzhan Sarsenbek, a former Asian youth gold medallist. Despite starting her campaign later than most, Jaismine showcased her class and experience, defeating Sarsenbek convincingly with a 5-0 scoreline. Her precise combinations, swift footwork, and tactical control of the ring left little room for her opponent to mount a challenge.

In the 51kg category, former world champion Nikhat Zareen also advanced with a commanding 5-0 victory over Gulsevar Ganieva, the 2022 World youth champion. Nikhat, known for her aggressive style and sharp counterpunching, dominated all rounds, demonstrating her read-

iness to reclaim the top spot in her weight division.

With these wins, India now has a strong presence in the title rounds, with a total of 15 Indian boxers still in contention for medals across different categories. Alongside Jaismine and Nikhat, six more Indian pugilists progressed to the finals on Wednesday, highlighting the country's growing strength in international women's boxing.

The World Boxing Cup Finals have attracted top talent from around the globe, but India's performance so far reflects a blend of skill, preparation, and determination. Both Jaismine and Nikhat will now focus on their final bouts, aiming to bring home gold for the host nation.

The championship promises exciting showdowns in the coming days, with Indian boxers looking to capitalize on home advantage and continue the country's impressive run in the tournament. Fans are eagerly anticipating the finals, where the nation's top fighters will battle for the coveted World Cup titles.

## Upendra Says He Joined AKT for Fans' Love



The upcoming Ram Pothineni-Bhagyashri Borse starrer Andhra King Taluka continues to build strong momentum as its promotional campaign intensifies. Following an impressive trailer launch in Kurnool—highlighted by a grand drone show—the makers have now unveiled the Kannada version of the trailer. Kannada star Upendra, who plays a key role in the film, graced the event and shared his thoughts with the media.

Ram Pothineni, speaking at the launch, described Andhra King Taluka as a film driven entirely by emotion. He said the team poured their heart into crafting a story that blends various emotions into a heartfelt narrative. Ram also expressed gratitude for the opportunity to share the screen with Upendra, noting that he connected with him not just as a co-star but as a person. He praised Upendra's support and the warmth he brought to the set.

Expressing confidence in the film's theatrical prospects, Upendra praised director Mahesh Babu P for crafting a warm, engaging screenplay rooted in a novel concept. He also thanked Mythri Movie Makers for backing a project with such emotional depth.

With high expectations and widespread buzz, Andhra King Taluka is all set for its grand release on November 27.

## Keerthy Suresh Speaks Out Against AI-Morphed Images



Chennai: Popular actress Keerthy Suresh has raised her voice against the misuse of artificial intelligence, following the circulation of AI-morphed images of her on social media. The actress described the situation as both "hurting" and "irritating" during a press conference in Chennai on Wednesday.

"AI has become a huge issue. It has turned into both a boon and a bane," Keerthy said. "Humans created technology, but we are gradually losing control over it. On social media, I am often shocked to see my photos in suggestive outfits and wonder if I ever wore them because they look that real."

The actress recounted a recent incident where an image of her, taken during a movie puja, was altered using AI to appear vulgar from a different angle. "For a moment, I was confused and then realized I never posed like that. It is definitely irritating and deeply hurting," she added.

Keerthy's statement comes amid growing concerns over AI-powered deepfake content,

which has increasingly targeted celebrities. Leading actors, including Katrina Kaif, Alia Bhatt, and Priyanka Chopra Jonas, have previously fallen victim to similar misuse, with morphed images and videos spreading rapidly online.

In a notable case in November 2023, a deepfake video of Rashmika Mandanna went viral. The actor called the incident "extremely scary," and authorities later arrested the individual responsible in January 2024.

Experts have warned that as AI tools become more sophisticated, the creation of hyper-realistic manipulated content poses serious risks to privacy, reputation, and mental health.

Keerthy's candid remarks highlight the urgent need for stronger regulations and awareness around AI-generated content. Celebrities and ordinary users alike face the challenge of navigating a digital space where technology can distort reality with alarming ease, making legal and social safeguards increasingly critical.

# Kodama Simham Re-Release Turns Special for Chiranjeevi



Megastar Chiranjeevi is reliving a wave of nostalgia as his iconic cowboy-action entertainer Kodama Simham gears up for its grand re-release on November 21. Originally released in 1990, the film holds a unique place in Telugu cinema for its adventurous Western setting, and fans are looking forward to experiencing it once again on the big screen.

Ahead of the re-release, the film has undergone a complete, high-quality restoration. The team has upgraded Kodama Simham to pristine 4K resolution, paired with enhanced 5.1 surround sound to offer an immersive theatrical experience. Each frame has been carefully cleaned, sharpened and color-graded to revive the film's original visual richness while ensuring it meets modern cinematic standards.

The restored version promises sharper imagery, vibrant colors and powerful audio, giving both long-time fans and new audiences a chance to enjoy the film like never before.

Chiranjeevi expressed heartfelt joy as he revisited memories associated with the film. He shared

that Kodama Simham remains one of his personal favourites, not only because of its distinctive genre but also because it was a film his son Ram Charan loved during childhood. The Megastar fondly remembered working

with the film's strong ensemble cast, which included Radha, Sonam, Kalki, Satyanarayana and several other notable actors who contributed to the film's enduring charm.

He also recalled his on-screen collabora-

tion with Mohan Babu, whose antagonist role added both intensity and entertainment to the narrative.

According to Chiranjeevi, Mohan Babu's balanced portrayal brought a perfect mix of villainy and fun, elevating the film's dramatic impact.

With fans eagerly awaiting the release, Kodama Simham is set to gallop back into cinemas with renewed grandeur, promising a nostalgic celebration of the beloved Mega Cowboy era.

## Homebound to Stream on Netflix from November 21



Homebound, India's official entry for the 98th Academy Awards in the Best International Feature Film category, is set to make its digital debut on Netflix tomorrow, November 21. Produced by Karan Johar and directed by acclaimed filmmaker Neeraj

Ghaywan, the film features Ishaan Khatter, Vishal Jethwa and Janhvi Kapoor in lead roles. Despite strong critical acclaim, the movie struggled to perform at the box office, leaving its theatrical run short-lived.

Netflix officially announced the film's

streaming date earlier today, much to the excitement of cinephiles who have been waiting to catch the Oscar-contending drama. The OTT release is expected to give the film the visibility it missed during its theatrical outing, especially among global

audiences. Karan Johar, speaking about the film's underwhelming box-office performance, expressed disappointment and admitted that he might reconsider producing films like Homebound in the future. The filmmaker also faced criticism

from the public, who felt the movie did not receive adequate marketing or a strategic release, which may have affected its commercial fate.

Homebound earned international recognition long before its theatrical release in India. The film

## Upasana Konidela Sparks Debate Over Egg Freezing Advice at IIT Hyderabad



Upasana Konidela, entrepreneur and wife of actor Ram Charan, has sparked a nationwide debate after advising women students at IIT Hyderabad to "freeze eggs" to prioritize careers and plan motherhood on their terms.

Her remarks, shared in a video on X, quickly went viral, attracting criticism from doctors, influencers, and social media users. Critics argued that her advice ignored biological limits, the emotional stress of fertility treatments, and the high costs of procedures like IVF and egg freezing.

Obstetrician Rajesh Parikh noted, "IVF costs lakhs per cycle. Egg freezing costs lakhs upfront plus annual storage charges. Most young women can't afford even one attempt." Dr. Sunita

Sayammagaru also highlighted that egg freezing does not guarantee a successful pregnancy.

In response, Upasana took to X, calling the backlash a "healthy debate" and clarifying her intentions. "I'm happy to have sparked a healthy debate & thank you for your respectful responses. Stay tuned as I voice my opinions on the pleasures/pressures of privilege," she wrote, encouraging followers to review the factual information she shared.

Upasana also shared her personal experience, stating she married at 27, froze her eggs at 29, welcomed her first child at 36, and is now expecting twins at 39. "For me, marriage and career are not competing priorities—they are equally meaningful parts of a

fulfilled life. But I decide the timeline! That's not privilege, it's my right!" she added.

Her initial statement

for women is to freeze their eggs... when you are financially independent"—drew mixed reactions. Some lauded it as empowering, while others criticized it as impractical for

most women. Entrepreneurs like Zoho founder Sridhar Venkateswaran encouraged earlier marriage and parenthood, citing social responsibility.

The debate under-

scores ongoing discussions around women's career choices, fertility, and the balance between privilege and practical realities in India's evolving workplace.