

POINT

Weather Forecast

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

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At Least 30 Feared Killed..70 Injured

Stampede occurs as devotees rush for holy dip at Triveni Sangam.

Second stampede triggered by crowd surge at closed pontoon bridges.

Chaos leads to suspension of "Amrit Snan" ritual.

President Murmu, PM Modi Express Condolences



Maha Kumbh Mela Stampede

President Murmu, PM Modi Express Condolences



President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday expressed her sorrow over the tragic stampede at the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj and extended her condolences to the victims' families. She also wished for the swift recovery of those injured in the incident.

"The stampede incident at Prayagraj Maha Kumbh is extremely sad. I express my condolences to the families of the injured devotees and pray to God that all the injured devotees recover soon," Murmu said in a post on 'X' in Hindi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also responded to the tragedy, offering his deepest sympathies. "The accident that happened in Prayagraj Maha Kumbh is extremely sad. My deepest condolences to the devotees who have lost their loved ones. I wish for the speedy recovery of all the injured," Modi wrote on 'X'.

The stampede occurred between 1 am and 2 am on Wednesday, as a massive crowd gathered to take a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam for Mauni Amavasya. Reports suggest that the incident was triggered when devotees climbed over barricades at Akhara marg, resulting in the tragic chaos.

TPN Correspondent | Prayagraj
At least 30 people are feared dead and around 70 others injured in a stampede at the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj on Wednesday, as tens of millions of devotees gathered to take a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam on the auspicious occasion of Mauni Amavasya. This day holds immense spiritual significance, amplified by a rare celestial alignment that occurs once in 144 years.

Authorities have not officially confirmed the deaths, but sources close to the matter reported the fatalities, with many others seriously injured. The stampede occurred when devotees, eager to participate in the sacred "amrit snan", became trapped in a crush of people. Videos and photographs from the scene show bodies being carried away on stretchers and the injured struggling to escape the chaos. Eyewitness ac-

counts describe the scene as chaotic, with people stepping over discarded belongings as they tried to flee.

The stampede occurred after an initial incident at 1 am, which was not deemed serious at the time. However, a second stampede escalated when devotees found the pontoon bridges closed and began pushing in a panic. Witnesses said the crowd surged, leading to people falling and being trampled. Some pilgrims, carrying luggage, lost their balance and fell into the mass of people, causing further chaos.

Vivek Mishra, a content creator from Prayagraj, recalled his harrowing experience: "I fell when my foot got stuck in a dustbin. I was left barefoot and injured. I had to help my parents and another woman who was lying on the ground. The situation spiraled out of control, with young people

pushing others, leading to the stampede."

The stampede has led to the suspension of the "Amrit Snan" ritual, with authorities urging devotees to refrain from heading to the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati rivers. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has appealed to the public to bathe at nearby ghats and avoid the Sangam area. "Follow the instructions of the administration and cooperate in making arrangements," he said in a statement.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been in constant communication with CM Adityanath, calling for immediate support measures. The administration has deployed the Rapid Action Force to restore order, and rescue operations continue. The situation is being closely monitored, as the administration works to ensure the safety of the remaining devotees.

FEAR OF LOOSING

PM Modi on Kejriwal's 'Yamuna poisoned' claim

Can Haryana's BJP govt poison the water that the Prime Minister drinks?

They promised to clean the Yamuna, but now they want Delhi to beg for water.

Delhi Assembly worked for only 74 days in the last 5 years.

AAP misused water issues for political gain.

Delhi will never forgive them.

PM Modi counters Kejriwal's 'Yamuna poisoned' claim.



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi
Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed an election rally in Delhi's Ghonda area on Wednesday, fiercely defending the BJP and challenging Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's accusations about water contamination. The AAP leader had earlier claimed that the BJP government in Haryana was mixing "poison" in the water supplied to Delhi. PM Modi, speaking directly to the voters, asked, "Can

Haryana's BJP government poison the water that the Prime Minister drinks?" He criticized the AAP's "disgusting charge" and highlighted Kejriwal's failure to deliver on his promise to clean the Yamuna River.

He slammed the AAP for its poor governance, saying, "They promised to clean the Yamuna, but now they want Delhi to beg for water." Modi noted that AAP had misused the issue for political gain,

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ISRO celebrates 100th rocket launch with successful NVS-02 mission

ISRO successfully launched its 100th rocket from Sriharikota.

The GSLV-F15 carried the NVS-02 navigation satellite into orbit.

This was the first mission under ISRO's new chairman, V. Narayanan.



TPN Correspondent | Sriharikota
The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) marked a significant milestone on Wednesday, successfully launching its

100th rocket with the navigation satellite NVS-02 onboard the GSLV-F15. The launch took place early in the morning from the Sriharikota spaceport in Andhra Pradesh, making it

ISRO's first mission of the year. The GSLV-F15 precisely injected the NVS-02 satellite into its intended Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO).

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Congress promises Caste Census

A Ministry for Purvanchalis in Delhi Manifesto

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Over 57 Million Devotees Take Holy Dip At Sangam In Maha Kumbh



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UP, Tripura, Andhra Win Tableau Awards at Republic Day 2025

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi
India celebrated its 76th Republic Day on Sunday with a grand parade featuring tableaux from various states and military contingents, marching down the iconic Kartavya Path. Uttar Pradesh's Mahakumbh tableau was declared the winner of the tableau competition, followed by Tripura and Andhra Pradesh, which secured second and third places, respectively.

A total of 16 tableaux from states and Union Territories, along with 15 from central ministries, departments, and organizations, were showcased during the parade, highlighting the rich cultural diversity and heritage of India.

Winning State Tableaux:

• **First Place:** Uttar Pradesh – Mahakumbh 2025 – Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas

• **Second Place:** Tripura – Eternal Reverence: The Worship of 14 Deities in Tripura – Kharchi Puja

• **Third Place:** Andhra Pradesh – Etikoppaka Bommalu – Eco-Friendly Wooden Toys
In addition, an online poll conducted by the MyGov portal saw Gujarat's tableau emerging as the popular choice among citizens, followed by Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Winning Military and Administrative Tableaux:

• **Best Marching Contingent among Services:** Jammu &

Kashmir Rifles

• **Best Marching Contingent among CAPFs/Other Auxiliary Forces:** Delhi Police

• **Best Tableau from Central Ministries/Departments:** Ministry of Tribal Affairs (Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh)

• **Special Prize:** Central Public Works Department (75 Years of Constitution of India)

Among the highlights of the parade were displays of advanced defense technology, such as the BrahMos, Pinaka, Akash missiles, and the DRDO's surface-to-surface tactical missile "Pralay." Additionally, various military systems, including T-90 "Bhishma" tanks, multi-barrel rocket-launchers, and the Nag missile system, were part of the spectacular display.



UP wins first place for its Mahakumbh tableau at Republic Day 2025 parade.

Tripura and Andhra Pradesh secure second and third place, respectively.

Jammu & Kashmir Rifles named the best marching contingent among services.

Gujarat's tableau wins popular choice award in online MyGov poll.

Congress promises Caste Census A Ministry for Purvanchalis in Delhi Manifesto



- Promises ₹2,500 monthly grant for women
- Free power up to 300 units.
- Delhi elections on February 5, results on February 8.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Days ahead of the Delhi elections, the Congress on Wednesday released its manifesto, pledging to conduct a caste census and establish a dedicated ministry for Purvanchalis if voted to power. The party, which lost power to AAP in 2013, also announced a series of welfare measures, including a ₹2,500 monthly grant for women, free electricity up to 300 units, and LPG cylinders at ₹500.

The manifesto, divided into 22 focus areas, also includes free health insurance up to ₹25 lakh and free ration kits.

Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav, alongside party leader Jairam Ramesh, unveiled the document, highlighting additional promises such as ₹8,500 per month for one year to unemployed educated youth and 100 Indira Canteens offering meals at ₹5.

Ramesh criticized both the BJP-led central government and the AAP-led Delhi government for failing to tackle pollution, calling it a major crisis. With Delhi set to vote on February 5 and results due on February 8, Congress is banking on these populist measures to make a comeback in the capital.

Yogi Adityanath urges calm after Maha Kumbh stampede

TPN Correspondent | Prayagraj

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has urged devotees not to believe in rumours following the stampede at the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj. He assured that the administration is working to ensure the smooth conduct of the 'amrit snan' and that the situation is now under control.

The chief minister confirmed that the incident occurred between 1-2 am when some devotees attempted to cross barricades near Akhara Marg, leading to injuries. He stated that all those injured are receiving medical treatment, with some in serious condition.

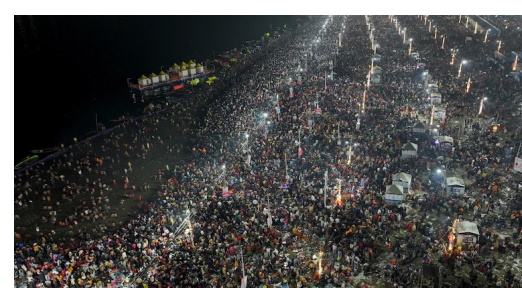
With a massive crowd surge for Mauni Amavasya, he revealed that over 5.5 crore devotees took a holy dip yesterday, while more than three crore had taken the ritual bath by 8:30 am today. The authorities are closely monitoring the situation, with

senior officials including the DGP, Chief Secretary, ADGP, and Home Secretary present on-site.

Yogi Adityanath also said he had spoken to Akhara Parishad leaders and Mahamandaleshwars, who agreed to let the general devotees take their holy dip first to ease crowd pressure. He urged people to use alternative ghats along a 12-20 km stretch rather than heading directly to the Triveni Sangam to prevent overcrowding. "The administration is here to serve you. The state and central government are ready for any kind of help or assistance. Please don't believe in any rumours," he appealed.



Over 57 Million Devotees Take Holy Dip At Sangam In Maha Kumbh



TPN Correspondent, Prayagraj:

A tragic stampede at the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, which resulted in 15 fatalities, has not deterred crores of devotees from participating in the 'amrit snan' (holy dip) on the occasion of Mauni Amavasya. The event, which marks one of the most

sacred rituals of the Maha Kumbh festival, saw a massive crowd at the Triveni Sangam, despite the earlier chaos. A bird-eye view video shared on social media shows a sea of people gathered at the venue, with the crowd thinning at the nose of the Triveni Sangam, where the three rivers – Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati – converge. Tents, flags, and makeshift pathways dotted the Sangam area, all teeming with devotees.

The stampede occurred at around 2:30 am, leading to panic as thousands attempted to reach the ghat for the sacred dip. In response to the tragedy, the Akharas, which were preparing for the 'snan,'

decided to postpone their participation to avoid further unrest. The Juna Akhara and Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad confirmed that the seers and saints called off the 'amrit snan' in light of the tragic incident.

To manage the large crowd, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has urged devotees to avoid the nose of the Triveni Sangam and to take their ritual dip at other ghats nearby. Authorities have set up additional bathing ghats to ensure devotees can celebrate Mauni Amavasya safely. Rescue operations continue at the Sangam Nose to control the crowd and maintain order.

Fear of Lossing Continue...

and the people of Delhi would never forgive them. In his counterattack, the Prime Minister also pointed to the "shamelessness" of AAP leaders, adding that the Delhi Assembly worked for only 74 days in the last five years, which is the lowest in its history.

Modi continued his attack by reminding voters of AAP's broken promises and mentioned other scandals, such as the "sheeshmahal" controversy and the liquor policy scam. Referring to the allegations on water contamination, the Prime Minister added, "Haryana has nothing to do with this. Delhi has many people from Haryana living here. If Haryana poisons Delhi's water, does that mean the Prime Minister drinks poisoned water too?"

The water controversy, which started when Kejriwal claimed high ammonia levels in Yamuna water, has gained significant traction in the run-up to the elections. The BJP has strongly denied the allegations, with Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini demanding an apology from Kejriwal for the false accusations.

The Delhi Jal Board has also rejected Kejriwal's claims, labeling them unfounded. Despite this, Kejriwal's allies continue to attack the BJP, alleging a deliberate attempt to create chaos.

Dense fog triggers massive pile-ups on Delhi-Meerut Expressway



TPN Correspondent | Ghaziabad

At least five people were injured in two major pile-ups involving around 50 vehicles on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway (DME) and Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE) in Ghaziabad on Wednesday morning. The accidents, caused by dense fog and low visibility around 7:30 am, led to heavy traffic congestion before police cleared the routes.

The first crash occurred on the Meerut-Ghaziabad carriage-way of the DME, about 2 km from the Hawa Hawai restaurant, involving 30-35 vehicles.

A bus initially rammed into a vehicle, triggering a chain collision. "Three people were injured and taken to a hospital for treatment," said Surendra Nath Tiwari, deputy commissioner of police (rural zone). A passenger traveling from Roorkee recounted, "We applied brakes upon spotting a stationary bus, but vehicles behind us kept crashing. My sister and I missed an interview in Delhi due to the accident."

A second pile-up involving 20-25 vehicles occurred on the Baghpat-Duhai stretch of the EPE, injuring two people. "The incident happened due to dense fog and low visibility," said Siddharth Gautam, assistant commissioner of police, Masuri-Muradnagar Circle. Authorities have urged motorists to drive cautiously amid ongoing winter fog conditions.

ISRO celebrates 100th rocket launch with successful NVS-02 mission Continue...

The mission was also the first under the leadership of ISRO's new chairman, V. Narayanan.

Following the launch, ISRO shared onboard footage from the GSLV-F15, capturing the satellite's journey into orbit. "A view like no other! India's space programme continues to inspire," the space agency posted on X.

The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) has had a challenging history, once referred to as ISRO's "naughty boy" due to its high failure rate. Out of 16 launches, six have failed, marking a 37% failure rate. In contrast, India's latest launch vehicle, the LVM-3 (also known as the 'Bahubali' rocket), boasts a 100% success rate.

Despite early setbacks, the GSLV series played a crucial role in India's mastery of cryogenic technology. GSLV-F15 was the 17th flight of the GSLV and the 11th with an indigenous cryogenic stage. It also marked the eighth operational flight with this advanced technology and the 100th launch from the Sriharikota spaceport.

With this successful mission, ISRO continues to strengthen India's capabilities in satellite navigation and space exploration.

In Yamuna Row, Haryana CM Drinks Yamuna Water Saini challenges Kejriwal's claims



February 5.
The video, lasting 57 seconds, shows Saini drinking the water and splashing it on himself while consulting aides. His actions were a direct response to Kejriwal's accusations that the Haryana government had poisoned the water supply by mixing high levels of ammonia.

In response to Kejriwal's claims of "water terrorism," Saini strongly denied any contamination, demanding that Kejriwal apologize for "blatantly false" statements. The Haryana government is also considering legal action for spreading panic among Delhi residents.

The BJP, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has dismissed Kejriwal's charges. Modi earlier questioned whether Haryana could poison the water he drinks, asserting that such actions would never be tolerated by the BJP.

The Delhi Jal Board has also refuted Kejriwal's allegations, labeling them "factually incorrect." Despite this, Kejriwal and AAP continue to push their claims as the matter has reached the Election Commission.

- Haryana CM Nayab Saini drinks Yamuna water, rejects Kejriwal's claims.
- Saini challenges AAP's allegations of "poisoned" water.
- BJP demands apology from Kejriwal over false statements.
- PM Modi defends the BJP, asserts no poisoning of water.
- Delhi Jal Board calls Kejriwal's accusations baseless.

TPN Correspondent, New Delhi

The controversy over "poisoned" Yamuna water escalated when Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini took a sip directly from the river, rejecting Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's allegations. In a video shared online, Saini is seen drinking water from the Yamuna at Palla village,

near Delhi's border.

Saini addressed the video with a post on X, claiming, "I drank the water of the holy Yamuna on the Haryana border. Atishi-jji [Kejriwal] did not come. She must be making up a new lie. Lies have no legs." He further declared that the people of Delhi would punish Kejriwal for his "deceit" when they vote on

Haryana To File Case Against Kejriwal For Yamuna "Poisoning" Claims

State government to take legal action over Kejriwal's "poison" allegations

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Haryana government will take legal action against former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal over his allegations that the BJP-led state government poisoned the Yamuna water supplied to Delhi. Haryana Minister Vipul Goyal announced on Wednesday that a case would be filed in the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court (CJM) in Sonapat under Disaster Management laws. Goyal accused Kejriwal of spreading panic with his "irresponsible" statements, emphasizing that the allegations

were baseless. He stated, "There is no truth in these allegations. The Haryana government will not spare him." Kejriwal had claimed that the BJP government in Haryana mixed "poison" in the Yamuna water, referring to high levels of ammonia in the water supply to Delhi. He asserted that the Delhi Jal Board's engineers had managed to stop the contaminated water from reaching the city. The AAP leader's claims were widely echoed by other party leaders, including Chief Minister Atishi, who accused the BJP of "water terrorism" and demanded action from the Election Commission.

The Election Commission, in response, directed Kejriwal to provide evidence for his claims by 8 pm, warning that failure to do so could lead to serious consequences. The Commission noted the potential impact of the allegation, stressing that false claims could disrupt the campaign discourse and incite conflict between states, particularly over the sensitive issue of water supply.

Delhi LG slams Kejriwal's 'Yamuna poisoning' claim as misleading

TPN Correspondent

| New Delhi

Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has strongly criticized AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal's recent claims of "poison" being mixed into the Yamuna River, calling them misleading and dangerous. In a letter to Chief Minister Atishi on Tuesday, Saxena stated that such accusations amount to endangering national security.

Citing media reports, Saxena condemned Kejriwal's allegations that the BJP-led Haryana government was attempting "genocide" by contaminating Yamuna's water supply to Delhi. "Making false, misleading, non-factual accusations of poisoning and genocide over a sensitive issue like drinking water and attempting to incite the public against another



state government is not only a threat to the states involved but also to national peace and security," he wrote. Saxena also criticized Atishi for reinforcing public confusion by writing to the Election Commission instead of condemning Kejriwal's remarks. He urged the Delhi CM to rise above "narrow interests" and

avoid making baseless claims. The political row over Delhi's water crisis escalated after Kejriwal, in a post on X, alleged, "Poison is being mixed into the Yamuna to make its water untreatable. If people in Delhi consume this water, many will die. This is nothing short of a mass murder."

Opposition MPs allege bias in Waqf Bill panel report, call process a 'mockery'



- Opposition MPs claim Waqf panel report disregards their concerns.
- JPC adopts the report with a 16-11 vote; dissent notes submitted.
- Bill likely to be introduced in Parliament.

TPN Correspondent

| New Delhi

Opposition MPs in the House panel reviewing the Waqf Amendment Bill have accused BJP members of disregarding their objections and pushing through a biased report. The Joint Parliamentary Commit-

tee adopted the draft report on Wednesday with a 16-11 majority, despite Opposition members alleging that their recommendations were ignored. The report, spanning 655 pages, was handed to MPs late Tuesday, leaving little time for review. DMK MP A Raja

termed the process "undemocratic," while Congress MP Syed Naseer Hussain called the amendments "unconstitutional" and aimed at targeting minorities.

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi alleged that the bill is designed to harm Waqf boards and seize mosques. TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee criticized the proceedings as a "mockery," stating that stakeholders' concerns were ignored. Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Arvind Sawant warned that allowing non-Muslim members on Waqf boards could set a precedent for interference in other religious institutions.

Despite these objections, panel chairperson Jagdambika Pal defended the amendments, stating they would improve Waqf board efficiency. The report is set to be presented to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla today, with the bill likely to be taken up in the upcoming Budget Session.

'World-class system exposed'

Akhilesh Yadav targets Yogi govt over Maha Kumbh stampede



TPN Correspondent

| Prayagraj

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav has strongly criticized the Uttar Pradesh government over the tragic stampede at the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj, which has reportedly claimed 15 lives. He accused the state of failing to manage the event despite claims of a "world-class system" and demanded resignations from those responsible. In a post on X, Yadav stated, "Now that the truth behind the claims of 'world-class system' has been exposed, those who made such claims should take moral responsibility and resign." He urged the immedi-

ate transfer of event management to the Army to restore faith among devotees and the saint community.

The former UP CM also called for urgent measures, including deploying air ambulances for the critically injured, ensuring swift identification of the deceased, and increasing aerial surveillance via helicopters.

The stampede occurred as thousands gathered for a holy dip in the Ganga on Mauni Amavasya, one of the most auspicious days of the Mela. Authorities have yet to confirm an official death toll, but sources indicate at least 15 casualties.

Rahul Gandhi dares Kejriwal over Yamuna water claim

TPN Correspondent

| New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday continued his attack on Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal, this time over his unfulfilled promise regarding the Yamuna River. Speaking at a rally in Bawana, Delhi, Gandhi recalled that five years ago, Kejriwal had vowed to bathe in and drink the water of the Yamuna. Gandhi challenged Kejriwal to fulfill that promise, sarcastically saying that Kejriwal should drink the polluted water, which the Delhi Chief Minister allegedly claims is unsafe.

The attack came amid ongoing controversy over Kejr-

wal's remarks about polluted Yamuna water entering Delhi from Haryana, which has led to criticism from both the BJP and Congress. Gandhi further accused Kejriwal of false promises, contrasting the current AAP government with the past Congress government under Sheila Dikshit, claiming that Delhi saw real development under Congress leadership.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission has directed Kejriwal to provide evidence to substantiate his claims about the poisoning of Yamuna water by the Haryana government. Kejriwal has been asked to respond by 8 PM on 29th January.



Himanta Sarma slams Kejriwal over 'poisoned' Yamuna water claim

Assam CM calls Kejriwal's remarks as revealing his "mentality"



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Wednesday strongly criticized Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal for alleging that the BJP-led Haryana government was poisoning the Yamuna water supplied to Delhi. Sarma described Kejriwal's remarks as revealing his "mentality," questioning how the former Delhi Chief Minister could make such claims against Haryana, his birthplace. Sarma, at an event in Kokrajhar, said he would rather die than speak ill of his homeland, emphasizing his respect for his

roots.

The controversy erupted following Kejriwal's comments about the polluted Yamuna water being supplied to Delhi, accusing Haryana of mixing harmful substances in the water. Sarma condemned this as an attempt to divert attention from the pollution in the river. He stated that no politician should ever speak negatively about their birthplace, calling Kejriwal's words irresponsible. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Ajay Maken also joined the growing chorus of criticism, with Modi calling the allegations malicious and a sign of desperation by AAP. In response to the allegations, Delhi Jal Board CEO Shilpa Shinde wrote to the Delhi Chief Secretary, calling Kejriwal's claims misleading and without factual basis. Meanwhile, the Haryana government is preparing to take legal action against Kejriwal for spreading panic and misinformation.

Condolences To Those Who Lost Loved Ones": PM On Maha Kumbh Stampede

Stampede at Maha Kumbh Grounds Leaves Several Injured

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his condolences after a stampede at the Maha Kumbh fair grounds, where casualties are feared. He wished for the speedy recovery of around 30 women injured when an overwhelming crowd broke barricades near the Triveni Sangam ghat on the sacred occasion of Mauni Amavasya, a day expected to witness 10 crore pilgrims taking a holy dip. PM Modi has spoken to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath four times, assuring full support from the Centre while local authorities manage the situation.

Akharas cancelled their processions and deferred the holy dip following the stampede. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath confirmed that some people were seriously injured but reassured that the situation remains under control. He urged devotees to avoid crowding at Sangam Nose and advised the elderly, children, and asthma patients to bathe at the nearest ghats, emphasizing that all Ganga ghats hold the same spiritual significance. The stampede occurred near Triveni Sangam



ghat on Mauni Amavasya. Over 4.80 crore devotees took a dip on Tuesday alone, surpassing Makar Sankranti's numbers. CM Yogi, Amit Shah, JP Nadda, and Anandiben Patel reviewed the situation. The Amrit Snan on Mauni Amavasya is the

most significant ritual of the Maha Kumbh, made even more auspicious this year due to a rare celestial event, 'Triveni Yog,' which occurs once in 144 years. The Maha Kumbh, which began on January 13, has already seen over 15 crore pilgrims in 17 days and will continue till February 26.

"Mysuru Land Scam Case Is Politically Motivated"



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday expressed confidence in receiving justice from the judiciary regarding the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam, where he is the prime accused and his wife, BM Parvathi, is the second accused. The Dharwad bench of the Karnataka High Court has reserved judgment on a petition seeking a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the case. When asked about his concerns, Siddaramaiah dismissed any worry, saying, "Why should I be concerned? I trust the judiciary."

The High Court on Monday stayed the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) summons to Parvathi and State Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh, questioning the urgency of the ED's actions. The court noted that the investigation was still ongoing and observed that the timing of the summons was inappropriate. The stay order will remain in effect until February 10, pending further hearings.

The MUDA scam allegations suggest that Siddaramaiah used his political influence to secure compensation for 14 sites in his wife's name in exchange for 3 acres and 16 guntas of land acquired by MUDA. The petitioner, Snehamayi Krishna, has challenged the ongoing Karnataka Lokayukta probe and requested a CBI investigation. While reserving judgment, the court directed the Lokayukta to continue its investigation and submit further findings on the day of the verdict.

Congress challenges Kejriwal over CAG reports

Panel to Study the Feasibility of Banning Fossil Fuel Vehicles



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera on Wednesday criticised the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi over 14 contentious Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports. Khera accused Arvind Kejriwal of hypocrisy, recalling how Kejriwal once carried "fake drafts" of CAG reports against the Congress government but is now silent on similar findings against his own administration. He challenged Kejriwal to a debate on the CAG reports concerning AAP's governance in Delhi.

"If he has any guts, he should debate on the CAG reports with us," Khera said. This criticism follows a scathing attack by Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, who had earlier slammed Kejriwal over the Delhi excise policy scam, highlighting the AAP leader's past promises and present contradictions.

Maharashtra Forms Committee to Explore Petrol, Diesel Car Ban in Mumbai

TPN Correspondent | Maharashtra

The Maharashtra government has taken a significant step in tackling Mumbai's air pollution crisis by forming a seven-member committee tasked with exploring the possibility of banning petrol and diesel vehicles within the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). The move comes in response to growing concerns over deteriorating air quality in the city and its surrounding areas, including Thane, Raigad, and Palghar. The committee will focus on promoting cleaner alternatives like CNG and electric vehicles to reduce vehicular emissions.



Led by retired IAS officer Sudhir Kumar Shrivastava, the committee includes key stakeholders such as Maharashtra's transport commissioner, Mumbai's joint police commissioner (traffic), the managing director

of Mahanagar Gas Limited, and representatives from the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), among others. The committee is expected to conduct a detailed study and submit a report with recommen-

dations within three months. This move follows a suo-motu Public Interest Litigation heard by the Bombay High Court, which raised concerns about traffic congestion and its role in increasing pollution levels. The court emphasized that current strategies to manage vehicle numbers and pollution are insufficient. In response, the state government is seeking expert advice to determine whether phasing out fossil fuel-powered vehicles is a viable solution to Mumbai's air quality problem.

Mumbai Police Insist Arrested Man is the Attacker in Saif Ali Khan Stabbing Case



TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

Mumbai Police on Tuesday firmly asserted that they have arrested the right person in connection with actor Saif Ali Khan's stabbing case. Additional Commissioner of Police Paramjit Singh Dahiya stated, "Yes, we have the right man in custody. There is no doubt that he is the accused." The officer emphasized that substantial technical, physical, and oral evidence has been gathered to prove the accused's involvement, rejecting media speculation suggesting otherwise.

Saif Ali Khan was stabbed in five places—including his back, wrist, neck, shoulder, and elbow—during an apparent burglary at his Bandra residence in the early hours of January 16. His friend rushed him to Lilavati Hospital in an autorickshaw, and he was discharged within a week.

- Police assert strong evidence against the accused, Shariful Islam.
- No fingerprint report has been received yet, despite media claims.
- The accused's lawyer argues he is being made a scapegoat.

Shariful Islam was arrested near Hiranandani Estate in Thane, 35 kilometers from Khan's home, after an intensive 70-hour manhunt. However, controversy arose when reports suggested the 19 sets of fingerprints collected from the crime scene did not match Islam's. Mumbai Police refuted these claims, stating that they have yet to receive the official fingerprint report.

Meanwhile, a West Bengal-based woman's Aadhaar card, allegedly used by Islam to purchase a SIM card, has led police to record her statement. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis assured the public that the investigation is proceeding meticulously, urging against unnecessary confusion. However, the father of another man initially detained in Chhattisgarh criticized Mumbai Police, stating his son lost his job and marriage due to mistaken identity, questioning who would be held accountable for his ruined future.

Court Dismisses Bibhav Kumar's Plea in MP Swati Maliwal Assault Case



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Tis Hazari Court in Delhi has dismissed multiple revision petitions filed by Bibhav Kumar, a close aide of Arvind Kejriwal, in the assault case involving AAP Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal. The court rejected Kumar's challenge against the cognizance order and his appeal against the committal of his case to the Sessions Court.

Additionally, the court turned down a revision plea by the Delhi Police against an earlier order directing them to provide un-relied documents to Kumar. The judge emphasized the need for transparency, allowing access to materials that could support his defense.

Bibhav Kumar was accused of physically and verbally assaulting Swati Maliwal at the Chief Minister's residence on May 13 last year. Maliwal alleged that he slapped, kicked, and attempted to disrobe her. Kumar was arrested on May 18 following her complaint.

The Supreme Court later granted him bail but barred him from resuming any role in the Chief Minister's Office. The Delhi Police has filed a 500-page charge sheet, with testimonies from multiple witnesses. Kumar continues to face charges, including culpable homicide and criminal intimidation.

Hitman Gets Life for Killing Air India Bombing Suspect



TPN Correspondent | Ottawa
A contract killer in Canada has been sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Ripudaman Singh Malik, an acquitted suspect in the 1985 Air India Kanishka bombing. Tanner Fox, who carried out the killing in July 2022 outside Malik's business in Vancouver, was convicted on Tuesday. Fox and his associate Jose Lopez had pleaded guilty in October last year to second-degree murder. While they admitted to being hired for the contract killing, Lopez's next court hearing is scheduled for February 6. The Kanishka Bombing On June 23, 1985, Air India Flight 182, en route from To-

ronto to Mumbai, exploded off the Irish coast, killing all 329 passengers and crew onboard. The Boeing 747, named Emperor Kanishka, disintegrated midair just 45 minutes from its destination, with no distress call or warning issued. It was the deadliest aviation terror attack before the 9/11 attacks in the U.S. Most of the victims were Canadian citizens of Indian origin. Another explosion occurred at Japan's Narita Airport on the same day, killing two baggage handlers as they were loading luggage onto another Air India aircraft. Both suitcase bombs were later traced back to Vancouver, where a large Sikh immigrant population resided. Canadian

authorities linked the attack to Sikh separatists seeking revenge for Operation Blue Star, the Indian Army's military action at the Golden Temple in Punjab. Five months later, Talwinder Singh Parmar and Inderjit Singh Reyat were arrested, but charges against Parmar were dropped due to lack of evidence. In 2000, Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajai Singh Bagri were also arrested but were acquitted in 2005 due to insufficient evidence. Inderjit Singh Reyat remains the only person convicted in the bombing plot. He was sentenced for making the bombs and for perjury during the trials of Malik and Bagri.

Meghalaya Government Introduces Game-Based Learning for Children

CM Conrad Sangma Unveils Model Creative Learning Centre in Tura

TPN Correspondent | Shillong
Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma announced the introduction of game-based learning for children in the state to help develop key skills such as motor, cognitive, and self-regulation abilities. In his speech at the inauguration of the Model Creative Learning Centre (MCLC) at Dobakkol in Tura, CM Sangma emphasized the importance of this approach for early childhood development. The initiative falls under the Early Childhood Development (ECD) mission, which aims to set up learning centres across the state.



Game-based learning, a method shown to boost learning retention and creativity, will give children the tools they need to excel in both academic and personal development.

Lauding the collaboration between Mere Mentor and Dobakkol Non Govt L.P. School, he noted that while the state government had provided Rs 50 lakh for the project through the Chief Minister's Special Development Fund (CMSDF), the responsibility of ensuring its success lies with the involved organization.

The new learning centre will incorporate game-based learning techniques, providing children with opportunities to develop perceptual, motor, and cognitive skills in an engaging and interactive environment.

The project has been allocated Rs 50 lakh from the Chief Minister's Special Development Fund (CMSDF), with the local community school, Dobakkol Non-Govt L.P. School, collaborating with Mere Mentor to manage and run the initiative. CM Sangma emphasized that while the government's financial support is crucial, the success of the project will ultimately depend on the involvement and efforts of the school and its partners.

This initiative also aims to modernize traditional learn-

ing environments. CM Sangma shared plans to transform local anganwadis into "smart anganwadis" that adopt modern teaching methods to create a more stimulating and fun environment for children. A successful example of this approach has already been seen in the Dura Asim village, where an anganwadi was upgraded into a dynamic learning centre, offering children an engaging and enriching space for development.

With a clear vision to improve early childhood education, the Meghalaya government is taking steps to revolutionize how children learn and grow in the state, starting with the MCLC project in Tura.

Businessman Arrested for Murdering Sister to Claim ₹1 Crore Insurance

Debt-Ridden Man Stages Accident After Killing Sister in Prakasam District



TPN Correspondent | Podili (Andhra Pradesh)
A real estate businessman in Prakasam district has been arrested for allegedly murdering his divorced and childless younger sister to fraudulently claim a ₹1 crore insurance

payout. Malapati Ashok Kumar, 30, was taken into custody for the crime, which took place on February 2, 2024, near a petrol station in Podili, police confirmed on Tuesday.

Struggling with mounting

debts, Kumar allegedly devised a scheme to insure his sister for ₹1 crore with multiple insurance companies. His plan was to kill her and stage her death as an accident to claim the insurance money.

On the day of the incident, Kumar took his sister to Ongole under the pretext of a hospital visit. While returning, he allegedly drugged her with sleeping pills before smothering her to death. He then attempted to stage the death as an accident before authorities uncovered his plan. Kumar now faces serious charges, including conspiracy and murder, as the investigation continues.

India Strengthens Olympic Vision with Research and Innovation

IOA President PT Usha Highlights Intellectual Preparedness for 2036 Olympic Bid



TPN Correspondent | Delhi
India is ramping up not only its infrastructure but also its research and intellectual preparedness as it eyes hosting rights for the 2036 Olympic Games, Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha said on Wednesday. Addressing the 1st International

Olympic Research Conference at Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) in Gujarat's Gandhinagar district, Usha emphasized that India's Olympic ambitions extend beyond competitive sports to fostering global peace and cultural exchange.

The four-day conference, or-

ganized by Bharat Centre for Olympic Research and Education (B-CORE), has brought together experts from across the world to explore India's evolving role in the Olympic movement. Usha underscored the importance of knowledge exchange, stating that India's efforts go beyond infrastructure development to embrace the "true spirit of Olympism."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking at the 38th National Games in Dehradun, reinforced India's commitment to hosting the 2036 Olympics. He emphasized that this bid is a national priority, capable of transforming India's sports sector while boosting economic and technological advancements. IOA Vice-President Ajay Patel also highlighted research-driven approaches to making mega-events sustainable and inclusive.

Delhi-NCR Enforces Stage 3 Pollution Curbs Amid Severe Air Quality Decline

Construction Ban, Vehicle Restrictions, and Hybrid Classes Implemented Under GRAP

TPN Correspondent | Delhi
Delhi's air quality deteriorated sharply on Wednesday, prompting the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to enforce Stage 3 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). The city's Air Quality Index (AQI) surged to 365 by 4 PM due to unfavorable meteorological conditions, including low wind speeds and smog accumulation.



Under GRAP Stage 3, non-essential construction work is prohibited, and classes up to grade 5 are required to shift to

a hybrid learning mode, allowing parents and students to opt for online education. Additionally, the use of BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel four-wheelers is restricted in Delhi and NCR districts, with exemptions for persons with disabilities. Diesel-operated medium goods vehicles with BS-IV or older standards are also banned.

Kejriwal Faces Backlash Over Yamuna Poisoning Allegation



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi
Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal's allegations against the Haryana government regarding Yamuna pollution have sparked a major political controversy ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections on February 5. Kejriwal accused the BJP-led Haryana government of deliberately releasing industrial waste into the river, even claiming that "poison" was being

mixed to harm the people of Delhi. The remark has drawn sharp criticism from multiple quarters, including Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and even Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, an ally of AAP in the INDIA bloc. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has now sought factual evidence from Kejriwal to support his claim.

Addressing a rally in Delhi, PM Modi refuted the allegations, questioning whether the people of Haryana would poison the very water consumed by their own families. Meanwhile, CM Saini publicly drank Yamuna water to disprove Kejriwal's claims and stated that water tests confirmed no contamination. Rahul Gandhi also hit out at Kejriwal, accusing him of making false promises, citing his unful-

filled pledge to clean the Yamuna. BJP leaders, including Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami and Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, joined the attack, blaming Kejriwal's government for failing to clean the river despite a decade in power. Sarma challenged Kejriwal to take a dip in the Yamuna to prove his claims. With Yamuna pollution being a key issue for Delhi voters, opposition parties have seized on Kejriwal's failure to meet his 2025 cleanup deadline. AAP, however, remains firm on its stance, with party spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar reiterating that the presence of ammonia in Yamuna water is hazardous. Kejriwal himself maintained that the ammonia levels in Delhi's Yamuna water had reached 7 parts per million (PPM), making it unfit for consumption.

India Rejects Canada's Allegations of Election Interference

MEA Hits Back at "Baseless" Claims of India's Involvement in Toronto Elections

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

India has firmly rejected the allegations made by a Canadian commission regarding interference in Toronto's elections, categorizing the report as "insinuations" without merit. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) also criticized Canada's interference in India's internal matters, emphasizing the negative consequences of such actions, including illegal migration and organized criminal activities.

The report, issued by Canada's National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians, claimed that India was one of the most active foreign actors engaging in electoral interference in Canada, specifically citing involvement in the support of candidates through proxy agents.

The Canadian report also referenced the expulsion of six Indian diplomats in October 2024, following allegations of their involve-



ment in a campaign of violence, which was met with reciprocal action by India. The report's mention of India's supposed disinformation

regarding the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar was also strongly denied by India, further escalating tensions between the two coun-

tries. The MEA reaffirmed its stance that such smear campaigns only serve to harm the already delicate diplomatic relations.

Talks With Ukraine Possible, But Not With Zelensky: Putin



TPN Correspondent | Moscow

Russian President Vladimir Putin stated on Tuesday that he would be open to negotiations with Ukraine, but not with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Putin argued that Zelensky is an "illegitimate" leader due to the expiration of his term during martial law. Instead, Putin suggested that negotiations could take place with a different Ukrainian representative who is willing to seek a compromise.

Putin's comments mark a continued rejection of Zelensky's leadership, even as the war in Ukraine rages on without any signs of de-escalation. The Russian president's stance is indicative of Moscow's reluctance to engage directly with Zelensky, who has been a vocal figure in rallying international support for Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression.

Putin also implied that the war could be brought to an end within two months, should Western support to Ukraine cease. This statement highlights Russia's belief that the continued supply of military aid and political backing from the West is prolonging the conflict. He suggested that without this external influence, Ukraine would be forced to negotiate or face a shift in the balance of power.

The Russian president's remarks come amid ongoing efforts from other global leaders to mediate a ceasefire. U.S. President Donald Trump has expressed support for a quick end to the conflict, even going so far as to promise a ceasefire if he were in power. However, Russian officials have indicated that no one from Trump's team has yet reached out to initiate peace talks, despite his public comments in favor of a swift resolution.

On the Ukrainian side, Kyiv has raised concerns about the possibility of being excluded from any peace negotiations. Ukrainian officials have accused Putin of trying to manipulate the situation, particularly regarding Trump's comments. There is a growing unease in Ukraine about the risk of being sidelined in discussions that could shape the future of their sovereignty, with some fearing that any negotiations without direct involvement from Kyiv would be detrimental to Ukraine's interests.

White House Opens Briefing Room to "New Media" in Move to Engage Younger Audiences



TPN Correspondent | Washington DC

In a groundbreaking move, the White House has adapted its media strategy under President Donald Trump's administration by opening up the briefing room to a new generation of media outlets, including podcasters, social media influencers, and content creators.

This shift is part of the administration's effort to cater to the evolving media landscape, particularly among younger Americans who are increasingly consuming news outside traditional television and newspapers. Karoline Leavitt, at 27 the youngest White House press secretary in history, emphasized that this change is critical for effectively spreading the president's message.

Leavitt invited content creators from independent platforms to apply for press credentials via a newly launched website, whitehouse.gov/newmedia. She further announced plans to reinstate press passes for 440 journalists whose access was revoked under the previous administration. The change marks a significant step toward embracing diverse voices and expanding the reach of presidential communications in an era dominated by digital media.

Zelensky: Ukraine to Replace Suspended US Aid Funding for Critical Humanitarian Projects



TPN Correspondent | Ukraine

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on Tuesday that several vital humanitarian projects in the country had been put on hold due to the US government's decision to freeze foreign aid. This includes key initiatives aimed at supporting veterans, local media, and various sectors reliant on international assistance since Russia's invasion began in February 2022.

Zelensky emphasized that despite the setback, Ukraine would prioritize these suspended programs by reallocating public funds where possible, ensuring the continuation of essential services for its citizens. His government has already begun assessing which projects need immediate attention, particularly those involving vulnerable groups such as children and veterans, as well as infrastructure protection efforts crucial to the country's survival amid ongoing conflict.

Since the outbreak of the war, Ukraine has heavily relied on foreign aid, particularly from the United States, which has contributed billions of dollars toward its defense and humanitarian needs. However, with the new administration under US President Donald Trump halting much of this financial support last week, Ukraine has had to find alternative means to sustain its efforts. Zelensky assured his country that despite the funding freeze, his government remains committed to addressing the needs of its citizens during this challenging period, with a clear focus on national priorities.

The US freeze has left Ukraine in a difficult position, prompting Zelensky to take immediate action to safeguard essential services. While the president's response underscores resilience in the face of adversity, it also highlights the growing reliance on both domestic resources and continued international assistance to navigate the prolonged conflict.

MP CM Mohan Yadav's Japan Visit Boosts State's Investment Prospects CM's Discussions with Japanese Officials and Companies Focus on Key Sectors

TPN Correspondent | Tokyo

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's ongoing Japan visit is yielding promising results as he engages with top Japanese officials and business leaders, emphasizing the state's vast potential for investment across various sectors. Yadav has highlighted the opportunities available for Japanese organizations in areas such as IT, healthcare, education, and railways, expressing confidence that the discussions are leading to fruitful collaborations.

On the second day of his tour, Yadav visited the Sensoji Temple and continued his series of high-profile meetings. His dialogue with Yuji Fukasawa, Chair of Keidanren's South Asia Committee and Chairman of East Japan Railway Company, was focused on potential collaborations involving Japanese railway technology. Fukasawa showed interest in visiting Madhya Pradesh to explore further opportunities.

Yadav also met with Daiki Arai, Director of A&D Medical, who expressed interest in establishing a

manufacturing unit in Madhya Pradesh within the year. Additionally, the CM's meeting with Japan's Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hisashi Matsumoto, aimed to enhance Indo-Japan cooperation at the state level.

This four-day visit is a part of the 'Invest in Madhya Pradesh' campaign, which seeks to position the state as a prime destination for foreign investment. The campaign is gearing up for the 'Invest Madhya Pradesh Global Investors Summit 2025', to be held in Bhopal in February.



Piyush Goyal Co-Chairs 11th India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting

Focuses on Expanding Trade, Investment, Cooperation Between India and Oman



11th India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting to strengthen bilateral trade and investment. India and Oman signed a protocol to amend the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. Goyal met with Omani business leaders to explore investment opportunities

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal visited Oman on January 27-28, where he co-chaired the 11th Session of the India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) with Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, Oman's Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion. The discussions were productive, focusing on several key areas of bilateral cooperation, including trade, investment, technology, food security, renewable energy, and more.

The two ministers emphasized the importance of expediting the India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which is in its advanced stages of negotiation. Once signed, the agreement will be a milestone in bilateral relations, with the potential to substantially increase trade and investments between the two nations. This move reflects both countries' commitment to enhancing economic ties and strengthening mutually

beneficial business relations.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the two countries signed a protocol to amend the India-Oman Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA), aligning it with international standards on cross-border taxation. This protocol aims to simplify tax procedures, reduce tax-related barriers, and promote greater cooperation between India and Oman in tax matters.

Piyush Goyal also held discussions with prominent Omani officials, including Sultan bin Salem Al Habasi, Minister of Finance, and Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ), to deepen economic cooperation. During the visit, the Minister engaged with the Indian and Omani business communities at the India-Oman Joint Business Council (JBC) meeting, hosted by the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) with support from FICCI. This meeting provided a platform

for exploring investment opportunities and incentives for businesses in both countries.

Additionally, Goyal attended a Business Roundtable hosted by the Indian Embassy in Muscat, where he met with CEOs and business leaders from Oman to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation. The minister also addressed the Future Leaders Programme at the Royal Academy of Management in Oman, where he shared India's growth story and insights on leadership and its role in shaping a better world.

The visit concluded with Goyal visiting cultural landmarks in Oman, including the Sultan Qaboos Grand Mosque and the historic Shiva Temple in Muscat, underscoring the deep-rooted cultural and people-to-people ties between India and Oman. The successful trip reinforced the strong foundations of India-Oman relations, setting the stage for future collaboration in trade and investment.

Odisha CM interacts with 100 company CEOs, seeks their cooperation



Odisha targets industrial growth across all 30 districts, with a focus on border areas. State's focus on infrastructure development to support industrialization, including railways, roads, and ports. Odisha's natural resources and mineral wealth highlighted as key assets for investment.

TPN Correspondent | Odisha
Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi held a special interaction with the CEOs of over 100 companies on Tuesday, discussing the state's industrialization goals and seeking their cooperation to drive economic growth. The interaction was part of the Utkarsh Odisha - Make in Odisha Conclave 2025, inaugurated earlier by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The CEOs represented diverse sectors, including steel, green energy, green ammonia, green hydrogen, renewable energy, chemicals, semiconductors, IT, and cement, among others. Majhi emphasized that now is the ideal time to invest in Odisha, citing the state's highest GDP growth in the country and the active support from the central government under Prime Minister Modi's leadership.

The Chief Minister reiterated that Odisha is a state of possibilities and invited entrepreneurs to invest across all 30 districts, particularly focusing on border regions like Malkangiri. He outlined the government's plans to develop infrastructure in railways, roads, and ports to support industrial growth in these areas, which would also provide substantial employment opportunities to local youth.

Majhi expressed confidence that with cooperation from the CEOs, the state would fulfill its industrialization goals and contribute to making Odisha a key player in India's economic development. The Prime Minister's speech at the inauguration of the conclave had also provided encouragement to the entrepreneurs, reinforcing Odisha's potential as a growth engine for a developed India.

Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja also addressed the session, assuring the CEOs that the state government would offer all necessary support and facilities for setting up industries in Odisha.

RG Kar case: SC asks hospitals to regularise doctors' absence during protests

Hospitals, including AIIMS Delhi, Directed to Address Unauthorised Absences

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Supreme Court of India directed hospitals, including AIIMS Delhi, to regularize the unauthorised absence of doctors who had participated in protests following the rape and murder of a doctor at RG Kar Hospital in Kolkata. The ruling came after a bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar considered submissions from a doctors' body, stating that some hospitals had already regularized the absences as per the court's August 22, 2024 order. However, some institutions, including AIIMS Delhi, had chosen not to follow suit, treating the absence as unjustified.

In the court's order, Chief Justice Khanna emphasized that, given the unique circumstances of the case, any doctor who



had returned to work after the order should have their absence regularized, with the period of protest not counted as absence from duty. The court also clarified that this decision was specific to these cases and should not be interpreted as setting a broader legal precedent for future cases.

The lawyer representing the

protesting doctors noted that the issue of treating the protest period as official leave had caused confusion and unrest among medical staff in certain hospitals. The court's intervention aims to provide clarity and ensure that doctors who had expressed their grievances but returned to their duties are not penalized for their participation in the protests.

Sri Lanka in Talks with Adani Group to Lower Wind Energy Price



TPN Correspondent | Delhi
Sri Lanka's government is in negotiations with the Adani Group to reduce the price of electricity to be supplied through two upcoming wind energy plants in the country. The discussions come after the government, under President Anura Dissanayake's leadership, revoked the power purchase agreement (PPA) with Adani Green Energy, although it clarified that the project itself is not cancelled.

The wind energy project, which

is set to establish plants with a total capacity of 484 MW in Sri Lanka's northern region, has been at the center of political and legal debate. Despite the revocation of the power purchase deal, Sri Lankan officials emphasized that the project would proceed, with only the tariff being subject to renegotiation.

Minister Nalinda Jayatissa stated that the government's goal was to lower the price per kilowatt-hour from the originally agreed-upon \$0.08 to around \$0.06, signaling ongoing discussions with Adani. The revocation follows President Dissanayake's pre-election pledge to cancel the deal, a position he has since softened, focusing instead on adjusting the terms of the agreement.

India Lodges Protest as Two Fishermen Injured in Sri Lankan Navy Firing

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

India has lodged a strong protest with Sri Lanka after two Indian fishermen sustained serious injuries due to accidental firing by the Sri Lankan Navy during the apprehension of 13 fishermen near Delft Island. Vice Admiral Kanchana Banagoda, the Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy, confirmed that the gun was discharged unintentionally during an altercation on board a fishing trawler.

The incident occurred early Tuesday when Sri Lankan naval personnel intercepted an Indian trawler allegedly engaged in illegal fishing in Sri Lankan waters. Banagoda stated that the fishermen did not respond to instructions to leave the area, leading the Navy to board their vessel. A scuffle ensued, during which a firearm was accidentally discharged, injuring two fishermen.

India responded swiftly, summoning Sri Lanka's acting high commissioner in New Delhi to lodge a formal protest. The Indian government condemned the use of force and demanded a thorough investigation. Meanwhile, the injured fishermen are receiving medical treatment, and tensions over repeated maritime conflicts between the two nations remain high.

Bangladesh to Review "Unequal Agreements" with India, Raises Border Issues

Bangladesh's interim government has announced plans to reassess agreements made with India during the tenure of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, calling some of them "unequal." Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (Retd) Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury confirmed that discussions would take place on these agreements, alongside key border security concerns.

Speaking ahead of a border security conference between India's Border Security Force (BSF) and the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), Chowdhury alleged that

Indian border regions were producing and smuggling Phensedyl—a banned narcotic syrup—into Bangladesh. He also stated

that future constructions of mosques and temples near the border would require joint approval from both governments.



The conference is expected to address Bangladesh's long-standing grievances over border incidents, including alleged killings of unarmed Bangladeshis and reported cases of detention by the BSF. With India-Bangladesh relations under scrutiny following Sheikh Hasina's exit, the talks could shape future diplomatic ties between the two neighbors.

A Comparative Analysis of the Unified Pension Scheme and the National Pension System

The union government has recently introduced the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for its employees, with further details expected in the coming weeks. While the complete picture of the scheme's benefits and implementation remains unclear, initial insights suggest key differences when compared to the existing National Pension System (NPS). Employees will need to assess their risk tolerance when deciding between the two schemes.

How Assured Pension is Calculated

Under the NPS, both the employee and government contribute a percentage of the employee's basic salary to their retirement account. Specifically, employees contribute 10%, while the government adds 14%. Similarly, under the UPS, employees contribute 10% of their salary, with the government matching this amount. However, the UPS introduces an additional 8.5% contribution by the government to a pooled fund, which is managed without employee input. The management of this pooled fund is a key risk factor, as its sustainability depends on the government's investment strategy and governance.

At retirement, the UPS presents three potential outcomes based on the value of the individual fund relative to the pooled fund:

Case 1: If the individual's fund equals the pooled fund, the employee will receive a lump sum and an assured pension, set at 50% of their last 12 months' salary, plus dearness relief.

Case 2: If the individual fund exceeds the pooled fund, the employee can take the excess amount alongside the assured pension.

Case 3: If the individual fund is smaller, the employee may need to contribute more or face a reduced pension.



For example, with a corpus of ₹50 lakh and an average salary of ₹45,000, an employee could receive a lump sum of ₹3.44 lakh and an assured pension of ₹22,500 per month, plus inflation adjustments. The employee's spouse is entitled to 60% of the pension after death.

NPS vs. UPS

In contrast, the NPS allows employees to invest their accumulated corpus in an annuity, with no assured pension. For instance, a ₹50 lakh corpus can generate an annual annuity of approximately ₹3.90 lakh or ₹32,500 per month. While the NPS annuity is not inflation-protected, employees can opt for an annuity with a 3% annual increment, which would lower the monthly payout to around ₹28,500. The NPS annuity is more flexible but lacks the spouse's pension benefit offered by the UPS.

Risk Factors

The NPS presents two main risks: low

returns on contributions and inflation erosion of pension value. While the NPS is vulnerable to inflation, particularly if the RBI's inflation targets are not met, it offers greater flexibility in terms of investment choices.

On the other hand, the UPS offers better inflation protection with its dearness relief component. However, the risk here lies in the sustainability of the pooled fund and the future government's commitment to pension payments. Should the pooled fund face losses, employees might not receive the expected benefits.

The choice between NPS and UPS largely depends on an individual's career timeline and risk tolerance. Employees in the NPS for a shorter period may benefit from the UPS's assured pension, while long-term NPS contributors might prefer the flexibility and potential higher returns of the NPS. Each system carries its own set of risks, and understanding the nuances of both will help employees make informed decisions for their retirement.



DeepSeek and the Thali Analogy: The Future of AI Disruption

The recent fluctuations in the US stock market have raised questions about the future of AI technology, especially after the debut of DeepSeek, a new open-source AI engine developed by a Chinese-backed hedge fund. To understand the implications, we can draw an analogy to India's diverse thali meals, which can provide insights into the way DeepSeek disrupts the AI landscape.

In India, a thali meal can be as humble as a roadside stall offering a simple, affordable meal for Rs 50 or as luxurious as an unlimited thali in a five-star restaurant for Rs 1,500. Despite the differences in ambiance and presentation, both meals offer a satisfying, complete experience. Similarly, DeepSeek, though built on open-source technology and developed at a fraction of the cost (\$5.6 million), provides a well-rounded AI experience that rivals expensive engines like ChatGPT. It's a more affordable, customizable option that gives users the flexibility to tweak its features, much like how a thali meal allows for second servings or extra sides.

DeepSeek can be likened to Android in the mobile world—an open-source platform that provides a low-cost alternative to Apple's iOS. Just as Android revolutionized the mobile market by offering an affordable and customizable operating system, DeepSeek aims to democratize access to artificial general intelligence (AGI), challenging the monopoly of costly AI solutions. Its entry into the AI space is akin to Linux's disruption of Windows in the 2000s, making powerful technology accessible to a broader range of users.

One of the main concerns with AGI is its enormous processing power requirements, which demand costly GPUs and vast amounts of electricity. Nvidia, the leader in this domain, saw a dramatic 17% drop in stock value, reflecting the market's uncertainty about the future of AI investments. DeepSeek's rise challenges this model, showing that powerful AI engines can be built without relying on top-tier GPUs or traditional training methods. This efficiency offers companies a chance to embrace generative AI at a fraction of the cost, making it an attractive option for businesses focused on profitability.

While the US still leads in creating core technologies for AI, the timing of DeepSeek's launch is significant. Its release raises questions about the balance of power in the AI space and may prompt the US to reconsider its approach to trade restrictions with China. DeepSeek's emergence signals the beginning of an exciting, more accessible AI era—one where affordability and innovation go hand-in-hand, creating a more inclusive technological future.

Reviving Yamuna: A Sabarmati Riverfront-Like Transformation for Delhi's Lifeline



As Delhi approaches its upcoming election, the Yamuna River, heavily polluted and foaming with toxic foam, has become a focal point of political debate. Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has accused Haryana of contaminating the river with ammonia, sparking sharp responses from the BJP. This ongoing political clash, however, underscores a deeper issue—the complete neglect of the Yamuna, which now resembles a vast sewage drain, rather than the lifeline it once was.

Amidst the political rhetoric, Union Home Minister Amit Shah's proposal to develop the Yamuna Riverfront akin to Ahmedabad's Sabarmati Riverfront has rekindled hope for a transformative change. But is such a makeover feasible for the Yamuna?

The Sabarmati Riverfront, now a shining example of urban renewal, underwent a remarkable transformation. Once a highly polluted water body, Sabarmati was revitalized through a combination of commercial, residential, and recreational

developments along its banks. The project began taking shape in the late 1990s and gained momentum in 2004, with the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation leading the charge. The project transformed a neglected stretch into a vibrant public space, with beautiful parks and promenades attracting both locals and tourists.

However, Sabarmati's journey to recovery was not without challenges. As a seasonal river, Sabarmati's waters were largely confined to the monsoon months, making it difficult to maintain water quality. In response, the Gujarat government released water from the Narmada River into Sabarmati, a step that stabilized the water levels, though the river still faces issues of pollution, especially downstream.

For the Yamuna, the task is even more daunting. Despite the implementation of three Yamuna Action Plans and the expenditure of over Rs 8,500 crore since 1993, the river remains choked with untreated sewage, industrial waste, and chemical pollutants. Both AAP and the

BJP have used the river's pollution as a political tool, blaming neighboring states like Haryana and Uttar Pradesh for discharging contaminants, while Delhi contributes to the problem by overusing the river for drinking, irrigation, and industrial needs.

Reviving the Yamuna to mirror the success of Sabarmati will be an arduous task. The river's unique challenges—ranging from flooding in the monsoons to low water levels in summer—make it difficult to replicate the Sabarmati model. However, with proper planning, expert consultation, and government support, the Yamuna can undergo a much-needed ecological overhaul. Removing encroachments, upgrading sewage treatment plants, and ensuring freshwater flow are critical steps.

Yet, just as the political uproar over the Yamuna pollution ebbs and flows with election cycles, so too does the commitment to solving its crisis. Without sustained effort and a long-term vision, the Yamuna will remain a toxic symbol of Delhi's environmental neglect.

Pakistan's Crisis of Perpetual Uncertainty: A Deepening National Challenge

Pakistan finds itself entrenched in a state of "perpetual uncertainty," with no clear path forward. The nation is facing a multifaceted crisis of immense proportions that threatens the very fabric of its existence. Political instability, internal security issues, and governance deficiencies intersect in a way that undermines the country's ability to recover or stabilize. At the heart of this crisis lies a pervasive economic unpredictability that continues to undermine the nation's future.

Despite receiving significant financial assistance from international creditors, both bilateral and multilateral, totaling billions of dollars over the past year, Pakistan's economic outlook remains grim. Rather than seeing meaningful recovery, the country's economy has stagnated, burdened by structural inefficiencies, a lack of investor confidence, and an absence of long-term policy solutions. This ongoing economic struggle starkly illustrates the failure of Pakistan's political and governance systems to enact meaningful reforms or deliver sustainable growth.

The roots of Pakistan's economic and political instability are deeply embedded in its military-dominated governance structure. The country's leadership, largely shaped by entrenched military elites, has failed to prioritize or implement the structural reforms needed to address the systemic issues facing the nation. Corruption among the elite remains pervasive, undermining efforts to address the country's challenges effectively. The continued mismanagement of public resources, coupled with a reluctance to engage in essential policy reforms, only exacerbates Pakistan's vulnerabilities, both politically and economically. The inefficiencies within the government are compounded by a security situation that has spiraled out of control, with increasing incidents of internal unrest and militant activity. The national security crisis not only distracts from the country's political and economic priorities but also creates an environment of fear and uncertainty that further erodes investor confidence and exacerbates social tensions.



Stock Market Rebounds as Nifty Holds 23,000; Sensex Surges 631 Points



Domestic stock markets gained on Wednesday. Despite mixed signals from Asian and international markets, the relief rally continued for the second consecutive day. Investors bought as the indices were already in the oversold zone. Shares from IT, media, realty and healthcare sectors supported the indices. The results of some companies were also impressive. With this, the Nifty 200 and the Sensex ended with gains of more than 600 points. It is noteworthy that the Nifty maintained the key support level of 23,000. If it sustains for a few more days, there is a possibility of a reversal. The BSE Sensex, which closed at 75,901 in the

previous session, opened at 76,138 today. It touched an intraday low at 75,975. It reached an intraday high at 76,599. It ended at 76,532 with a gain of 631 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,026 on Wednesday, reached a low of 22,976 and a high of 23,183. It gained 205 points in total and closed at 22,163. The Nifty Bank rose 299 points to settle at 48,165.

In the Nifty50, 42 companies gained and 9 lost. Shriram Finance, BEL, Tata Motors, SBI Life, Trent were the top gainers. ITC Hotels, Maruti, Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel, Britan-

nia were the biggest losers. All sectoral indices rose today except FMCG. IT, media, realty, healthcare, consumer durables, pharma, metal, bank, auto and finance indices performed well. Market breadth on NSE is in favor of buyers today. Out of 2909 stocks traded, 2311 gained. 528 lost. 14 stocks touched 52-week highs. 98 shares reached 52-week lows.

SRF's net profit in the third quarter increased by 7% from Rs.253 crore to Rs.271 crore. Bluestar's net profit increased



by 31% from Rs.100 crore to Rs.132 crore. The rupee weakened slightly against the dollar and settled at 86.55. Dr. Agarwal IPO received a response of 0.06 times on the first day. HSBC has given a reduce rating to SBI Card. The Cabinet has allocated Rs 16,300 crore for the Critical Mineral Development Mission. It also approved the rates for molasses-based ethanol. HSBC has given a buy rating to M&M Financial with a target price of Rs 320. Adani Power's net profit rose 7.4% to Rs 2940 crore. Credit Access

Grameen shares gained for the third consecutive day. JBM Auto's net profit rose 8.3%. Radico Khaitan's net profit rose 27% to Rs 95 crore from Rs 75 crore.

1. Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited (CHOLAFIN):



Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited is a prominent non-banking financial company (NBFC) in India, primarily focusing on vehicle finance, home loans, and small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) loans. The company has demonstrated consistent growth in its loan book and maintains a strong asset quality. As of recent data, the stock was trading at ₹1,223.05.

2. SBI Life Insurance Company Limited (SBILIFE): SBI Life Insurance is one of India's leading life insurance companies, offering a range



of individual and group insurance products. The company benefits from a strong distribution network, leveraging State Bank of India's extensive branch network. It has shown robust growth in new business premiums and maintains a healthy solvency ratio, reflecting its financial stability.

3. Mphasis Limited (MPHASIS):

Mphasis is an IT services company specializing in cloud and cognitive services, serving clients across various industries, including banking, financial services, and insurance. The company has reported steady revenue growth, driven by its focus on digital transformation services. The stock was recently priced at ₹3,009.30.



4. Zensar Technologies Limited (ZENSARTECH):

Zensar Technologies is a technology services and solutions company offering digital and infrastructure services. The company has been focusing



on expanding its digital capabilities and has seen growth in its key markets. The stock was trading at ₹850.50, with a market capitalization of ₹17,826.4 crore.

5. Zomato Limited (ZOMATO):



Zomato is a leading online food delivery platform in India, providing services like restaurant discovery, reviews, and food delivery. The company has experienced significant growth in its us

India's Coffee Exports Set to Drop 10% in 2025



India's coffee exports are set to decline by more than 10% in 2025, as the country faces a reduced crop and lower carry-forward stocks from last year's harvest, according to industry officials. Despite record-high prices for coffee beans, the decrease in production is expected to curb export volumes, impacting global supply.

India is the world's seventh-largest coffee producer, known primarily for its robusta beans, which are commonly used in instant coffee production. The country also cultivates arabica beans, a more expensive variety. The reduced export forecast comes at a time when the global coffee market is already grappling with tighter supplies due to diminished output from Brazil, the world's largest coffee producer.

Industry experts suggest that the smaller harvest in India, along with reduced stocks, will result in a significant dip in exports in 2025. According to Chengappa Pradhan, a researcher at Volcafe, the coffee trading division of ED&F Man, the lower crop yield is expected to cause export volumes to fall by more than 10% compared to 2024's record level of 295,402 metric tons.

While the rise in prices offers some financial relief for producers, the decline in coffee exports could have broader consequences for the global market. The combination of reduced production in India and Brazil, both key suppliers, has already placed strain on global coffee inventories, driving up futures prices.

India's coffee industry has been facing challenges in recent years, including adverse weather conditions and labor shortages, which have contributed to the lower production levels. Despite the ongoing price surge, the overall export outlook remains grim, with officials and traders bracing for a tougher year ahead.

As the 2025 season unfolds, stakeholders will be closely monitoring how global demand responds to the reduced supply from two of the world's largest coffee producers. The continued tightness in global coffee markets is expected to sustain high prices but also exacerbate supply concerns.

Sebi Rejects Digvijay Gaekwad's Request for Competing Open Offer for Religare Enterprises

On Tuesday, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) returned a letter from US-based entrepreneur Digvijay 'Danny' Gaekwad, who had sought permission to make a competing open offer for an equity stake in Religare Enterprises Limited (REL). Gaekwad's proposal aimed to acquire a 55% stake in REL at Rs 275 per share.

The rejection came after Sebi reviewed Gaekwad's request and determined that it did not qualify as an exemption application under Regulation 11 of the SEBI (Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers) Regulations, 2011. Regulation 11 covers the procedures and guidelines for acquisitions and open offers, including the conditions for exempting certain transactions from mandatory open offer requirements.

Religare Enterprises shared Sebi's response to Gaekwad's proposal with the stock exchanges on Tuesday, highlighting that the regulator had not granted permission for the competing open offer. According to Sebi's letter, Gaekwad's request did not meet the necessary criteria to be considered an exemption under the relevant regulations.

Gaekwad had made his intention known to acquire a substantial stake in REL, offering to purchase 55% of the company's equity at Rs 275 per share. This move came amid ongoing changes and developments within Religare Enterprises, which has attracted attention due to its strategic restructuring and shifting market dynamics.

The rejection of Gaekwad's proposal has significant implications for his plans to enter REL's ownership structure. Without Sebi's approval, he will not be able to proceed with the competing open offer as initially proposed.

This move underscores the importance of complying with the regulatory framework set by Sebi, especially in high-stakes corporate acquisitions. It also highlights the role of market regulators in maintaining transparency and fairness in the acquisition process, ensuring that the interests of all shareholders are safeguarded.



Maruti Suzuki Reports Strong Q3 Results for FY24, Revenue and Profit Surge



Maruti Suzuki India Ltd announced its third-quarter financial results for the period ending December 31, 2024, revealing significant growth in both revenue and profit. The company's consolidated revenue increased by 15.67%, reaching ₹38,764.3 crore, compared to ₹33,512.8 crore during the same period last year. This represented a rise of ₹5,251.5 crore in the October-December period, highlighting the automaker's robust performance.

The company's net profit also saw a healthy increase of 16.21%, rising to ₹3,726.9 crore from ₹3,206.8 crore in the previous year. This increase of ₹520.1 crore was driven by improved sales and operational efficiency.

Maruti Suzuki's total income for the third quarter of FY24 climbed 15.39%, or ₹5,312.8 crore, reaching ₹39,822 crore, up from ₹34,509.2 crore in Q3 of FY23. The increase in total income reflects the company's strong sales performance and market presence.

While the company's total expenses rose by 3.78%, or ₹1,284 crore, to ₹35,163.1 crore from ₹33,879.1 crore, this increase was significantly smaller compared to the revenue growth, indicating efficient cost management.

In terms of stock market performance, Maruti Suzuki shares saw a decline in value on Wednesday. At 3 pm IST, the company's stock was trading at ₹11,968.40 on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), reflecting a drop of 1.27%, or ₹154.50, from the previous trading session.

Despite the stock's decline, Maruti Suzuki's solid financial results for Q3 demonstrate its continued strength in the Indian automotive market. The company's ability to maintain revenue growth while keeping expenses in check suggests a resilient business model, positioning it well for future performance in the upcoming quarters.

ChatGPT Founder Altman is 'impressed' by DeepSeek, hints at new releases by OpenAI



OpenAI founder Sam Altman has responded to the rapid rise of Chinese AI startup DeepSeek, which has quickly gained attention in the AI community. Altman, who is credited with the success of ChatGPT, expressed both admiration and excitement over DeepSeek's impressive development, specifically their R1 reasoning model. Despite being a new competitor, Altman stated that OpenAI remains committed to continuing its own progress in AI, hinting at potential upcoming releases to rival DeepSeek.

In a series of posts on X (formerly Twitter), Altman acknowledged the impressive nature of DeepSeek's R1 model, particularly its value for the price. He emphasized that OpenAI would continue to push the boundaries of AI development, vowing to deliver superior models. "We will obviously deliver much better models, and it's invigorating to have a new competitor! We will pull up some releases," Altman wrote. He further noted that OpenAI remains focused on executing its research roadmap, stressing the importance of computing power to succeed

in the mission of advancing AI. "The world is going to want to use a LOT of AI, and really be quite amazed by the next-gen models coming," he added.

DeepSeek, founded in 2023 by Liang Wenfeng, the head of the Chinese hedge fund High-Flyer, has gained significant attention for its V3 large language model (LLM). Remarkably, the model has outperformed those of major US tech giants, such as OpenAI and Meta, but with far lower development costs. DeepSeek's V3 model was built using older Nvidia H800 chips, with the project costing approximately \$5.6 million — a fraction of the billions invested by companies like OpenAI, Meta, and Microsoft.

This low-cost approach to AI development has positioned DeepSeek as a serious competitor to Western tech companies, potentially forcing them to lower prices to remain competitive in the growing AI market. With DeepSeek challenging traditional assumptions about the cost and power required for AI models, the competition in the industry is heating up.

Rock Climber's Final Post Goes Viral After Fatal Fall In California

Micah Manalese, a 30-year-old rock climber from California, tragically lost her life during a hike along the Pine Creek Trail in Red Rocks Canyon, Nevada. The incident occurred while Micah was climbing with a friend. Several other climbers in the vicinity witnessed the fall. Despite the swift response from emergency teams, Micah was declared dead at the scene.

The accident took place on January 18, when the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) responded to two simultaneous rescue operations at the Cat in the Hat climbing area, a popular spot for outdoor enthusiasts. While rescuers worked to save Micah, they also assisted four other climbers who had become trapped by their ropes. Tragically, despite the efforts of emergency personnel, Micah could not be revived.

In her final Facebook post, shared just days before the accident, Micah reflected on her love for climbing and her recent return to the sport after a break. She wrote about reigniting her passion for sport climbing, which had been sidelined for the past few



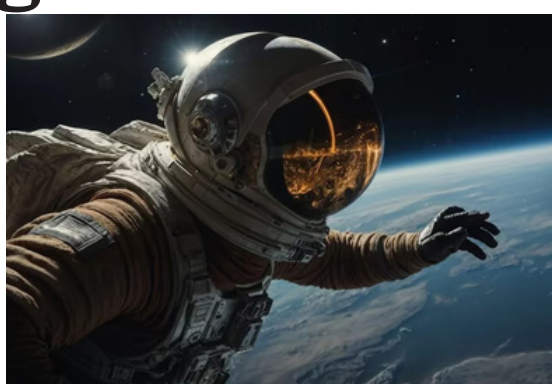
years. "I have been outside climbing since 2014 but in the past 4 years it's been on the back-burner. I love sport climbing and it was special for me to reignite this passion for myself this year. Thank you for all the delays and moments I got to spend outside. I am hungry for more," she shared, alongside photos of her past climbing adventures.

Micah's passion for the outdoors and climbing was evident to those who knew her, and her untimely death serves as a somber reminder of the risks inherent in the sport. Her memory will live on through the many adventures she shared with the climbing community and the friends who admired her spirit.

Spaceflight's Impact on Eye Health: Challenges for Mars Missions

Astronauts returning from extended space missions often report significant changes in eye health, largely due to prolonged exposure to microgravity. Research has shown that altered blood flow and pressure in space can lead to vision problems, particularly a condition known as spaceflight-associated neuro-ocular syndrome (SANS), which affects approximately 70% of astronauts on six- to twelve-month stays aboard the International Space Station (ISS). As plans for longer missions, such as trips to Mars, progress, understanding these changes becomes critical.

A recent study published in the IEEE Open Journal of Engineering in Medicine and Biology examined three key ocular parameters: ocular rigidity, intraocular pressure, and ocular pulse amplitude, in data from 13 astronauts who completed missions lasting between 157 and 186 days. The results revealed notable biome-



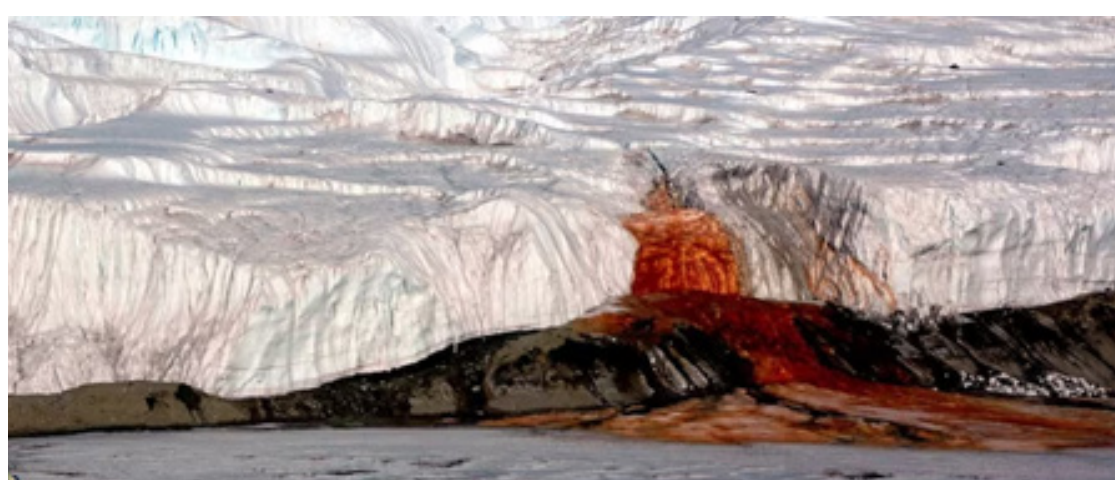
chanical changes: a 33% reduction in ocular rigidity, an 11% decrease in intraocular pressure, and a 25% decline in ocular pulse amplitude. These shifts were linked to symptoms like reduced eye size, optic nerve swelling, and retinal folds.

Dr. Santiago Costantino, an ophthalmologist at Université de Montréal, explained that microgravity affects blood flow and venous circulation in the eyes, which

could cause structural changes in the sclera and choroid. While most astronauts' vision returned to normal after their missions, some required corrective lenses during their recovery, raising concerns about the long-term impact of these changes.

These findings are particularly concerning for future space missions to Mars, which would last much longer than typical ISS stays. Experts stress the need for more research and preventive measures to ensure astronauts' health during extended missions. The study's findings offer an early warning, allowing researchers to identify astronauts at risk and develop targeted solutions to safeguard their vision during future space exploration. As space travel advances, addressing these ocular health challenges will be essential for the safety and success of missions to distant destinations like Mars.

Unveiling the Mystery of Antarctica's Blood Falls



Antarctica, one of the most remote and unexplored places on Earth, continues to captivate scientists and explorers alike. One of its most intriguing natural wonders is the Blood Falls, a crimson waterfall that flows from Taylor Glacier into West Lake Bonney. The striking red color of the waterfall against the vast, white landscape has fascinated observers since its discovery by geologist Thomas Griffith Taylor in 1911.

For over a century, researchers were puzzled by the waterfall's eerie red hue. Initially, many believed the color was caused by red algae in the water. However, recent studies have uncovered a more scientific explanation. The red color is due to the high iron content in the water. As the water emerges from the glacier and comes into contact with oxygen, the iron reacts with the air, turning the water a vivid, bloody crimson.

In addition to the color, the fact that the water remains liquid at such cold temperatures—around minus 19 degrees Celsius—has also baffled scientists. In 2003, it was

discovered that the water's high salt content, which is twice the level of seawater, lowers its freezing point, allowing it to stay liquid despite the freezing conditions.

Another fascinating aspect of the Blood Falls ecosystem is the life it supports. Despite the harsh conditions—no sunlight, no oxygen, and limited nutrients—bacteria thrive in this extreme environment. These microorganisms rely on chemosynthesis, a process where they obtain energy by breaking down sulfate and iron in the water, rather than through photosynthesis like most other life forms.

The origin of the water adds another layer of intrigue. According to researchers, about 1.5 million years ago, saltwater was trapped beneath a glacier. Over time, the glacier sealed the water in, and today, it bursts from under the ice in the form of the Blood Falls. This combination of geological and biological phenomena makes the Blood Falls a truly remarkable natural wonder in one of the world's most inhospitable places.

Millions Across Asia Celebrate the Year of the Snake

Hundreds of millions of people across Asia are celebrating the Lunar New Year, bidding farewell to the Year of the Dragon and ushering in the Year of the Snake. This marks a time of family reunions, prayers, and festive celebrations throughout East and Southeast Asia.

In China, the 2025 Spring Festival is marked by eight consecutive public holidays, offering families the chance to gather, share meals, and engage in traditional activities like setting off fireworks. Train stations and airports have been bustling with travelers, as millions return home for the annual migration, expected to reach record numbers. High streets, shopping malls, and homes are adorned with red banners, which are believed to ward off evil spirits and bring good fortune.

On the island of Taiwan, temples were packed on New Year's Day as people of all ages made offerings of fruit, sweets, and incense in hopes of a prosperous year. Chen Ching-yuan, a visitor to Taipei's Longshan Temple, shared that her prayers were simple: "I wish for a smooth, peaceful, safe, and healthy year," she said. Elderly worshippers, like Lin Yu-soon, expressed how visiting the temple with family provided spiritual solace.

Some temple-goers participated in an exciting tradition of racing to be the first to release incense for good luck. Kao Meng-shun, who won the event at



Fusing Temple in Yunlin County, explained his motivation: "While I'm still young and have the energy, it's the perfect time to take action and make the most of it."

Travel disruptions were caused by heavy snowfall in South Korea, where thousands of people struggled with delayed train and bus services while traveling to visit family. Traffic on major highways, including the route from Seoul to Busan, was severely impacted, with some journeys taking over seven hours.

In a symbolic gesture, Chinese astronauts aboard the Tiangong space station also joined in the festivities, sending heartfelt New Year's greetings in a video shared by the China Manned Space Agency.

With the spirit of celebration transcending borders, the Year of the Snake has begun with joy, prayers, and excitement across Asia.

Steve Smith, Usman Khawaja Slam Unbeaten Tons as Australia Dominate Sri Lanka in 1st Test

Australia took firm control on Day 1 of the first Test against Sri Lanka, thanks to unbeaten centuries from Steve Smith (104) and Usman Khawaja (147)**. The duo shared a formidable 195-run stand, guiding Australia to 330-2 in 81.1 overs before rain ended play prematurely.

The highlight of the day was Steve Smith's milestone, as he became the 15th batsman in Test history and only the fourth Australian to surpass 10,000 Test runs. He reached the milestone with a single off Prabath Jayasuriya, later bringing up his 35th Test century in dominant fashion.

Khawaja, playing his first Test on Sri Lankan soil, ended his 17-match century drought with a brilliant knock. His 16th Test hundred came with a flick to fine leg off Asitha Fernando, showcasing his class and resilience. Though he had some lucky escapes, including an unreviewed edge at 74, he made Sri Lanka pay with his patient batting. Earlier in the day, Travis Head (57 off 40 balls) provided a blistering start, smashing 10 fours and a six before mistiming a shot against Jayasuriya. Marnus Labuschagne (20) fell to Jeffrey Vandersay, leaving Australia at 135-2



before Smith and Khawaja took control. Sri Lanka missed crucial chances, including dropped catches of both Smith and Khawaja. With Australia fielding three specialist spinners, they now hold a strong advantage as the pitch is expected to deteriorate. Day 2 promises an exciting contest as Sri Lanka looks to fight back.

Sachin Tendulkar Returns to Cricket in International Masters League (IML)



Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar is set to return to action, leading Team India in the inaugural International Masters League (IML). The highly anticipated tournament, featuring six teams—India, Australia, England, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and the West Indies—kicks off on February 22, 2025. The opening match will witness India vs. Sri Lanka, with Tendulkar and Kumar Sangakkara leading their respective teams. The tournament will be broadcast live on JioStar's Disney+ Hotstar, Colors Cineplex (SD & HD), and Colors Cineplex Superhits, with all matches starting at 7:30 PM IST. Speaking about his return, Tendulkar expressed excitement, stating, "IML will be a celebration of cricket's unique and enduring legacy. I can't wait to step back onto the field with my contemporaries in a league that will be intense and competitive." Similarly, Sangakkara described IML as a tribute to cricket's timeless charm, adding, "It's a wonderful opportunity for former cricketers to relive old rivalries and reconnect with fans." The league aims to provide a nostalgic experience for cricket fans while allowing veteran players to showcase their skills once again. With top-class broadcasting and expert commentary, IML promises to be an exciting addition to the cricketing calendar.

Kidambi Srikanth Cruises Into 2nd Round of Thailand Masters BWF Super 300

Former World No. 1 Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth advanced to the second round of the Thailand Masters BWF Super 300 tournament with a straight-game victory over Israel's Daniil Dubovenko on Wednesday. Srikanth dominated the match, winning 21-13, 21-18 in the men's singles opening round. This marks Srikanth's second consecutive victory over Dubovenko, having previously beaten him at the 2024 Macau Open in September. In the next round, Srikanth will face Hong Kong's Jason Gunawan.

Mixed Results for Indian Shuttlers

- S Sankar Muthusamy Subramanian battled past Malaysia's June Wei Cheam in a three-game thriller, winning 15-21, 21-15, 21-19. He will next face Indonesia's Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo.
- Ayush Shetty suffered a first-round exit, los-

- ing to Malaysia's Jing Hong Kok 15-21, 17-21.
- Mithun Manjunath also bowed out after falling to Sholeh Aidil 14-21, 13-21.

Doubles Success for India

- In mixed doubles, Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde advanced to the second round with a 21-8, 21-16 victory over Thailand's Weeraphat Phakjarung and Sararat Chueboca. They will next face another Thai duo, Ratchapol Makkasasithorn and Nat-tamon Laisuan.
- In men's doubles, Ruben Kumar and Hariharan secured a comfortable 21-18, 21-12 win over Pannawat Jamtubtim and Ratchapol Makkasasithorn.

Srikanth's dominant start in the tournament raises hopes for a deep run in the competition as he looks to reclaim his top form.



Gukesh Triumphs Over Leon Mendonca to Secure Sole Lead at Tata Steel Masters

Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh delivered a stellar performance, defeating compatriot Leon Luke Mendonca in the ninth round of the Tata Steel Masters, securing the sole lead in the tournament. With this victory, Gukesh's tally rose to 6.5 points out of nine, putting him ahead of Uzbek Grandmaster Nodirbek Abdusattorov and Slovenian Vladimir Fedoseev, who both stand at six points.

On a day filled with intense battles, R Praggnanandhaa suffered his first defeat in the tournament against Dutch Grandmaster Anish Giri, while veteran P Harikrishna also faced a setback, losing to Fedoseev. Despite the lead, Gukesh remained focused, stating, "I'm happy that I played a good game today, but there are still four rounds left, so I'm not thinking much about the standings. I'm just happy with how I'm playing."

Gukesh's remarkable consistency in the tournament has positioned him as a strong contender for the title. Meanwhile, Praggnanandhaa, who now has 5.5 points, shares the fourth spot.

Round 9 Results:

- Anish Giri (NED, 4.5) beat R Praggnanandhaa (IND, 5.5)
- D Gukesh (IND, 6.5) beat Leon Luke Mendonca (IND, 2.5)
- Vladimir Fedoseev (SLO, 6) beat P Harikrishna (IND, 4)



- Jorden van Foreest (NED, 3.5) drew with Max Warmerdam (NED, 3.5)
- Wei Yi (CHN, 5) drew with Arjun Erigaisi (IND, 2.5)
- Alexey Sarana (SRB, 5) drew with Vincent Keymer (GER, 3.5)
- Fabiano Caruana (USA, 5) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (UZB, 6)

With four rounds remaining, all eyes are on Gukesh as he aims to maintain his lead and claim victory at the prestigious tournament.

Novak Djokovic Withdraws from Serbia's Davis Cup Squad Due to Injury

Tennis legend Novak Djokovic has withdrawn from Serbia's Davis Cup first-round qualifying tie against Denmark due to a hamstring injury, the Serbian Tennis Federation (TSS) confirmed.

Djokovic, who sustained the injury during his Australian Open semi-final against Alexander Zverev, was scheduled to represent Serbia in the Jan 31 - Feb 2 match in Copenhagen. However, his fitness concerns forced him to withdraw.

Following his retirement from the Australian Open, the 24-time Grand Slam champion responded to criticism by sharing an MRI scan of his left hamstring on social media, dismissing doubts about his injury.

Despite Djokovic's absence, Serbia's Davis Cup captain Viktor Troicki remains optimistic, stating, "We are weakened without Novak, but we are still aiming for victory. Denmark has a great player in Holger Rune, but I believe in my team."

Djokovic, 37, was instrumental in leading Ser-



bia to their first-ever Davis Cup title in 2010, securing a historic victory over France in Belgrade. His absence presents a challenge for Serbia, but the team is determined to fight for qualification.

Hockey India Announces 24-Member Women's Squad for FIH Pro League 2024-25

Hockey India has announced the 24-member Indian Women's Hockey Team for the Bhubaneswar leg of the FIH Pro League 2024-25, scheduled from February 15 to 25 at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium. India will compete against England, the Netherlands, Spain, and Germany, facing each team twice. Their campaign begins with a match against England on February 15.

The squad includes goalkeepers Savita and Bichu Devi Kharibam, while defenders Sushila Chanu, Pukhrambam, Nikki Pradhan, Udita, Jyoti, Ishika Chaudhary, and Jyoti Chhatri bolster the backline. Midfielders Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Neha, Manisha Chauhan, Salima Tete, Sunelita Toppo, Lahremsiami, Baljeet Kaur, and



Sharmila Devi bring balance to the squad. Forwards include Navneet Kaur, Mumtaz Khan, Preeti Dubey, Rutaja Dadaso Pisal, Beauty Dungleung, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, and Vandana Katariya.

Dynamic midfielder Salima Tete will lead the team as captain, with Navneet Kaur as vice-captain.

Head coach Harendra Singh emphasized the blend of experience and young talent, stating, "We have built a balanced squad with strong options in every position. I am eager to see how our young players perform against top-tier competition."

India hopes to make a strong impact in the tournament as they prepare to face the best teams in the world.



“Agent Guy 001” will release on January 31st in Telugu states by Deepa Arts Banner

The Hollywood dubbed film ‘Agent Guy 001’ Directed by David Andersson, produced by Erik Andersson, screenplay by Baltazar Plateau and David Andersson will be released to the telugu audience. Anton Cloud Jumper Gustin provided the music for the film, while Dennis Andersson acted as the production designer. Anton Carlsson worked as the cinematographer. Baltazar Plateau, Anton Sjolund, Milton Bjornegren, Knut Westbacka and Omar Myrza are playing key roles in this film. P Srinivasa Goud will produce the film in Telugu and P Hemanth will be the associate producer. The film is releasing through Deepa arts banner on 31st January in both Telugu States.



for the mayor’s seat as well as some adventures. The quality of the film is going to be very clearly understood through the production values in the trailer.

The upcoming project features an impressive cast, including Baltazar Plateau, Anton Sjolund, Milton Bjornegren, Knut Westbacka, and Omar Myrza. Directed by David Andersson and produced by Erik Andersson, the film’s screenplay is crafted by Baltazar Plateau and David Andersson. Anton Carlsson handles the cinematography, while Anton Cloud Jumper Gustin composes the music. Production design is led by Dennis Andersson. On the Telugu front, the film is backed by producer P. Srinivasa Goud, with P. Hemanth as the co-producer. Madhu VR serves as the PRO, and Digital Dukanam manages digital media promotions.

However, if you look at the trailer of this film, which has already been released in Telugu, it is clear that this film is going to be another amazing action and adventure film on the lines of James Bond films. Trailer looks like a political drama revolving around money. There are major fights

Vikrant Massey to Play Villain in Don 3 Alongside Ranveer Singh

Bollywood actor Vikrant Massey, who recently earned acclaim for his role in the movie 12th Fail, has landed an exciting opportunity in the world of Bollywood’s most iconic film franchises. The actor is all set to play the villain in Don 3, marking his entry into the prestigious series.



The Don franchise, which has captivated audiences with its thrilling plotlines and high-octane action, has so far been led by Bollywood Badshah Shah Rukh Khan, with Priyanka Chopra playing the female lead. The first two films, directed by Farhan Akhtar, were major hits, and now, the third installment is under development. However, in a significant change for this new chapter, Farhan Akhtar will feature Ranveer Singh as the new Don, replacing Shah Rukh Khan.

The film, which is currently in pre-production, is expected to go into shooting soon. Exciting news has surfaced recently about the casting of Vikrant Massey, who is reportedly set to portray the antagonist in Don 3. While this news has created a buzz on social media, an official confirmation from the filmmakers is still awaited.

Vikrant Massey and Ranveer Singh have previously worked together in the 2013 film Lootera, and their reunion in Don 3 has sparked interest among fans. With Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani collaborating again as producers, Don 3 is expected to be a pan-India film, set to appeal to a wide range of audiences.

As the third installment of the Don franchise gears up for production, fans are eagerly awaiting further updates, especially about the film’s plot and the chemistry between Ranveer Singh and Vikrant Massey. With the promise of a fresh and exciting twist in the iconic series, Don 3 is already generating significant anticipation in the Bollywood industry.

Jana Nayagan: Thalapathy Vijay’s Movie Overseas Rights Sold for Record Price

Kollywood superstar Thalapathy Vijay, who is currently juggling his political aspirations and his filmmaking career, has once again created a buzz in the entertainment world with his upcoming movie Jana Nayagan. Known for his dedicated fan base, Vijay is making waves both in Tamil Nadu’s political scene and the film industry. While he prepares for his political journey with his party, his focus remains on completing Jana Nayagan, which promises to be a treat for his fans.



Directed by H. Vinod, the filmmaker behind the hit movie Khaki, Jana Nayagan (translated as ‘People’s Leader’) has already gained significant attention. The film’s first look, released as a Republic Day gift, and its title have been met with positive responses from fans and critics alike.

In a recent development, it has been reported that the

overseas distribution rights of Jana Nayagan have been sold for a staggering Rs. 75 crores, a record-breaking amount that speaks volumes about Vijay’s global popularity. This sale showcases the immense international demand for Vijay’s films, further cementing his position as one of Kollywood’s top stars. The news of the record-breaking price for the overseas rights has

gone viral, highlighting the movie’s worldwide potential.

The film’s music is being composed by the popular Anirudh, adding to the anticipation surrounding its release. Produced by the renowned KVN Production banner, Jana Nayagan stars Mamita Baiju, known for her role in Premala, as the female lead. The makers

have announced that the film will have a worldwide release in October 2025, further building excitement among fans.

With such a significant deal in place for its overseas rights, Jana Nayagan is poised to become one of the most highly anticipated films in Kollywood, with Vijay’s star power extending well beyond Indian shores.



Revolution in the Making: Sivakarthikeyan’s SK 25 Pre-Look Sparks Curiosity

Kollywood actor Sivakarthikeyan is all set to captivate audiences with a series of exciting films, and one of the most anticipated projects in his lineup is *SK 25*, directed by Sudha Kongara. This upcoming period drama has already created a buzz, especially with the release of its intriguing pre-look, which has raised the curiosity of fans and movie enthusiasts alike.

The pre-look, released with the tagline “Revolution waits for no one... We are going to start the revolution tomorrow,” has created an electrifying atmosphere. The announcement of the teaser, set to drop tomorrow at 4 PM, only adds to the excitement surrounding the film. From the pre-look, it is evident that Sivakarthikeyan is taking on a bold, fresh role that promises to bring something unique to the big screen. The glimpses shared so far have left fans eagerly awaiting more.

SK 25 is a period film set to showcase a revolution, and the film promises a strong narrative backed by an exciting ensemble cast. Sivakarthikeyan

will be joined by Srileela as the female lead, with Jayam Ravi and Atharva Murali playing pivotal roles. The talented GV Prakash Kumar is composing the music, further heightening expectations for the film’s audio-visual experience.

Sivakarthikeyan has already expressed his excitement about *SK 25*, sharing that the promo shoot has been completed. He spoke fondly of working with Jayam Ravi, mentioning how happy Ravi was to play a powerful villain role. Sivakarthikeyan added that he had been a fan of Jayam Ravi’s films during his college days, making their collaboration even more special. The dynamic between the two actors, especially in their upcoming fight sequences, has fans eagerly anticipating their performances.

With its period setting, powerful storyline, and talented cast, *SK 25* is shaping up to be a revolutionary film that could become a game-changer in Tamil cinema. Fans are in for a thrilling ride when the teaser drops tomorrow!

Vijay Antony’s 25th film titled Parashakthi in Telugu

Multifaceted Tamil actor Vijay Antony is gearing up for the release of his milestone 25th film, now officially titled Sakthi Thirumagan in Tamil. Directed by Arun Prabu Purushothaman, known for his acclaimed film Aruvi, the movie will also be released in Telugu under the title Parashakthi.

The film’s first-look poster, unveiled alongside the title announcement, shows Vijay Antony in a gripping pose, sitting on the floor while holding a gun, hinting at the intense and action-packed nature of the film. This teaser gives a glimpse into the genre and tone of Parashakthi, further piquing the curiosity of fans.



In this much-anticipated project, Vijay Antony is not only playing the lead role but also taking on the responsibilities of producing and composing the music, showcasing his multifaceted talents. This combination of acting, music, and production reflects his growing prominence in the Tamil film industry.

The film is slated for release this summer, and more details regarding the plot, cast, and crew are expected to be revealed in the coming days. With his 25th film, Vijay Antony is ready to captivate audiences with yet another memorable performance, and the film’s cross-language release underscores its pan-Indian appeal. Fans of the actor and the genre can look forward to a gripping cinematic experience this summer with Parashakthi.