



Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
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Aero India, ‘Maha Kumbh of collaboration’, starts in Bengaluru



Aero India 2025 showcases India’s industrial and technological advancements. Rajnath Singh calls for deeper global defence cooperation. India’s defence exports exceed ₹21,000 crore, total production at ₹1.25 lakh crore. Russian Su-57 and American F-35 make their debut at Aero India.

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated Aero India 2025 at Air Force Station Yelahanka, Bengaluru, calling it the “Maha Kumbh of collaboration” and highlighting India’s growing strength in defence and aerospace. The event began with a spectacular display of advanced defence technology, including aerobatic performances by fighter jets and helicopters. Singh emphasized that Aero India aims to showcase India’s industrial and technological advancements while strengthening strategic ties with friendly nations. He stressed that India’s defence partnerships should go beyond transactional buyer-seller relationships to co-development and industrial collaboration. “Peace cannot be achieved in a weak state of security. The banyan tree of peace can only stand on the roots of strength,” he said. He highlighted India’s record-breaking growth

in defence manufacturing, with total production surpassing ₹1.25 lakh crore and exports crossing ₹21,000 crore. Singh also noted India’s historical commitment to peace, stating, “We have never attacked any country nor engaged in power rivalries. Our partnerships are key to global peace and stability.” The event features 452 Indian exhibitors and 57 foreign participants, with defence ministers and senior officials from multiple countries attending. Notably, Aero India 2025 marks the debut of two advanced fifth-generation fighter aircraft—the Russian Su-57 and the American F-35 Lightning II. Singh compared the event to the Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj, stating, “While Maha Kumbh is the Kumbh of introspection, Aero India is the Kumbh of research. Maha Kumbh focuses on internal strength, Aero India is about external strength.”



Rajnath Singh inaugurates Invest Karnataka-2025 meet

Karnataka targets ₹10 lakh crore in investment proposals.

75+ industry leaders, 25+ technical sessions

10+ country sessions featured.

19 country partners to engage in investment and trade discussions.

9 dedicated country pavilions to showcase bilateral investment opportunities.

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the Global Investors’ Meet, Invest Karnataka-2025, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The three-day summit will feature investment agreements, policy announcements, seminars, and startup challenges. The three-day event will witness agreements, a series of seminars, policy announcements and challenges for startups. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his Deputy D K Shivakumar, Karnataka Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil, Union Minister for Food and Civil Supplies Pralhad Joshi and Karnataka Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh were among those present on the occasion. Mahindra and Mahindra Group chairperson Anand Mahindra, JSW Group chairperson Sajjan Jindal, Biocon chairperson Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Kirloskar Systems chairperson Geetanjali Kirloskar, Hero Future Energies chairperson Rahul Munjal attended the event. The three-day global investors’ meet aimed at highlighting the southern state’s strategic advantages in fostering innovation, industrial development and global partnerships will officially kickstart on February 12, following Tuesday’s grand inaugural. With the theme “Reimagining Growth”, Invest Karnataka-2025, expects investment proposals worth ₹10 lakh crore, with a target of realising at least 70 per cent of these commitments, according to Karnataka Minister M B Patil. Featuring more than 75 marquee speakers, over 25 technical sessions, more than 10 country sessions, and SME Connect discussions, the state’s flagship Global Investors Meet (GIM) will provide deep insights into global economic trends, emerging technologies, and resilience strategies, officials said. Nineteen country partners will engage in investment and trade discussions during the summit, Patil has said, adding that 9 dedicated country pavilions will showcase opportunities for bilateral cooperation and investment.

Rahul Gandhi and Kharge Skip Karnataka Summit

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi will not attend the inaugural function of the investors’ summit in Bengaluru on Tuesday evening, citing their ongoing commitments in Parliament. Jairam Ramesh, Congress General Secretary for communication, informed that both leaders are preoccupied with the continuing Budget debate in the Parliament and have regretted their inability to participate in the event. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Ramesh explained, “Both the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, are extremely tied up in Parliament today on account of the continuing debate on the Budget. Hence, they have regretted their inability to attend the inauguration of the Karnataka

Investor Summit this evening in Bengaluru.” Ramesh further conveyed the leaders’ best wishes for the summit and expressed confidence that it would be productive and successful, highlighting Karnataka’s unique competitive and comparative advantages. However, sources suggest that the absence of Kharge and Gandhi may not only be due to their Parliament schedules. Reports indicate dissatisfaction over the presence of Union Ministers and prominent BJP leaders at the event organized by the Congress-led Karnataka government. The two Congress leaders reportedly felt uncomfortable with the political significance of BJP figures being given prominence during the summit, leading to their decision to skip the inauguration. Despite their absence, the Congress party is likely to remain focused on ensuring that Karnata



taka continues to foster its investment-friendly environment, even as the party leaders prioritize their responsibilities in Parliament.

Growing demand for rollback of Bengaluru Metro fare hike

Highlights

Public and political leaders demand rollback of Metro fare hike.

AIDSO seeks 50% fare concession for students.

IT Minister Priyank Kharge blames Centre for the hike.

BJP protests at key Metro stations.



2 PAGE

Parameshwara backs police action on Ed Sheeran’s street gig

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Home Minister Dr. G Parameshwara has defended the Cubbon Park police for halting British singer Ed Sheeran’s surprise performance on Church Street in Bengaluru. He clarified that Sheeran was only permitted to perform at a designated venue in Madavara, not on Church Street. “Sheeran was given permission to perform at a specific venue. However, he suddenly started singing on Church Street, which could have led to chaos due to his popularity. The police intervened to prevent any possible disorder,” Parameshwara



said. Sheeran’s impromptu Sunday morning performance, where he sang his hit song Shape of You, was stopped by the police, citing the absence of necessary permissions. The police stated that they received a public complaint about the disturbance, but no formal case was registered against the singer.

Tejasvi Surya raises Bengaluru Metro fare hike issue in Lok Sabha



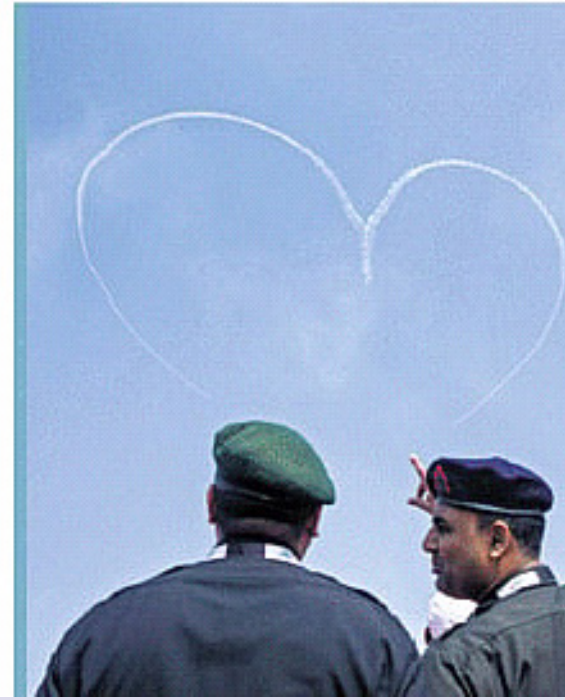
4 PAGE

Surya Kiran paints Bengaluru skies with tricolour at Aero India

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team (SKAT) reintroduced the tricolour trail at Aero India 2025 after a 13-year gap, marking its first display on a Hawk aircraft. The 11-minute performance on Monday featured new maneuvers, including a DNA formation, and showcased continuous aerial sequences with minimal gaps between stunts. Previously, the tricolour was displayed with the Kiran Mk II aircraft, but this year, the team modified the Hawk Mk 132 to dispense the national colours throughout the display, culminating in the Jai Hind maneuver. SKAT has also extended its performance duration to 40-44 minutes, up from 30-35 minutes.

Meanwhile, Aero India 2025 also hosted the Russian Su-57, a fifth-generation stealth fighter that captivated the audience with its advanced agility and combat capabilities. However, the IAF's Sarang team was absent this year as all Dhruv helicopters remain grounded following a crash in January.



HAL's Dhruv-NG makes debut at Aero India in Bengaluru

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) showcased the Dhruv-(ALH)-NG for the first time at Aero India on Monday, marking its maiden entry at the air show. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, after inaugurating the event, visited the HAL and DRDO stalls, where he reviewed new technology and aircraft, including the newly unveiled Dhruv-NG.

A HAL spokesperson stated that while the aircraft is designed for civil use, it has yet to be utilized commercially. However, the Indian Air Force has expressed interest in procuring it. "They have shown interest, but details cannot be disclosed until finalization," the official said.

Weighing 5,500kg, the Dhruv-NG has a maximum cruise speed of 250 kmph and a large fuel tank, making it suitable for heli-tourism (9-14 seats), VIP travel, offshore operations, medical services, and disaster relief. Its seating capacity can be customized from 6 to 14.

The helicopter is equipped with advanced systems, including a passenger address system, passenger headsets, an area navigation system, a terrain awareness warning system, a traffic collision avoidance system, a satellite flight following system, and automatic dependent surveillance broadcast. The Dhruv MK-3 variant also features emergency flotation gear, a crashworthy structure, fuel tanks, and life rafts.

Bodies of Four Kumbh Mela Accident Victims Arrive in Belagavi

TPN Correspondent | Belagavi

The bodies of four Belagavi residents who lost their lives in an accident while traveling to the Kumbh Mela arrived in Belagavi on Sunday. Heartbroken families and locals gathered near Bhutaramanahatti village on National Highway-48 to receive their loved ones. A group of 18 people had set out from Belagavi for the Kumbh Mela, but on February 8, their journey turned tragic when an accident in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, claimed six lives and left 17 others seriously injured. The deceased from Belagavi were identified as Sagar Shahapurkar (55), a driver from

Basavan Galli; Neeta Badamanji (50) from Kranti Nagar in Benakanahalli Gram Panchayat limits; Sangeeta Maitre from Chhatrapati Shivajinagar; and Jyoti Khandekar from Vadgaon. Belagavi South MLA Abhay Patil coordinated with Indore district authorities to ensure the safe return of the injured and the deceased. The bodies were received at Bhutaramanahatti by MLA Patil, Sri Ram Sene Hindustan president, and Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) leader Ramakant Konduskar. Later, they were taken to their respective localities, where Indore officials formally handed them over to their families.



Karnataka resubmits microfinance ordinance to Governor with clarifications



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The Karnataka government has re-submitted the Karnataka Micro Loan and Small Loan (Prevention of Coercive Actions) Ordinance, 2025, to Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot with clarifications on his concerns, urging him to reconsider and approve the order. The ordinance itself remains unchanged, with officials asserting that it does not violate basic rights, neglect lender interests, or restrict lawful loan recovery.

On Friday, Governor Gehlot had returned the ordinance, raising concerns over certain provisions, particularly the penalties and punishments prescribed for violations. He noted that the ordinance imposes a punishment of up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to ₹5 lakh for contravention of Section 8, categorizing the offences as non-bailable. The governor argued that the ₹5 lakh penalty was excessive when the maximum loan amount allowed under the ordinance is ₹3 lakh, deeming the provision against natural justice. He also pointed out that the punishment term was disproportionate compared to existing laws governing similar offences. Additionally, he observed that the ordinance appeared to favor borrowers while adversely affecting lenders and suggested that the bill could be tabled in the upcoming budget session for legislative discussion. Defending the ordinance, Law Minister H.K. Patil stated that it does not infringe on fundamental rights and ensures a balance between borrowers and lenders. He clarified that the ordinance only prohibits unregistered or unlicensed lenders from issuing loans, charging compound or penalty interest, or pursuing legal action to recover such loans. "If illegal lenders claim that recovering loans through coercion is a basic right, it would mean that the Constitution is protecting those engaged in unlawful activities," Patil said. Addressing the governor's objection to the ₹5 lakh fine, Patil explained that the penalty is not based on the loan amount but on the harassment inflicted on borrowers by unauthorized lenders. His response has been formally included in the clarifications submitted to the governor along with the ordinance.

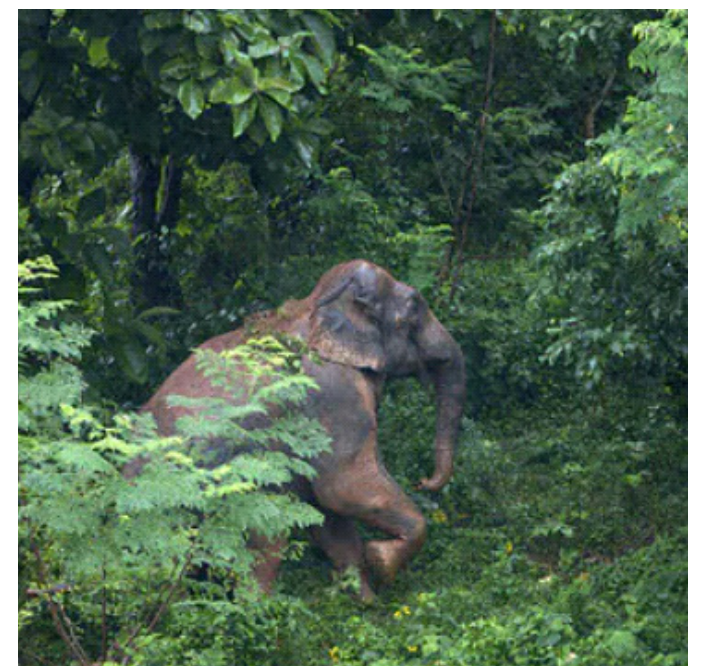
Man Fined ₹25,000 for Provoking Elephant Near Bandipur

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka

A man from Gundlupet was fined ₹25,000 by the forest department for allegedly provoking a wild elephant near Bandipur National Park in an attempt to take a photo, violating wildlife protection guidelines, officials said on Monday. The incident, which occurred on Saturday evening, was captured on video and widely shared on social media. The footage purportedly shows 32-year-old Shahul Hameed shouting and waving his hands at the elephant on the Gundlupet-Ooty highway, causing distress to the animal. The elephant had wandered onto the road in search of food when Hameed allegedly tried to provoke it for a photograph, officials added.

"We were alerted on Sunday morning after the video spread online," said Bandipur Tiger Reserve project director B Prabhakaran. "Once we identified him, we

detained him on Sunday noon, imposed a ₹25,000 fine, and released him after taking a bond," he added. Officials confirmed that Hameed had violated wildlife protection guidelines by disturbing the elephant. Environmental activist Joseph Hoover condemned the act, calling for stricter action against such reckless behavior. "The elephant was merely searching for food near the highway, but the man deliberately tried to enrage it for the sake of photos. This is unacceptable. He should have been booked under stringent laws to set an example," Hoover stated. In a statement, Hameed later expressed regret, saying, "I was on a trip to Bandipur National Park when I took photos and videos of the elephant. I realized my mistake and have paid the fine. People should respect wildlife and avoid disturbing animals for photographs."



US diplomat highlights deepening Indo-US defence ties at Aero India 2025

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

US Chargé d'Affaires Jorgan K Andrews reaffirmed his country's commitment to strengthening defence and security cooperation with India at the inauguration of the US Partnership Pavilion at Aero India 2025 on Monday. "President Trump and Prime Minister Modi have emphasized the need to enhance defence trade between our nations. From small startups to major defence public sector undertakings and a growing private sector, bilateral defence trade is deepening," Andrews stated. He highlighted the US defence industry's commitment to partnering with India, providing



high-quality, technologically advanced equipment known for its operational reliability. As one of the largest international exhibitors at Aero India 2025, the US is showcasing next-generation aircraft, advanced avionics, unmanned systems, space technologies, and cutting-edge defence capabilities through its leading aerospace and defence firms.

1st Page Cont..

GROWING DEMAND FOR ROLLBACK OF BENGALURU METRO FARE HIKE

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Public opposition to the Metro fare hike intensified on Monday as various organizations urged Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BM-RCL) to reconsider the decision. The move also sparked a political blame game, with Congress accusing the BJP of being responsible for the hike. Representatives of the All India Democratic Students Organisation (AIDSO) met BM-RCL Managing Director Maheshwar Rao, arguing that students make up 30% of daily Metro commuters and should receive a 50% fare concession. Meanwhile, BJP MLAs CK Ramamurthy, Ravi Subramanya, and S Muniraju also met Rao, demanding a rollback of the increase. Karnataka IT Minister Priyank Kharge blamed

the Centre, stating that the fare hike was implemented by BM-RCL under the direction of the Centre's Fare Fixation Committee. He challenged BJP leaders to take responsibility for the increase, mocking Leader of Opposition R Ashoka for his past protests against state bus fare hikes. The #RevokeMetroFareHike campaign gained momentum on social media, with commuters calling the hike unfair and sharing ticket price comparisons. BJP workers staged protests at major Metro stations, while reports of empty trains on Monday fueled further criticism. BM-RCL MD Rao acknowledged discrepancies in fare increases, stating that no 100% or 120% hikes were planned and that the anomalies were under review.

DRDO scientists behind dazzling flares at Aero India

DRDO's Pune unit produces flares for Surya Kiran, Sarang, and Tejas displays. High Energy Material Research Lab (HEMRL) manufactures over 1,000 flares daily. Eco-friendly, military-grade dyes used for vibrant aerial effects.



air shows. A DRDO scientist explained that the size and shape of the flares vary based on the aircraft, with each aircraft carrying hundreds to thousands of flares in special pods for release during performances. The High Energy Material Research Lab (HEMRL) in Pune manufactures these flares, which weigh between 100 to 770 grams. The scientist, while withholding details on the materials used, assured that the flares are made using eco-friendly, military-grade dyes to produce the vibrant orange and green colors seen in the sky. "Everything is indigenously made, and our scientists have mastered the production process, manufacturing no less than a thousand flares daily. These flares are also used for bird scare operations. We are working on upgrading them with enhanced versions beyond the current 200 mm-50 mm variants," the scientist added.

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
The breathtaking aerobatic displays at Aero India 2025 are not just about precision flying but also the spectacular flares lighting up the sky. While the Surya Kiran team's Hawk MK-132, Sarang's HAL Dhruv, and the Tejas aircraft steal the show with their daredevil stunts, the flares released mid-air owe their brilliance to a team of specialized scientists at the Defence Research and

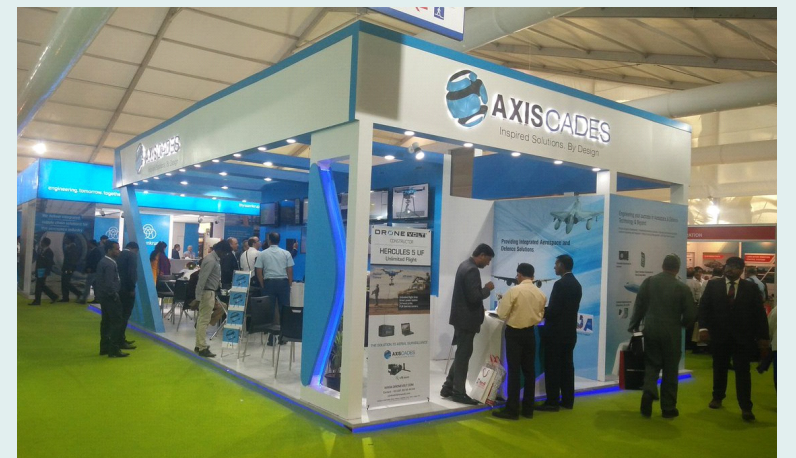
Development Organisation (DRDO) in Pune. Initially developed for defence and warfare tactics, flares were introduced in aerial displays two decades ago and have since become an integral part of

Rowdy-sheeter stabs four in Bengaluru, police on the hunt

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

A rowdy-sheeter went on a stabbing spree in Indiranagar on Saturday night, injuring four people within five hours and triggering panic in the area. The accused, 22-year-old Kadamba, is listed as a rowdy-sheeter at the Indiranagar police station and had recently come out of jail. The victims include two pani puri vendors and two individuals who refused to give him a lift. The injured—Deepak Kumar Verma (24), M Thammaiah (44), A Adil (24), and P Jaswanth (19)—are undergoing treatment, and the police have registered three attempt-to-murder cases and a robbery case against the accused. The attacks began around 9:30 pm when Kadamba stabbed Jaswanth at a BBMP purified water center after he refused to give him a lift. Minutes later, he attacked Verma at his shop for not serving him pani puri. Around 9:50 pm, he stabbed Thammaiah after being asked to pay for his food. The last attack occurred at 2:30 am on Sunday, when Adil was stabbed for refusing to drop Kadamba at KR Puram railway station. The police have launched a manhunt to apprehend the accused.

AXISCADES to establish defence cluster in Bengaluru



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Defence and aerospace technology firm AXISCADES is set to launch a 'Defence Atmanirbhar Cluster' near the KIADB aerospace SEZ, with plans to roll out its blueprint by next year. The project is being developed on 20.70 acres of company-owned land.

In addition, the Bengaluru-based company is setting up a Global Capability Centre (GCC) for unmanned warfare, which will feature drone, counter-drone, and radar hangars. The facility in Electronics City is being upgraded for this purpose and is expected to be operational by June 2025.

On Monday, AXISCADES announced a collaboration with leading defence company MBDA to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Test Benches in the upcoming Defence and Aerospace Park near Kempegowda International Airport. Company officials at the Aero Show stated that this initiative will help MBDA expand its Make in India efforts.

AXISCADES MD and CEO Sharadhi Chandra Babu highlighted the significance of the CoE, calling it "a powerful testimony of our leadership in the Automated Test Equipment (ATE) domain and a reflection of our high-quality, cost-optimized deliveries." He added that the partnership with MBDA is set to grow further in the coming years.

Since 2018, AXISCADES has been handling built-to-spec and built-to-print Test Bench assignments for MBDA. The CoE will be housed at the company's new Aerospace Park premises.

Greater Bengaluru Bill proposes five corporations, BBMP polls soon

Bill proposes splitting BBMP into five smaller corporations. Public consultations on the bill to conclude on Wednesday. BBMP elections to be announced after the bill is passed.



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
The Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill 2024 proposes restructuring the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) into five smaller corporations for better administration and governance. The bill is under review by a Joint Scrutiny Committee led by its chairman, Rizwan Arshad. Speaking at a public consultation in the BBMP East Zone, Arshad emphasized the need for a stronger governance framework to match Bengaluru's rapid growth. He noted that the bill has been extensively debated, with 17 committee meetings involving opposition leaders and stakeholders. The public consulta-

tion will conclude on Wednesday, with citizens invited to provide suggestions. The bill also proposes extending the mayor's term, which will require amendments to the Administrative Reforms Act. Arshad stated that once the bill is passed, BBMP elections will be announced. He also clarified that the bill does not aim to regularize violations of building by-

laws. BJP MLA and former minister ST Somashekhar supported the bill, stating that a single mayor and BBMP chief commissioner make administration difficult. Under the new structure, each of the five corporations will have up to 75 elected corporators and a chief commissioner, while the Chief Minister will oversee funding at the top level.

IAF officer Manjunath G S cremated with full military honours in Shivamogga



TPN Correspondent | Shivamogga
The last rites of Indian Air Force Junior Warrant Officer Manjunath G S, who lost his life after his parachute failed to deploy, were performed with full military honours at his native village Sankuru in Hosanagara taluk on Sunday. His mortal remains arrived in Shivamogga city in the morning, where MP B Y Raghavendra and MLA S N Channabasappa paid their final respects. The body was then transported to Hosanagara in a military vehicle, reaching the town at 11:30 am. A massive gathering of mourners, including schoolchildren, lined the streets near Kodachadri College,

showing flowers in tribute to the fallen soldier. A grand procession accompanied the open military vehicle carrying Manjunath's remains to his village. MLA Beluru Gopalakrishna, tahsildar Rashmi Halesh, and Congress leader Kalagodu Ratnakar paid their respects on behalf of the government. His body was placed at his residence for the final viewing before being handed over to the family with full military honours. As per Ediga community traditions, his mortal remains were cremated on his family land. The solemn farewell left the entire village in mourning, as residents gathered to pay their last respects to the brave officer.

German pilots stuck in Bengaluru traffic, miss Aero India opening ceremony



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

A group of fifteen German pilots visiting Bengaluru for the first time faced unexpected delays due to the city's infamous traffic, causing them to miss the opening ceremony of Aero India 2025 on Monday. The pilots, who arrived in an A330 passenger aircraft and were staying at a hotel 17 km from the venue, set out early for Yelahanka Air Force Station. However, their private cab got stuck in heavy congestion, turning what should have been a short commute into an hours-long ordeal. By the time they reached the venue, the inaugural event and key aircraft displays had already concluded. One of the pilots noted the irony of discussing Bengaluru's infrastructure challenges with a local guide the previous day, only to experience them firsthand. While disappointed, they remained optimistic about engaging with attendees and showcasing their aircraft during the rest of the event. Authorities later clarified that special lanes were designated for foreign delegates to bypass traffic, but the German pilots were unaware of this provision and took a regular route. Officials added that traffic management had improved this year, reducing congestion near the venue compared to previous editions.

Mob protests at Udayagiri police station over derogatory post on Congress leaders



TPN Correspondent | Mysuru

Tension erupted at Udayagiri police station in Mysuru late Monday night after a derogatory social media post targeting Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav, and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal went viral. The post, which featured semi-nude images of the leaders with Arabic inscriptions on their bodies, sparked widespread outrage. The police took suo motu cognizance of the matter, registered a case, and arrested the accused. As protests intensified, agitators resorted to stone-pelting, leading to injuries. The police had to resort to a lathi charge to disperse the crowd and restore order.



Kharge, Parameshwara plan Dalit Samavesha to counter Shivakumar's CM bid

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Karnataka Home Minister Dr. G Parameshwara are planning a Dalit Samavesha to strengthen the demand for a Dalit chief minister, a move seen as countering Deputy CM DK Shivakumar's ambitions. Parameshwara, acting as an envoy of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, met Kharge to seek his approval for an SC/ST convention. Kharge agreed, viewing it as a strategy to consolidate the party's hold over these communities. He also suggested inviting Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi to the event. Key Siddaramaiah allies, including PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi, Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna, and Social Welfare Minister Dr. HC Mahadevappa, have decided to proceed with the convention. Jarkiholi and Rajanna have already reached Delhi for discussions with AICC leaders, while Parameshwara is expected to follow soon. This move is being seen as a direct challenge to Shivakumar, who is eyeing the CM post after Siddaramaiah completes his two-and-a-half-year tenure. Sources say Siddaramaiah's camp is pushing for a Dalit CM, using the Samavesha as a platform to build momentum for the cause. Earlier, Siddaramaiah had urged Parameshwara to gather support from SC/ST MLAs, but AICC General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala had not approved the proposal. Miffed by this, SC/ST ministers are now pressing ahead with the Samavesha, aiming to amplify calls for a Dalit CM.

BJP's Factional Politics Won't Affect Alliance: Kumaraswamy

TPN Correspondent | Hubballi
Union Minister and JDS leader H D Kumaraswamy on Sunday dismissed concerns that factionalism within the BJP would impact its alliance with his party. Addressing reporters in Hubballi, he stated that internal matters of the BJP were being handled by its senior leaders and would not cause any issues for the alliance. On the Delhi election results, Kumaraswamy remarked that the outcome was expected. "AAP came to power claiming to fight corruption, but in the last ten years, it has done nothing. The lack of basic infrastructure in Delhi led to public anger, and people have made an appropriate decision regarding the city's development," he said. Speaking on the controversy over disputed land in Hubballi, allegedly encroached upon by Congress, Kumaraswamy said that original documents had been requested for verification. "The Congress has acted high-handedly by seizing the land. The truth will be known once we examine the proper records," he stated. When asked about Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar's visit to the Kumbh Mela, he said, "It is a matter of personal faith. There is no need to interpret it otherwise."



Tejasvi Surya raises Bengaluru Metro fare hike issue in Lok Sabha

Tejasvi Surya opposes Bengaluru Metro fare hike, calls for review in Lok Sabha. Metro fares increased by nearly 50%, with separate peak and non-peak hour tariffs. Maximum fare raised to ₹90; public backlash and political opposition intensify.



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi
BJP MP from Bengaluru South, Tejasvi Surya, strongly opposed the recent hike in Bengaluru Metro fares during the Zero Hour in Lok Sabha on Monday, calling for an urgent review of the decision. He emphasized that the steep increase had made the metro unaffordable for many, particularly the middle class. Surya criticized the sharp rise in ticket prices, especially for short-distance travel, where fares have nearly doubled at several metro stations. He argued that the hike had turned Bengaluru Metro into the most expensive metro network in India, defeating its objective of providing an affordable and sustainable public transport option. "I urge authorities to reconsider the fare structure and introduce a more reason-

able pricing system to ensure accessibility for the common man," Surya stated in Parliament. Following his speech, Surya met with the Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs to discuss concerns regarding the fare fixation by the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRL). He pressed for immediate intervention to correct anomalies in the revised pricing system. The BMRL announced a fare increase of nearly 50% last Saturday, based on recommendations from the Fare Fixation Committee. The new structure also introduced separate tariffs for peak and non-peak hours, similar to ride-hailing services like Ola and Uber. Under the revised system, the maximum fare has been raised from ₹60 to ₹90, while the minimum balance required on metro cards has increased from ₹50 to ₹90.

Under the revised Bengaluru Metro fare structure, the fare for 0-2 km is ₹10, for 2-4 km it is ₹20, for 4-6 km it is ₹30, and for 6-8 km it is ₹40. Commuters traveling 8-10 km will now pay ₹50, while the fare for 10-12 km has been set at ₹60. For longer distances, the fare for 15-20 km is ₹70, for 20-25 km it is ₹80, and for 25-30 km and beyond, passengers will have to pay ₹90. The Fare Fixation Committee submitted its recommendations on December 16, 2024, and as per Section 37 of the Metro Railway O&M Act, the metro administration is bound to implement them. BMRL defended the decision, stating that the revised fares were necessary for operational sustainability. However, public backlash and political opposition, led by Surya, continue to mount against the fare hike.

BJP set to appoint Karnataka chief unanimously

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
The BJP high command has signaled its intent to appoint the Karnataka state president unanimously, with the party's disciplinary committee issuing a show-cause notice to 'rebel' leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal. This move is seen as a step toward securing incumbent state president BY Vijayendra's continuation in the post, countering Yatnal's demand for an election. Political analysts suggest that the BJP leadership sought to avoid a contest that could have embarrassed the party, particularly if Yatnal or his camp fielded a candidate against Vijayendra. Instead, the high command has opted to assert its decision-making authority, making it clear that the appointment will not be put to a vote. Yatnal and his supporters met in New Delhi at Karnataka Bhavan on Monday and later gathered at Union Minister V Somanna's house-warming ceremony. Speaking to reporters afterward, Yatnal claimed that Somanna conveyed a message from the party's top leadership, stating that a decision on the Karnataka BJP chief would not be rushed. However, Yatnal also maintained hope that an election could still be held to remove Vijayendra. Later, he softened his stance, stating that he would abide by the decision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP national president JP Nadda, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. **BJP sends second show-cause notice to Yatnal**
The BJP's disciplinary committee has issued a second show-cause notice to Yatnal for "breach of party discipline." Committee member-secretary Om Pathak cited Yatnal's continued criticism of the state leadership



and demanded a response within 72 hours. **Vijayendra in Delhi for talks with Amit Shah**
Karnataka BJP chief BY Vijayendra is currently in New Delhi and is expected to meet Amit Shah before returning. The Home Minister remains occupied with the post-election scenario in Delhi and the ongoing Manipur crisis.

Sriramulu returns from Prayagraj
Former minister B Sriramulu, who had hoped for a meeting with the BJP leadership in Delhi, returned home after taking a holy dip in Prayagraj. A party committee report on the Sandur bypoll loss has reportedly mentioned Sriramulu's absence from campaigning in the final days before polling.

Shivakumar urges Rajnath to incentivize aircraft manufacturing

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has urged Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to provide incentives for aircraft and helicopter manufacturers to establish their industries in Karnataka and across India. Speaking at the inauguration of Aero India 2025, Shivakumar highlighted Bengaluru's position as the aerospace capital of India, with over 60% of the country's aerospace manufacturing and defence research based in the city. "Bengaluru's aerospace sector employs over 1,50,000 people, making it a global leader in aviation and defence technology," he stated. He further noted that Karnataka contributes 67% of the country's aircraft and helicopter manufacturing for defence services and 65% of India's aerospace-related exports. Despite these achievements, Shivakumar pointed out a gap in the industry and reiterated his appeal for incentives to attract more manufacturers to set up operations in Karnataka and India.



HC Adjoins Hearing on ED Summons to CM Siddaramaiah's Wife, Minister Suresh

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka
The Karnataka High Court on Monday adjourned the hearing on Enforcement Directorate (ED) summons issued to BM Parvathi, wife of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh in connection with the alleged Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA) scam. The case will now be heard on February 20. Earlier, the High Court granted interim relief to Parvathi and Suresh, staying the ED summons that required them to appear for questioning. Both had challenged the notices in court. A single-member bench led by Justice Nagaprasanna stayed the summons until the next hearing. The HC had previously rejected a plea seeking to transfer the case from the Lokayukta police to the Cen-

tral Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Karnataka BJP president BY Vijayendra reacted to this, stating that the court had not acquitted Siddaramaiah. The case involves allegations that Siddaramaiah used his political influence to secure compensation of 14 prime locality sites, worth approximately ₹56 crore, in his wife BM Parvathi's name in exchange for land acquired by MUDA. The land was originally acquired for ₹3.24 lakh. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's legal advisor AS Ponnanna dismissed the case as politically motivated. Meanwhile, social activist Snehamayi Krishna had approached the High Court seeking a CBI investigation. However, the court ruled that there was no indication of bias in the Lokayukta investigation and dismissed the plea.

India-UK sign key defence agreements for next-gen weapons collaboration

Baldota Group to invest ₹54,000 crore in a steel plant in Koppal. The plant will create 15,000 direct and indirect jobs. The project will be operational in 2.5 to 3 years. Rising steel demand driven by government infrastructure projects.



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
India and the United Kingdom have taken a significant step in strengthening their strategic defence partnership with the launch of Defence Partnership-India (DP-I) on Monday, the first day of Aero India 2025. The agreement focuses on next-generation weapon systems, reinforcing collaboration between Indian and British industries. Among the major agreements signed, Thales and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) have entered into a contract for the supply of Laser Beam Riding MANPADs (LBRM), including an initial batch of High Velocity Missiles (STAR-Streak) and launchers set to be delivered this year. This deal marks a critical advancement in air defence cooperation between the two nations. Following this initial contract, Thales and BDL will expand their collaboration to produce Lightweight Multirole Missiles (LMM).

The partnership will integrate Indian industry into Thales' global supply chain, enhancing mutual security, creating jobs, and promoting interoperability between the two armies. **UK committed to strengthening ties with India**
UK Defence Minister Lord Vernon Coaker, while inaugurating the UK-India Defence Partnership Pavilion at Aero India 2025, announced the establishment of a dedicated programme office within the UK's Ministry of Defence to streamline bilateral defence collaboration. In a separate development, Matra Bae Dynamics UK (MBDA UK) and BDL are setting up an Advanced Short-Range Air-to-Air Missile (ASRAAM) assembly and testing facility in Hyderabad. This facility will enhance India's fighter jet capabilities and enable missile exports. On the maritime front, India and the UK have signed a Statement of Intent to co-develop an Integrated

Full Electric Propulsion (IFEP) system for India's next-generation Landing Platform Dock (LPD) fleet. This agreement aims to strengthen India's self-reliance in naval power and propulsion technology. Additionally, GE Vernova and BHEL are working on India's first maritime Land-Based Testing Facility to ensure the LPD fleet is operational by 2030. Speaking on the collaboration, Coaker stated, "Our Defence Partnership and the UK-India Defence Partnership Pavilion will strengthen our cooperation, supporting economic growth in both countries and India's Atmanirbhar ambition. This event showcases the massive potential we can unlock by working together." British High Commissioner to India Lindy Cameron added, "India is making significant strides towards self-reliance in defence. The UK is eager to be India's partner of choice in this journey, and these landmark agreements will drive economic growth and joint security."

Mention nature of injuries in compensation cases: HC



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
The Karnataka High Court has emphasized that Motor Vehicles Accident Claims Tribunals (MACT) must properly consider the nature of injuries suffered by petitioners while determining compensation. The court noted that simply labeling injuries as grievous or simple does not indicate a thorough assessment. Justice CM Joshi made these observations while partially allowing an appeal filed by New India Assurance Co. Ltd., challenging a ₹10.11 lakh compensation awarded to a petitioner by a tribunal in 2019. The court reduced the compensation to ₹4.54 lakh, with 6% interest per annum, and directed the registry to send a copy of the order to the Karnataka Judicial Academy for training purposes. The court stressed that tribunals often rely solely on disability percentages given by medical officers without assessing how injuries impact functional disability. It pointed out that medical officers can determine physical disability but not functional disability, which requires a detailed judicial evaluation. The HC directed that tribunal officers be sensitized to the need for specifying injuries and correlating them to functional impairment in judgments to ensure fair compensation.

Maharashtra to Supply 100% Green Energy for Irrigation by March 2026: MSEDCL

TPN Correspondent | Maharashtra
Maharashtra is set to become the first state in India to supply 100% green energy for agricultural irrigation by March 2026, as the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd (MSEDCL) shifts to solar power for agricultural pumps. This transition is expected to significantly reduce the ₹13,500-crore cross-subsidy burden on industrial consumers, making electricity tariffs more competitive with states like Gujarat, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. MSEDCL Managing Director Lokesh Chandra outlined the state's power sector roadmap, confirming that contracts for 16,000 MW of solar power have been awarded under the Mukhyamantri Saur Krishi Vahini Yojana (MSKVY 2.0). The move aims to lower the cost of power procurement, benefiting both agricultural and industrial consumers. Chandra acknowledged that electricity tariffs for certain categories, including residential consumers, may see a rise from April 2025 due to past pending costs. However, he assured that the introduction of cheaper solar power would lead to a phased reduction in tariffs over the next five years. Maharashtra currently has 4.74 million agricultural pump consumers, whose outstanding electricity dues have reached ₹65,565 crore. To keep power affordable for farmers, the state government provides a subsidy of ₹6,900 crore, while industrial consumers

bear an additional cost through higher tariffs. This cross-subsidy has pushed industrial power rates to ₹9.45 per unit. "MSEDCL has the highest agricultural load in India, accounting for 30% of its total demand or 40,000 million units. Supplying power at concessional rates places a ₹13,500-crore burden on industrial consumers. However, with MSKVY 2.0, solar power will be available at ₹2.69 to ₹3.10 per unit, bringing immediate relief to industries. As a result, industrial power tariffs will gradually drop from ₹9.45 per unit to ₹9.14 per unit over the next five years," Chandra stated. He further explained that without this shift, industrial tariffs could have surged to ₹14.67 per unit in the next five years. Additionally, decentralized solar generation will reduce transmission and distribution costs for MSEDCL. Looking ahead, MSEDCL plans to procure 45,000 MW of power over the next five years—the highest capacity addition in Maharashtra's history since 1960. The company will also invest ₹65,000 crore to expand and strengthen its distribution network, with an overall investment of ₹3.5 lakh crore in the state's power sector. This initiative is expected to generate around 7 lakh jobs. With Maharashtra advancing toward its trillion-dollar economy goal, the transition to solar energy is seen as a crucial step in ensuring a sustainable and cost-effective power supply for both agricultural and industrial sectors.

Key trains to halt at Karmelaram after track doubling project

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Residents of South East Bengaluru have been demanding stoppages for key trains at Karmelaram railway station, but the Railways has stated that this will be possible only after the completion of the Baiyappanahalli-Hosur track doubling project. The demand includes halts for the Kurla Express and Nagercoil Express in both directions. Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Krishna Chaitanya said the doubling project, executed by Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Enterprises (K-RIDE), is expected to be completed by May this year. Currently, the station records an average daily footfall of 3,200, with ticket earnings of ₹26,000 from unreserved tickets and ₹82,300 from reserved ones. Several express trains, including the Bengaluru-Ernakulam Express, Mysuru-Cuddalore Express, and Yesvantpur-Kannur Express, already stop at Karmelaram. Platform extension work will be carried out as part of yard remodelling, increasing the platform length from 460 to 560 meters. Meanwhile, a long-pending rail overbridge project, meant to enhance commuter safety, remains delayed due to land acquisition issues, forcing the public to take detours between Gunjur Main Road and Sarjapur Main Road.



Baldota Group to set up ₹54,000 crore steel plant in Koppal

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Baldota Group is making a historic ₹54,000 crore investment to establish an integrated steel plant in Karnataka's Koppal district. The 10.50 million tonne per annum facility, one of the largest in the region, aims to boost steel production and drive industrial growth. The MoU will be signed at the Global Investors' Meet on February 11. Operating under Baldota Steel and Power Limited (BSPL), the project is expected to generate 15,000 direct and indirect jobs. Government sources noted that Koppal is among Karnataka's most backward districts, with unemployment being a major concern. Rahul Kumar N Baldota, Joint Managing Director, stated that the groundbreaking is scheduled for next month, with the plant set to be operational within 2.5 to 3 years. The required iron ore will be sourced from within a 50-km radius. He emphasized the



growing steel demand due to the government's infrastructure push in rail, road, and other sectors, positioning Baldota as a national leader in steel production.

Former FKCCI president J Crasta echoed this sentiment, stating that the steel demand in India is set to rise significantly in the coming years.

Waiter arrested after 14 years for killing friend

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
A 34-year-old waiter who had been on the run for nearly 14 years after murdering his friend was arrested by RT Nagar police in Vyalikaval last week. The accused, identified as R John, had been absconding since 2011, working in hotels in Tirupati and Hoskote to evade arrest. John, along with his friends Chaati Raja, Arun, and Manikanta, killed 20-year-old Chetan on August 22, 2011, over an old rivalry in Ganganagar. While Raja, Arun, and Manikanta were arrested, John remained at large. A month ago, police arrested Raja and intensified their search for John, who had 20 warrants against him. Investigators tracked John through his parents' Aadhaar-linked gas agency records. After learning he had returned to Bengaluru a year ago, police monitored his contacts and arrested him. Police said John frequently changed locations to avoid capture. He has been sent to police custody.

Paris AI Action Summit 2025: From Data to Development

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping societies around the globe, but its transformative potential remains inaccessible to many, particularly in developing nations. While wealthy countries harness vast datasets to spur technological progress, many others grapple with fragmented, unreliable, or inaccessible data. Without equitable access to high-quality, local data, the benefits of AI for development remain largely untapped. This is not just a technological issue but a critical development challenge.

The Paris AI Action Summit, held with the aim of supporting AI development in the interests of all, including developing countries, represents a step toward addressing this gap. One of the key discussions at the summit will focus on ensuring that AI innovations are accessible to all, with a particular focus on democratizing access to data.

Data is the backbone of AI development, and its importance cannot be overstated. Data-driven solutions have the potential to address complex societal challenges. For example, the Bermuda Principle's data-sharing arrangements in the 1990s, as part of the American Human Genome Project, revolutionized vaccine development. In a similar vein, the rapid creation of COVID-19 vaccines was facilitated by transparent and real-time data sharing. Locally accessible, contextually relevant data can drastically improve living standards, as seen in London's Transport for London (TfL) system, where making non-public data publicly available fostered the creation of over 600 services benefiting millions of residents.

However, in developing countries, barriers like limited computing infrastructure, lack of skilled talent, and inadequate funding prevent AI from reaching



its full potential. A critical issue is the lack of usable, local data for AI development. This challenge is compounded by underdeveloped data governance frameworks, which hinder the creation of policies that protect citizens' data while fostering innovation. These nations must balance the desire to participate in global AI development with the need to maintain control over their data resources and ensure digital sovereignty.

International dialogues such as the Paris AI Action Summit are vital to overcoming these barriers. With non-standardized systems for cross-border data sharing, countries are often isolated in their AI efforts, limiting collaborative opportunities. Developing regions still struggle to access quality datasets suited to their local needs, which exacerbates global in-

equalities in AI. India's approach to leveraging technology for development offers valuable insights for other emerging economies. With initiatives like the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), India has made significant strides in financial inclusion and technology-driven growth. Prime Minister Modi's participation in the Paris AI Summit could steer global discussions toward inclusive and equitable AI-driven progress.

The Paris AI Action Summit 2025 presents an opportunity to cast AI as a tool for equitable, inclusive, and effective global development. By prioritizing collaborative policies and data democratization, the summit can help bridge the AI divide, ensuring that no region is left behind in the race for AI innovation.



Can Gautam Gambhir Silence His Critics as India's Head Coach?

Being the head coach of the Indian cricket team is no easy feat. The immense pressure to deliver results, especially in the face of fierce scrutiny, makes the role incredibly challenging. Gautam Gambhir, a veteran with a rich cricketing legacy, is now in that hot seat. Having played a key role in India's World Cup victories and led the Kolkata Knight Riders to three IPL titles, Gambhir took over the reins as head coach with high expectations. However, his journey has been anything but smooth.

Gambhir's appointment as India's head coach was met with skepticism. Critics questioned his lack of coaching experience, drawing a sharp distinction between mentoring an IPL team and managing an international squad. The pressure grew when India faced disappointing defeats, including a historic loss to Sri Lanka in a bilateral ODI series and a whitewash in a home Test series. The critics were quick to blame Gambhir, doubting whether he was the right man for the job.

However, it's essential to understand that coaching an international team involves a different set of challenges than playing for one. A top-level athlete's individual approach to the game, honed over years, doesn't change overnight just because they transition to a coaching role. Gambhir, known for his no-nonsense attitude as a player, has carried this persona into his coaching role. While it has ruffled some feathers, it's this very tenacity that has allowed him to handle the pressure.

Gambhir's tenure has been marked by a rough start. Taking over after the high of India's T20 World Cup victory, he inherited a team with its own set of expectations, following the leadership of Rahul Dravid. His early challenges were inevitable. Critics began to point fingers when results didn't match the standards set by his predecessors. However, it's important to note that Gambhir has had less than seven months to settle into the role, a brief period to adapt to new dynamics and refine his strategies.

Recent successes, like the 4-1 T20 series win against England and a commanding 2-0 lead in the ongoing ODI series, have given Gambhir some breathing room. These victories have quieted critics for now, but the real test lies ahead, with the Champions Trophy looming large.

The ODI format, where India has seen solid results, is of particular importance as the team prepares for the upcoming Champions Trophy. Success in this format has proven vital, with players like Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill finding form, and Ravindra Jadeja's confidence surging after his stellar domestic performance. Gambhir's emphasis on a high-risk, high-reward approach in T20s seems to be slowly filtering into the ODI setup.

Despite the recent improvements, challenges persist. India's Test team still needs attention, especially with a five-Test series in England later this year. Gambhir will need to work on finding the right balance and ensuring that players like Virat Kohli return to form. The ongoing issue with KL Rahul's form and Jasprit Bumrah's fitness will also need careful consideration.

Ultimately, the only way to silence the critics is through consistent success, particularly in ICC tournaments. If Gambhir can lead India to an ICC title, even the harshest critics will be forced to acknowledge his efforts.

How To Reproduce With Two Fathers - And No Biological Mother

In March 2023, Japanese researcher Katsumi Hayashi made a groundbreaking announcement at the Third International Summit on Human Genome Editing. Hayashi revealed that he had successfully reproduced mice using two male parents. This achievement was the result of his development of a complex method that transformed male pluripotent stem cells into female-like stem cells, enabling the production of eggs from male cells. His work was published in *Nature*, marking a significant milestone in genetic research.



field of genetics.

Almost two years later, a team of Chinese researchers led by Zhi-kun Li, Wei Li, and Qi Zhou of the Chinese Academy of Sciences built upon Hayashi's findings, but with a unique twist. Their procedure also produced a baby mouse from two males, but it eliminated the need for maternal biological involvement beyond gestation. Their work, published in *Cell Stem Cell*, has once again shaken the

The new procedure focuses on overcoming genetic imprinting, a mammalian control system that prevents the combination of two same-sex gametes (sperm or eggs) from resulting in a viable em-

bryo. In mammals, embryos must derive genetic material from both a male and a female to survive, as certain genes are only expressed when inherited from a specific parent. The Chinese team used CRISPR gene-editing tools to deactivate this imprinting barrier, allowing sperm cells to behave like egg cells, making it possible to combine two sperm to create a viable embryo. This embryo was then gestated by a female mouse, and the resulting mice were derived entirely from two male parents.

However, there are still significant challenges with this method. The mice produced through this process are infertile and can only reproduce via cloning. Furthermore, over half of the mice born to two fathers either fail to survive, die prematurely, or do not mature properly. Previous research from this team showed that mice born from two mothers had a higher survival rate, which suggests that the process is far from perfected.

India's AI Moment: The Race To Catch Up With China And The US

In 2023, OpenAI's CEO, Sam Altman, made a bold statement, claiming it was "totally hopeless to compete with us on training foundation models" for any small team with just \$10 million. However, just two years later, that assertion has been proven wrong. The rise of China's DeepSeek, which trained an open-source large language model (LLM) for just \$5.6 million, has shattered the notion that only deep-pocketed companies can develop cutting-edge AI models. This breakthrough came despite the U.S.'s stringent restrictions on chip exports, signaling that necessity and innovation can overcome even geopolitical obstacles.

This raises an important question: if China can do it, why can't India? India's AI Awakening

India, a nation that has long been a sleeping giant in AI, is now starting to awaken. The Indian government has recognized AI's strategic importance and launched the IndiaAI Mission in March 2024, with a budget of Rs 10,371 crore (\$1.2 billion). This initiative, coupled with significant increases in AI funding and the establishment of Centres of Excellence, underscores the government's commitment to AI development. In fact, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw recently announced that the government is collaborating with at least six developers to build India's first indigenous LLM.

However, while financial resources are on the rise, India faces a major challenge: a talent drain.

The Talent Drain and Research Deficit



India has the potential for a thriving AI ecosystem, but much of its talent is working abroad, particularly in Silicon Valley. With India investing just 0.64% of its GDP in research and development (R&D), compared to China's 2.41% and the U.S.'s 3.47%, India lags behind in fostering innovation domestically. This research deficit could hinder India's

ability to keep pace with global AI advancements.

The Role of the Private Sector

India's private sector is stepping up to bridge the gap. Leading conglomerates like Reliance Industries, Adani Group, and Nxta are investing heavily in AI infrastructure, including supercomputers and data centres. These investments, if executed well, will be critical for India's AI ambitions.

US GPU Restrictions: A Major Hurdle

Despite these advancements, India faces a major challenge: U.S. restrictions on high-end GPUs, essential for training AI models. However, the Indian government is exploring ways to bypass these restrictions by facilitating access to GPUs through partnerships and the

IndiaAI Mission.

India's Strategic Leverage

With the geopolitical landscape shifting, India has an opportunity to use its ties with the U.S. to influence key decisions. If India can push for an end to GPU export restrictions and secure a stake in initiatives like the U.S.'s StarGate AI project, it could solidify its position as a global AI leader.

The Bigger Picture

AI is not just a technological pursuit—it is a geopolitical one. Nations leading in AI will define global economic and security landscapes. India cannot afford to lag behind in this race. With strategic investments, collaboration, and diplomatic maneuvering, India has the potential to become a formidable AI player.

Need To Be Careful About AI Biases: PM Modi At AI Summit In Paris

- Modi stresses AI's role in daily life at Paris summit.
- Calls for transparent, bias-free AI and global collaboration.
- Emphasizes AI-driven innovation in healthcare, education, and jobs.

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a global Artificial Intelligence summit in Paris today, emphasizing the transformative role AI is playing in daily human life. Speaking to a gathering of world leaders, PM Modi called for collective global efforts to harness AI's potential, particularly focusing on the need for inclusivity, transparency, and addressing biases in AI systems.

"We must pool our resources and talent to develop open-source systems that foster trust and transparency while ensuring the creation of quality datasets free from biases," PM Modi stated. He stressed that AI applications must be people-centric, ensuring that they serve the global population equitably, especially the Global South. The Prime Minister also raised concerns about the risks posed by AI, including cybersecurity issues, disinformation, and deep fakes, calling for urgent solutions to mitigate these challenges.

PM Modi also highlighted the potential of AI to revolutionize sectors like healthcare, education, and agriculture, suggesting that AI could accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. "AI can help transform millions of lives," he said, noting that its application could make the path to sustainable development faster and more efficient.



Addressing concerns about AI-induced job loss, the Prime Minister assured that technological advancements do not equate to the disappearance of work. "The nature of jobs changes with time, and new types of jobs are created," he explained. To ensure the workforce is prepared for an AI-driven future, PM Modi emphasized the importance of investing in skilling and re-skilling programs to equip people with the necessary tools for emerging job markets.

The Prime Minister also acknowledged the

high energy demands of AI systems, underscoring the need for green energy solutions to fuel AI's future. "We must scrutinize the high-energy intensity of AI and explore sustainable power options," he added.

PM Modi, co-chairing the AI Action Summit alongside French President Emmanuel Macron, used the platform to advocate for a global approach to AI development that benefits all and minimizes risks, ensuring technology remains a force for good in the world.



Deepika Padukone Talks About Mental Health On 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' 2025

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The second episode of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2025', set to air on Wednesday, promises an insightful discussion on mental health and well-being, featuring Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone. Known for her candidness about mental health struggles, Deepika will engage with students, focusing on the importance of mental well-being, particularly in the context of education.

In a video preview shared by the actress, she responds to a student's question about ways to improve mental health. Deepika emphasized the importance of expressing one's feelings rather than suppressing them, encouraging students to share their thoughts with family and friends. "Always express, never suppress. Be it with anybody," she advised.

During the episode, Deepika will also open up about her personal battle with depression, shedding light on her journey and the significance of mental health awareness. "I want to thank our Prime Minister Narendra Modi for giving us this platform to come out as warriors, not worriers," she said, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to speak on such an important issue.

The 39-year-old actress has been an advocate for mental health, using her platform to encourage open conversations about mental well-being. Her candid admission about her struggles has inspired many, making her an influential voice in promoting mental health awareness.

In a post on Instagram, Deepika shared her excitement for the upcoming episode: "Pariksha Pe Charcha' is back with its 8th edition! And this time, we'll also be discussing the importance of mental health. Thank you, Honourable Prime Minister @narendramodi, for your commitment to this cause. I look forward to launching our episode... #PPC2025."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiative, 'Pariksha Pe Charcha', provides a platform for students and educators to discuss relevant issues, including education, stress, and mental health, fostering a supportive environment for young people across the country.



India-Indonesia business ties get fresh boost with Prabowo visit

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

During the State Visit of Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto to India from January 24-27, 2025, a series of business meetings, government-to-government interactions, and industry-level talks were held, fostering stronger trade and investment ties between the two nations. The visit marked a significant step towards deepening economic collaboration, with new initiatives aimed at boosting bilateral trade and enhancing mutual investment opportunities.

The President's entourage included over 100 delegates from the Indonesian National Chamber of Trade and Industry (KADIN), all of whom were keen to strengthen Indonesia's economic relationship with India. These meetings focused on fostering deeper business connections and exploring new avenues for trade across various sectors. The discussions encompassed industries such as manufacturing, infrastructure, agriculture, and renewable energy, aiming to identify opportunities for cross-border investments and partnerships. During the visit, both nations expressed a shared commitment to advancing their trade relations, leveraging India's growing market and Indonesia's strategic position as a key player in Southeast Asia. The discussions also focused on overcoming trade barriers and creating a more conducive environment for long-term economic growth.

In addition to formal talks, the visit included networking events, workshops, and roundtable discussions that provided a platform for businesses from both countries to explore potential collaborations. As a result, new avenues of cooperation in areas like digital economy, health, and sustainable development were identified, paving the way for stronger economic ties moving forward. This visit is expected to result in significant improvements in India-Indonesia trade relations, with the possibility of future trade agreements and expanded cooperation in various sectors. Both governments expressed their enthusiasm for strengthening their partnership and ensuring that the momentum generated during the visit leads to tangible benefits for businesses and industries in both countries.



Sundar Pichai Advocates for Global AI Regulation at AI Action Summit 2025

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Google CEO Sundar Pichai called for balanced regulations to address the risks associated with Artificial Intelligence (AI) while ensuring the continued innovation and positive impact of the technology. Pichai made these remarks on the first day of the AI Action Summit in Paris, France, where global leaders and tech experts are gathered to discuss the future of AI.

In his speech, Pichai emphasized the need for a global AI regulatory framework that is aligned across nations. He highlighted the importance of drawing from existing laws to fill in regulatory gaps, rather than creating entirely new laws from scratch. "It's essential to develop regulations that are not overly restrictive, allowing AI to continue driving progress while addressing the risks it may pose," he said.

Pichai's comments come at a time when AI technology is evolving rapidly and raising concerns regarding its potential misuse, including issues of bias, privacy, and job displacement. While acknowledging these concerns, Pichai urged policymakers to strike a balance between regulation and innovation. He stressed that an international approach would ensure consistency across borders and help prevent fragmented rules that could stifle technological advancements.

The Google CEO also discussed the transformative potential of AI across industries, including healthcare, education, and climate change. He urged governments to foster collaboration with the private sector to develop AI technologies that can contribute positively to global challenges.

The AI Action Summit aims to bring together leaders to discuss AI's future role in society, its ethical implications, and how it can be harnessed for the greater good. Pichai's speech marked a key moment in the ongoing global dialogue on how best to regulate and harness the potential of AI in a responsible and sustainable way.

J&K Legislative Assembly Holds First Full Session After Seven Years

TPN Correspondent | Jammu

The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly has convened its first full session after a seven-year hiatus, with a significant turnout from the 90 Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs). A total of 82 MLAs have submitted nearly 800 questions and 80 private members' bills, demonstrating active participation and a strong desire to address critical issues.

This session marks a significant shift in the legislative process, as the introduction of bills is now subject to approval by the Law Department—a procedural change brought about following the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories (UTs) in 2019. Previously, such a requirement did not exist when the region functioned as a state.

The decision to hold a comprehensive session is seen as a much-needed platform for MLAs to introduce reforms, engage with the concerns of their constituencies, and address pressing issues. As part of the session, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly had instructed each MLA to submit 20 questions—10 in starred and 10 in unstarred categories—along with three private member's bills by February 10. Notably, all eligible legislators have complied with this requirement, reflecting a commitment to active participation and governance. However, since the reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, there have been changes in the scope of legislative discussions. MLAs are no longer permitted to raise questions about the Police Department, anti-militancy operations, law and order, or All India Services, as these fall under the jurisdiction of the central government.

Welcome to Paris, my friend: Emmanuel Macron welcomes PM Modi ahead of AI Summit

- Modi welcomed in Paris for AI Action Summit with Macron.
- Indian diaspora celebrates, requests cultural center in France.
- Modi, Macron to inaugurate India's first Marseille consulate.

TPN Correspondent | France

French President Emmanuel Macron warmly welcomed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Paris, expressing excitement for the upcoming AI Action Summit, which the two leaders are set to co-chair. Macron also extended a greeting to US Vice President JD Vance, who will be attending the summit alongside global tech leaders. Sharing the moment on social media, Macron wrote, "Welcome to Paris, my friend @ NarendraModi! Nice to meet you dear @VP Vance! Welcome to all our partners for the AI Action Summit. Let's get to work!"

Upon arrival in Paris, PM Modi was greeted enthusiastically by members of the Indian diaspora, with some even singing 'Hare Krishna' in celebration. One member of the community shared their joy, stating, "Today is my birthday, it's a big day for me and he (PM Modi) blessed me." Another expressed pride in the Prime Minister's visit, noting the importance of the AI summit and the



opening of a new consulate. The communi-

ty also made a request for a cultural center to be established in the city.

The visit is significant not only for the AI summit but also for the deepening India-France strategic ties. Modi and Macron will discuss key advancements in AI for societal benefit, and jointly inaugurate India's first consulate in Marseille, marking a key diplomatic milestone. The two leaders will also review the Horizon 2047 Roadmap, which focuses on long-term cooperation in various sectors.

During his stay, PM Modi will travel to Marseille with Macron to visit the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), a major nuclear fusion research initiative. Additionally, he will pay tribute to Indian soldiers who lost their lives during the World Wars by visiting the Mazargues War Cemetery. Following his visit to France, PM Modi will travel to the United States for a two-day visit at the invitation of President Donald Trump.



Bangladesh govt aims to hold polls by December: Ex-PM Khaleda Zia

TPN Correspondent | Dhaka

Bangladesh is working towards holding its general elections by December, according to the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) following a meeting with Muhammad Yunus, the chief adviser to the interim government. Yunus, the Nobel Peace laureate, has been leading the caretaker government since August, when mass protests forced then-Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to resign and seek refuge in neighboring India.

The BNP, led by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, and Hasina's Awami League have alternated in power for most of the past three decades, marking a longstanding rivalry between the two political parties. Despite the ongoing political turbulence, there is growing anticipation for the upcoming elections as both major parties prepare for what could be a contentious battle for power.

In a statement following the meeting, a BNP official revealed that the party had once again pressed Yunus on the timeline for the elections. Yunus reassured them that efforts were underway to ensure the elections are held by December. The caretaker government, which is tasked with overseeing the election process, has been working to stabilize the country and maintain order during this transitional period.

The announcement comes amid increasing pressure from the political opposition to ensure free and fair elections, with the BNP seeking guarantees from the interim government. The opposition party has expressed concerns over the potential for election manipulation under Hasina's rule and is pushing for reforms to ensure the integrity of the election process.

As Bangladesh heads towards the critical December deadline, the country is bracing for heightened political activity, with both the Awami League and BNP gearing up for what promises to be a high-stakes election.



Be Psychologically Prepared For Terror Attack: Singapore Minister Warns People

TPN Correspondent | Singapore

Singapore's Law and Home Affairs Minister, K Shanmugam, issued a stark warning on Tuesday, urging the public to mentally prepare for a possible terror incident, as the city-state has seen a rise in radicalized individuals. The minister highlighted recent cases where a teenager, a housewife, and a cleaner were detained under the Internal Security Act (ISA) for their extremist plans.

Speaking at the Sri Thendayuthapani Temple during the Thaipusam 2025 celebrations, Shanmugam referenced a disturbing case involving an 18-year-old student who had been arrested for promoting far-right extremist ideologies. The student, who had been consuming racist and far-right propaganda, idolized the Australian white supremacist responsible for the 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks. He had plans to attack Muslims at a mosque in Singapore and had even gotten tattoos and T-shirts featuring neo-Nazi and far-right symbols.

The Internal Security Department (ISD) detained the student in December 2024. Additionally, Shanmugam noted that a housewife and a cleaner were also targeted for their support of Islamist militant groups. The housewife, a Singaporean Muslim, had been managing social media groups that supported terrorist organizations. Meanwhile, the Malaysian cleaner was arrested in November 2024 and repatriated to Malaysia.

Shanmugam emphasized that while Singapore's authorities have been proactive in combating radicalization, the increasing number of cases signals that the threat is growing. He reassured that ISD's swift actions had prevented many potential threats, but warned that Singaporeans must remain psychologically prepared. "It's not like in other countries.

Ukraine May Be Russian Someday: Trump Ahead Of Zelensky-Vance Meeting

TPN Correspondent | Washington DC

US President Donald Trump has sparked controversy by suggesting that Ukraine "may be Russian someday," signaling a potential shift in American policy toward Moscow. His remarks came just days before his vice president, JD Vance, was scheduled to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. The comments also come nearly three years after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as Russian forces continue to make steady progress on the battlefield, while Kyiv struggles with shortages of soldiers and weapons.

In an interview with Fox News, Trump discussed the ongoing conflict, saying, "They (Ukraine) may make a deal. They may not make a deal. They may be Russian someday, or they may not be Russian someday." Trump also expressed a desire for the US to secure a return on the financial aid sent to Ukraine, suggesting the possibility of brokering a trade deal for Ukraine's natural resources, such as rare earth minerals. He claimed that Ukraine had essentially agreed to provide the US with \$500 billion worth of these resources.

Ukrainian officials have previously shown interest in partnering with the US and oth-



er allies for resource extraction in exchange for security guarantees, though no specifics have been disclosed regarding such an arrangement. Meanwhile, Zelenskyy has insisted on tough security guarantees from the West, fearing that any agreement without military commitments—such as NATO membership or peacekeeping forces—would allow Russia to regroup for another attack.

As part of his efforts to end the war, Trump

revealed plans to send his special envoy, Keith Kellogg, to Ukraine on February 20, just days before the third anniversary of Russia's invasion. Kellogg is tasked with drafting a proposal to halt the conflict, though Trump has not yet outlined a clear strategy to bring both sides to the negotiating table. Despite his push for peace, both Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin have previously ruled out direct negotiations, with significant barriers remaining between the two sides.

Pakistan: Imran Khan requests court to conduct open hearing of his cases

TPN Correspondent | Islamabad

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has formally requested that his legal cases be heard in an open court, filing a petition with the Islamabad High Court. In the petition, Khan claimed that several "false" cases had been filed against him and that his trial was being conducted in a "controlled" environment at Adiala Jail. He argues that the trial in prison violated both legal procedures and the Constitution of Pakistan.

Since his arrest in 2023, Imran Khan, the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has not been presented in an open court. His trials have instead been conducted in makeshift courts set up within the jail. The petition highlights concerns about the lack of transparency in the proceedings, with Khan's legal team facing harassment and restricted access. It also states that the jail administration has not allowed international media to cover the trial, with only a few selected reporters permitted to attend. Additionally, the media was instructed not to use Khan's



name but to refer to him only as the "PTI founder."

In the petition, Khan's legal team urged the Islamabad High Court to issue an order for an open trial to ensure fairness and transparency, as guaranteed under Pakistan's Constitution. Khan's legal representatives

argued that conducting the trial in such a restricted manner violated his fundamental rights, including the right to a fair trial and the right to public and media scrutiny of legal proceedings.

Meanwhile, Imran Khan's sister, Aleema Khan, revealed that her brother would write a third letter to Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, General Asim Munir, next week. This follows two previous letters that Khan had sent to General Munir, which were shared with the media. The military establishment, however, has denied receiving any communication from Khan.

Imran Khan's petition and his ongoing attempts to secure a fair trial have sparked widespread attention in Pakistan, raising concerns about the integrity of his legal proceedings and the state of justice in the country.

Domestic stock markets are reeling under Donald Trump's blow

They fell sharply for the second consecutive day.



Negative sentiment prevailed after Trump said that he would impose 25% tariffs on aluminum and steel imports. In addition, equity shares crashed due to the sharp fall in the rupee, the rise in the value of the dollar, and the rise in bond yields. Mid and small cap indices fell by 2-3 percent. Investors lost wealth worth Rs 10 lakh crore as Nifty 350 and Sensex fell by 1100 points intraday.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 77,311 in the previous session, opened at 77,384 on Tuesday. It touched an intraday low at 76,030. It reached an intraday high at 77,387. It ended at 76,293, down 1,018 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,383, touched a low of 22,986 and a high of 23,390. It closed at 23,071, down 309 points. The Nifty Bank fell 577 points to settle at 49,403. Markets Plunge as Trump's Tariff Shock and Rupee Weak-

ness Trigger Heavy Sell-Off

Six companies gained and 44 lost in the Nifty50. Auto, Media, PSU Bank, Realty, Healthcare, Consumer Durables, Oil and Gas indices fell by 2-3%. Adani Enterprises, Grasim, Trent, Airtel, Britannia were the top gainers. Eicher, Apollo Hospitals, Shriram Fin, CoalIndia, BEL were the top losers.

Today, the market breadth in NSE has completely shifted in favor of sellers. Out of a total of 2918 shares traded, only 326 gained. 2532 lost. Shares of 18 companies reached 52-week highs. 407 shares reached 52-week lows.

Birla Soft's net profit in the third quarter fell 27% to Rs 116 crore from Rs 161 crore. IRCTC's net profit increased by 13.7% to Rs 341 crore from Rs 300 crore. Indo Count's net profit increased by 30%

to Rs 75.5 crore from Rs 58 crore. The rupee strengthened by 65 paise against the dollar and settled at Rs 86.83. Canara Bank reduced its one-month MCLR rate by 10 basis points. Morgan Stanley has given an overweight rating to Apollo Hospitals with a target price of Rs 8,159. Procter & Gamble's net profit rose 18% to Rs 364 crore from Rs 308 crore. Devyani International shares fell 5% on the decline in profit. BLS's net profit rose 43% to Rs 121 crore from Rs 84 crore. Campus Activewear's net profit rose 86% to Rs 46.5 crore from Rs 25 crore. Jefferies has given a buy rating to Grasim Industries with a target price of Rs 3150. Raymond Lifestyle MD and CEO Sunil Katharia has resigned. Bajaj Group shares rose today. Adani shares rose. IIFL Finance's Q3 profit fell 22.7%. HSBC has given a buy rating to Rainbow Medicare with a target price of Rs. 1720.

Patanjali Foods See 71% Jump In Q3 Profit On Cooking Oil Boost



Indian consumer goods manufacturer Patanjali Foods posted a 71% increase in its third-quarter profit on Monday, bolstered by robust demand for its flagship cooking oils. The maker of Ruchi Gold oil reported a profit of 3.71 billion rupees (\$42.4 million) for the three months ending December 31, up from 2.17 billion rupees in the same period last year.

The demand for edible oils, an essential item in Indian households, has remained strong despite the broader challenges posed by inflation. Consumers, who have been avoiding branded goods due to price hikes, continued to purchase cooking oils, even as manufacturers raised prices to offset the rising cost of raw materials.

Patanjali's revenue from its edible oils segment, which accounts for almost three-fourths of the company's total revenue, saw a growth of 22.5% during the quarter. This

surge helped drive a 15% increase in overall revenue, which reached 91.03 billion rupees.

However, not all of Patanjali Foods' segments performed well. Revenue from its food and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) segment dropped 18%, reflecting weaker demand in the category. The company's expenses also rose by 13%, largely due to a hike in import taxes on crude and refined edible oils that came into effect in mid-September. This increase in input costs had a significant impact on the company's profitability.

Despite the challenges in certain sectors, Patanjali Foods' strong performance in the edible oils market highlights its resilience and the ongoing demand for essential consumer goods, particularly in a climate of inflation. The company's focus on this key segment has provided a solid foundation for growth during the quarter.

India Launches EFTA Desk to Strengthen Economic Ties with Europe

India has launched a dedicated desk to foster deeper economic engagement between India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, namely Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland. The formal launch took place at Bharat Mandapam, with Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, representing India at the event.

The newly established EFTA Desk aims to assist businesses from the four EFTA countries in preparing for the opportunities created by the EFTA-India Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA), signed on March 10, 2024. The desk will act as a central point of contact for EFTA businesses looking to expand into India, offering support and guidance on market entry, investment opportunities, and resolving potential issues.



While the TEPA is still in the process of being ratified, businesses across the EFTA nations are already exploring investment opportunities and strengthening their commercial ties with Indian partners. Over 100 EFTA businesses are visiting India this week to explore potential collaborations, an outcome of ongoing efforts by EFTA countries to raise awareness about the benefits of the agreement.

Tea trade bodies push for minimum sustainable price and 100% auction of teas

In a significant development for the Indian tea industry, major tea trade bodies have announced plans to implement a minimum sustainable price for teas, alongside a proposal for 100 percent auction of all teas. This decision aims to ensure better profitability and sustainability for tea producers, especially small tea growers, across the country.

An interactive session was held today in Kolkata, bringing together stakeholders from the organized tea sector and small tea growers from both North and South India. The event provided a platform for dialogue on the challenges and opportunities within the tea industry, with a focus on sustainable growth strategies for the future. Key topics of discussion included improving quality control, optimizing production processes, and ensuring fair pricing mechanisms that benefit all players in the supply chain.

The proposal for a minimum sustainable price comes at a crucial time when the tea industry is grappling with fluctuating market prices, increased production costs, and competition from global markets. By establishing a baseline price, trade bodies hope to provide a more stable income for small tea growers, who often face financial instability due to market volatility.



The move is expected to help safeguard the livelihoods of farmers and ensure the continued production of high-quality tea.

Additionally, the push for 100 percent auctioning of teas aims to increase transparency and fairness in the trade process. Auction systems have long been seen as an effective way to determine market-driven prices, and this approach is intended to create a more competitive and equitable environment for all tea produc-

ers, big and small.

The event in Kolkata marked a critical step towards improving collaboration between different sectors of the tea industry. It highlighted the need for collective action to address issues such as price instability and access to markets, while also emphasizing the importance of sustainable practices in ensuring the long-term health of the tea industry in India.

SEBI Bars LS Industries and Promoter for Stock Price Manipulation

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has imposed a ban on LS Industries Ltd., its promoter Profound Finance, and four other entities from participating in the securities market, following an investigation into stock price manipulation. The regulator's attention was drawn by an article published on the NDTV Profit website on February 3, which highlighted the inexplicable valuation of LS Industries at Rs 5,500 crore despite having almost negligible revenue. SEBI's investigation followed concerns regarding the company's inflated market value, raising ques-

tions about the authenticity of the stock's trading activity and the role of various entities involved in the manipulation. The regulator's actions aim to safeguard market integrity and protect investors from potentially harmful practices. The regulatory body's decision has sent a strong message to the market, reinforcing its commitment to ensuring transparency and fairness in trading practices. The case underscores the importance of scrutiny around corporate valuations and the need for regulatory oversight to prevent stock market manipulation.



Jasprit Bumrah Ruled Out of ICC Champions Trophy 2025, Harshit Rana and Varun Chakravarthy Named as Replacements



Jasprit Bumrah has been officially ruled out of India's squad for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 due to a persistent lower back injury, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) confirmed late Tuesday. Following his exclusion, 23-year-old pacer Harshit Rana has been named as Bumrah's replacement in the final 15-man squad. In another significant change, mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy has been included in place of young opener Yashasvi Jaiswal, who was initially part of the provisional squad. India's revised squad for the tournament includes: Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill (vice-captain), Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul (WK), Rishabh Pant (WK), Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshit Rana, Mohammed Shami, Arshdeep Singh, Ravindra Jadeja, and Varun Chakravarthy. Non-traveling substitutes: Yashasvi Jaiswal, Mohammed Siraj, and Shivam Dube will travel to Dubai if required.



Chelsea Owner Todd Boehly Acquires 49% Stake in Trent Rockets, Beats KKR and Amit Jain

Todd Boehly, co-owner of Chelsea Football Club, has acquired a 49% stake in the English cricket franchise Trent Rockets, beating Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) and Indian investor Amit Jain in the process. Boehly's real estate firm, Cain International, purchased the stake for approximately 39 million British Pounds (around Rs 420 crore), valuing the franchise at GBP 79 million. KKR, owned by Shah Rukh Khan's Red Chillies Entertainment, had been in the running to acquire the team, which would have expanded their global reach, already spanning Trinbago Knight Riders, LA Knight Riders, and Abu Dhabi Knight Riders. Boehly's acquisition further strengthens his sports portfolio, which includes ownership of Chelsea, French side RC Strasbourg, and MLB's Los Angeles Dodgers. The Trent Rockets, based in Nottingham, represent the counties of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, and Leicestershire and won The Hundred tournament in 2022.

Pankaj Advani Wins Indian Snooker Championship, Secures 36th National Gold

Pankaj Advani, India's most decorated snooker player, clinched his 36th overall national title and 10th men's snooker crown at the Yashwant Club. Advani demonstrated exceptional skill and determination throughout the tournament, overcoming an early setback to defeat Brijesh Damani in the final. Damani claimed the opening frame, but Advani bounced back to win the remaining frames, including a standout 84 break in the final frame to seal the championship. The tournament, which serves as the selection event for the Asian and World Championships, proved to be a turning point for Advani. After suffering a loss to Damani in the group stage, Advani's resilience was on full display as he made a stunning comeback in the round of 48, saving his tournament bid and setting the stage for his eventual victory. Advani now prepares for the Asian Snooker Championship starting February 15.



India Chess Star Arjun Erigaisi Criticizes Ministry's Decision to Stop Cash Rewards for Grandmasters



Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi has slammed the Indian sports ministry's recent decision to end cash rewards for players achieving Grandmaster (GM) and International Master (IM) titles, a move that has sparked controversy within the chess community. Previously, players received Rs 4 lakh for a GM title and Rs 1.5 lakh for an IM or International Women Master (IWM) title. The ministry now offers rewards only for winning world-level competitions. Erigaisi, who recently achieved a 2800 ELO rating and won the men's Olympiad gold in 2024, expressed that the removal of these rewards would demotivate parents, who often face financial strain supporting their children's chess careers. "Such incentives encouraged parents to back their children's pursuits in chess," he said. While Erigaisi remains focused on his chess ambitions, including qualifying for the Candidates tournament, he acknowledged that the change could affect young players' motivation.

India to Play International Football Matches in Shillong Ahead of AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has announced that India will play two international matches in Shillong's Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium during the FIFA international window in March. This will be the first time the stadium hosts senior men's international matches since its refurbishment last year. India will face Maldives in a friendly on March 19, as part of their preparation for the AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers Final Round. The second match will be against Bangladesh on March 25, marking India's first game in the AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers. The 15,100-seat stadium, which has hosted several domestic events like the Durand Cup and Indian Super League matches, is now set to stage international fixtures. India is placed in Group C for the AFC Asian Cup 2027 Qualifiers, alongside Hong Kong, Singapore, and Bangladesh.



Pakistan Finalize 15-Man Squad for Champions Trophy 2025, Haris Rauf Cleared for Fitness

Pakistan has confirmed its 15-man squad for the 2025 Champions Trophy, making no last-minute changes despite widespread criticism. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) reviewed the selection after concerns about the inclusion of batter Khushdil Shah and all-rounder Faheem Ashraf. However, there will be no alterations, and the same players will represent Pakistan in the tournament. The squad faced scrutiny for having only one specialist opener and a lone specialist spinner, Abrar Ahmed. However, captain Muhammad Rizwan defended the team, stating the emphasis would be on pace bowlers. Haris Rauf, who suffered a muscle injury in the tri-series, is expected to recover in time for the Champions Trophy opener on February 19. The final squad for the tournament includes Mohammad Rizwan (c), Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, and Shaheen Shah Afridi, among others.



Cristiano Ronaldo Agrees to Extend Contract with Al Nassr Until 2026



Cristiano Ronaldo has reached an agreement with Saudi Arabian football club Al Nassr to extend his contract until June 2026. The Portuguese star's current contract was set to end in June 2025, but the extension, though not yet signed, has been agreed upon by both parties, with an official announcement expected soon. Ronaldo, who turned 40 last week, joined Al Nassr in January 2023 and has scored 82 goals in 90 appearances since. In August, Ronaldo had expressed his intention to likely end his career with Al Nassr, where he feels happy and comfortable. Despite joining for a high-paying deal that initially raised eyebrows, Ronaldo's influence has helped attract other aging stars to the Saudi Pro League. Though he has not won a major trophy with Al Nassr yet, his performances continue to push him toward the milestone of 1,000 career goals.

When It Rained Meat: The Bizarre Kentucky Meat Shower Of 1876



Imagine taking a peaceful stroll one morning, only for chunks of meat to suddenly rain down from the sky. This bizarre occurrence took place on March 3, 1876, in Bath County, Kentucky, leaving residents utterly confused and intrigued. Known as the Kentucky Meat Shower, this strange phenomenon has puzzled historians and scientists for generations, sparking numerous theories about its origins. The event unfolded between 11 am and afternoon when local resident Mary Crouch was outside making soap near Olympia Springs. She was stunned to witness what can only be described as a “meat storm,” with pieces of meat falling over an area roughly 100 by 50 yards.

The meat varied in size, with some chunks measuring 5 cm² and others up to 10 cm². Locals quickly gathered to inspect the mysterious shower. Among them was Harrison Gill, who noted that the meat had landed on fences and the ground, appearing fresh enough to spark curiosity. In a remarkable display of frontier daring, some brave individuals even sampled the strange meat, with reports describing it as tasting like venison or mutton. As the unusual event made its way into the news, various theories were proposed about the meat's origin. Some suggested it was noster, a gelatinous substance produced by cyanobacteria that can resemble meat during rainfall.

Others ventured more outlandish theories, even invoking divine intervention. However, the most plausible explanation came from LD Kastenbine, who theorized that vultures, known for their habit of vomiting their meals when startled, might have been the source. As the birds flew overhead, they could have ejected their partially-digested meal, which fell to the ground below. Despite some confusion, a piece of the “meat” is preserved at Transylvania University in Lexington, adding to the mystery. Though the exact nature of the Kentucky Meat Shower remains unclear, it stands as a strange reminder of the unexpected wonders and oddities nature can throw our way.

“Kurchi Madathapetti” Conquers Global Music Charts



Apple has rolled out an urgent security update, iOS 18.3.1, just one week after the release of the major iOS 18.3 update. The new patch addresses critical security vulnerabilities found in Apple iPhones, highlighting the company's ongoing efforts to keep devices secure and protect user privacy. For users already running iOS 18.3, the iOS 18.3.1 update is about 450 MB in size. It specifically targets a newly discovered zero-day exploit, which could have allowed unauthorized access to iPhones, including potentially enabling law enforcement to unlock devices. This vulnerability posed a significant security risk, as it could have allowed unauthorized parties to bypass iPhone security measures, jeopardizing user data and privacy. Apple has emphasized the importance of installing this update as soon as possible to mitigate the risks associated with these vulnerabilities. As part of its commitment to security,

Apple regularly releases patches like iOS 18.3.1 to address newly discovered threats and bolster device protection. Users are encouraged to download and install the update promptly by going to ****Settings > General > Software Update****. Those who haven't yet updated to iOS 18.3 can apply this critical update directly, which will include all the security fixes in the previous update as well. While Apple doesn't typically release details about specific vulnerabilities, the rapid rollout of iOS 18.3.1 underscores the severity of this security concern. With the growing sophistication of cyberattacks and exploits, keeping software up-to-date is essential to maintaining the security and integrity of devices. By quickly addressing vulnerabilities like the one patched in iOS 18.3.1, Apple continues to reinforce its commitment to user safety, ensuring that iPhones remain protected from emerging threats.

: Elephant Family Gives 'Z Class Security' To Calf In Anamalai Tiger Reserve



Supriya Sahu, the Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu, recently shared a touching moment from the Anamalai Tiger Reserve. In a post that has since captured the hearts of many, she observed a peaceful elephant family and highlighted their protective nature towards their baby elephant, drawing an endearing comparison to 'Class Z' security. Sahu, who heads the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Forests, noted how the elephant family slept peacefully in the deep jungles of the reserve. “Observe how the baby elephant is given Z class security by the family,” she remarked, pointing out how the young elephant sought reassurance from its family members. Her post reflected the similar dynamics often seen in human families, where the young find comfort and safety in the presence of loved ones. The touching scene was captured by wildlife photographer Dhanu Paran in a brief 15-second video,

which shows the bond within the elephant family. The video features a parent elephant, a young one, and three calves, including a newborn, peacefully resting together. Supriya Sahu's post, along with the video, quickly garnered attention on social media, with many users expressing their admiration for the beauty of the moment. One user wrote, “Wonderful and rare sight to see such beautiful things. Amazing..Thanks for showing us while another commented, “Love is the binding force amongst all beings in the world, which humans are moving away from!” The video not only highlighted the loving family dynamics of elephants but also sparked reflections on the importance of preserving such moments of peace in nature. This heartwarming display from the Anamalai Tiger Reserve serves as a reminder of the deep emotional bonds that animals, too, share within their families, resonating with people on a universal level.

Cobra In Amazon Package: Bengaluru Couple Shocked To Find Venomous Snake In Parcel

In an unexpected and alarming turn of events, a Bengaluru couple received a shocking surprise with their latest Amazon delivery. What was meant to be a simple package containing an Xbox controller turned out to have an entirely different kind of guest—a dangerous spectacled cobra. The family, residing on Sarjapur Road, eagerly awaited their package, expecting to find their gaming accessory inside. However, their excitement quickly transformed into fear when they opened the package and noticed a venomous snake attached to the packaging tape. The spectacled cobra, also known as the Indian cobra (*Naja naja*), is a highly venomous species commonly found across the Indian subcontinent. Its venom is a powerful neurotoxin that can cause severe respiratory paralysis, potentially leading to death if not treated immediately. This species is known for its iconic hood and is a symbol of cultural importance in Hindu mythology, often depicted in religious art and folklore. While once used by snake charmers, this practice is now illegal in India due to concerns about animal welfare. Fortunately, the family remained unharmed, but the discovery highlights the unpredictable nature of deliveries and the potential risks associated with them. It's unclear how the snake made its way into the package, but experts suggest that it may have entered the parcel while it was in transit or during the packaging process. This incident serves as a stark reminder of the unusual oc-



currences that can sometimes accompany online shopping. While it's highly unlikely to encounter such a scenario regularly, it's always important for consumers to carefully inspect their deliveries upon receipt.

Japanese Influencer After Eating 600 Fried Chickens And 100 Burgers In One Go

Yuka Kinoshita, Japan's reigning mukbang queen, has announced her retirement from competitive eating, leaving a significant void in the world of food consumption videos. Known for her ability to devour massive quantities of food, Kinoshita has garnered a dedicated following of 5.2 million subscribers on YouTube. However, after years of entertaining fans with her food challenges, she revealed that health concerns and the toll of constant eating have led her to step away from the spotlight. In a heartfelt video, Kinoshita explained the decision, citing both her health and age as major factors. “Well, I am retiring from eating a lot,” she said in the video, which was shared with her followers in both Japanese and English translations. “I will turn 40 on February 4 and I have been feeling tired from eating a lot. It's hard for me to continue working as a big eater. My health has deteriorated over the years, and I now

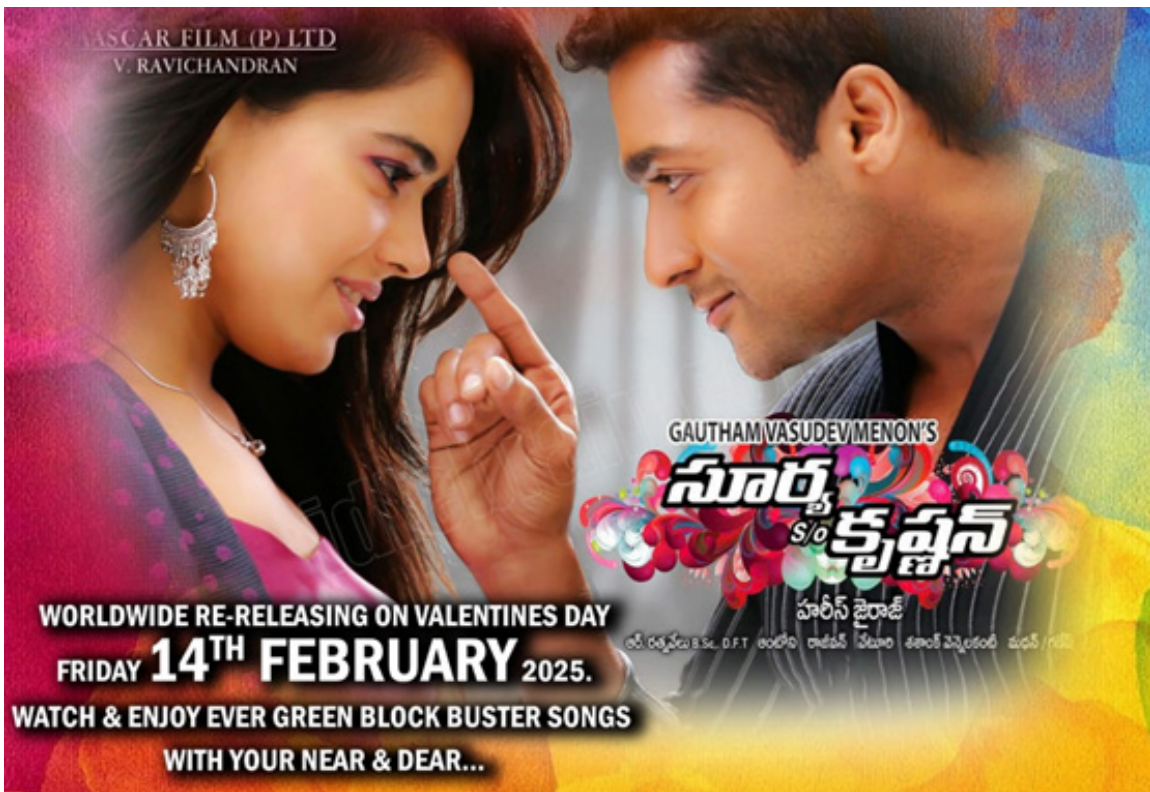


find it difficult to continue at the pace I once did.” Kinoshita further elaborated on how she no longer felt capable of eating at the same extreme levels, revealing that even when she wasn't full, the act of eating left her exhausted. “It is no problem to eat like a normal person, but I will feel tired even when I am not full,” she shared. The announcement follows a seven-month hiatus she had taken from content creation due to a bipolar affective disorder,

highlighting the significant physical and mental toll that her eating challenges had taken on her. Her fans have flooded social media with messages of support, expressing their sadness at her departure while also thanking her for the years of entertainment she provided. Kinoshita's decision to retire marks the end of an era in the mukbang community, but she remains an iconic figure for those who enjoyed her entertaining feats of food consumption.



Surya Son of Krishnan to Re-release on Valentine's Day



The Tamil film *Surya Son of Krishnan*, starring Surya in a dual role alongside Simran, Sameera Reddy, and Ramya, will be re-released in Telugu on February 14, coinciding with Valentine's Day. Directed by Gautam Vasudev Menon, the film was initially released in Tamil as *Varanam Aayiram* and later dubbed into Telugu. Released in 2008, the film became a major success, particularly in Telugu-speaking regions. CLN Media Production House, the team behind the Telugu release, expressed their excitement about bringing the film back to the-

aters. They highlighted Surya's remarkable performance, Gautam Vasudev Menon's direction, and Harris Jayaraj's timeless music as the movie's key strengths. The re-release will feature over 300 shows across Telugu-speaking regions, including Karnataka and overseas, with special screenings on February 12 and 13. PVR Theatres is also hosting a "Lovers' Day Week" event. The film's enduring popularity and iconic songs continue to resonate with youth, and the production team is confident that this re-release will be a hit.

How and Where to Buy IIFA 2025 Tickets Hosted by Shah Rukh Khan

The International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards 2025 is set to be an unforgettable event, and you can be part of the action! Scheduled for March 8th and 9th, 2025, the iconic Jaipur Exhibition and Convention Centre (JECC) in Rajasthan will host this glamorous occasion, which marks the 25th edition of the prestigious awards.

Ticket Prices for IIFA 2025: Ticket prices for the IIFA 2025 event range from Rs 3,000 to Rs 1.5 lakh, offering different levels of access to the star-studded event. While some categories are already sold out, there are still a few seats left, so don't miss out!

How to Book Your Tickets: Booking tickets is a breeze! You can head to District by Zomato's official website or visit the official IIFA website. Once there, click on the "Buy Tickets" option, which will direct you to the IIFA 2025 Jaipur ticket section. Choose your preferred seats, complete the payment, and secure your place at Bollywood's most glamorous event!

Event Highlights: For the first time ever, Shah Rukh Khan will co-host the event with Kartik Aaryan, alongside the charismatic Karan Johar. Get ready for electrifying performances



from Bollywood's brightest stars like Kareena Kapoor, Shahid Kapoor, Nora Fatehi, and Madhuri Dixit. So, are you ready for an evening filled with glitz, glamour, and unforgettable memories? Book your tickets now and be part of the biggest celebration in Bollywood!

NIFFA 2025 Line-Up: Superboys of Malegaon to Open the Festival, Rome Roam Mein as Closing Night Film

The National Indian Film Festival of Australia (NIFFA) has announced an exciting lineup for its 2025 edition, set to be the biggest celebration of Indian cinema in Australia. The festival, which will run from 13 February 2025, will feature 36 Australian premieres, three world premieres, and films in various languages, many never seen in Australian theatres before.

The festival will open with the highly anticipated *Superboys of Malegaon*, a film that garnered acclaim at TIFF and BFI London. It will have its Australian premiere at the red carpet gala in Sydney, followed by events in Canberra, Gold Coast, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, and Melbourne. The film will be released nationwide by Forum Films on 27 February 2025. The closing night film will be Tannishtha Chatterjee's directorial debut, *Rome Roam Mein*, which has already received critical acclaim.



Other notable films include *Wingman* by Anuj Gulati, *Parikrama* by Goutam Ghose, and the world premiere of *The Man Who Hurls News* by Ananth Mahadevan. The festival promises a diverse and engaging selection of films, marking a historic moment for Indian cinema in Australia.

Deepika Padukone Opens Up About Her Student Life on 'Pariksha Pe Charcha'

Actor Deepika Padukone reflected on her school days during an episode of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's *Pariksha Pe Charcha* (PPC) programme. She recalled being a mischievous child, often jumping from one sofa to another. Deepika also candidly shared her struggles with mathematics, admitting that she was weak in the subject and still is.

In a clip shared by PM Modi on his official X page, Deepika highlighted the importance of mental health and well-being, which is a focal point of this year's *Pariksha Pe Charcha*. The actress, who has been vocal about her battle with clinical depression, emphasized the need for students to focus on mental wellness, especially during exams. The full episode, which features discussions on overcoming exam stress and other relevant topics, will be broadcast on February 12 at 10 am. Deepika's participation in this session aligns with her commitment to spreading awareness about mental health.



Makers of 'Sanam Teri Kasam' Celebrate Film's Historic Box Office Return

The 2016 romantic drama *Sanam Teri Kasam*, starring Harshvardhan Rane and Mawra Hocane, has made an incredible return to the box office, emerging as the highest-earning film this past weekend. Directors Vinay Sapru and Radhika Rao have expressed immense pride and satisfaction with the film's renewed success, believing it has finally received the recognition it truly deserves.

The film was re-released on February 7, 2025, and its performance has exceeded expectations. The opening day saw earnings of Rs 4.25 crore, followed by Rs 5.25 crore on Saturday and Rs 6 crore on Sunday, bringing its opening weekend total to Rs 15.75 crore — over 170% higher than its original lifetime earnings. This remarkable box office return highlights the enduring emotional connection the film has with its audience.

Harshvardhan Rane, reflecting on his journey with the film, shared an interesting story about his casting. Despite being four months late for the auditions, he passionately begged the makers for an opportunity to audition, even offering to per-



form just for the sake of it. His persistence paid off, eventually landing him the role that would become a turning point in his career.

Sanam Teri Kasam's success at the box office marks an extraordinary chapter in the film's journey, proving that its emotional story and performances have found a lasting place in the hearts of viewers.

Renu Desai Criticizes Ranveer Allahbadia Over Controversial Comments



Renu Desai recently expressed her strong disapproval of social media influencer Ranveer Allahbadia's inappropriate remarks made during an episode of *India's Got Talent*. In the episode, Ranveer posed a highly offensive question to a female contestant, asking whether she would ever witness her parents' intimate moments or participate in such acts herself. His comments were met with shock and outrage from the show's participants and viewers alike. Although Ranveer lat-

er issued an apology, the backlash continued. Renu Desai took to Instagram to criticize his behavior, warning parents to keep their children away from such influencers. She emphasized the importance of raising children responsibly and highlighted how vulgarity, disguised as "freedom of speech," is being accepted by today's youth. Her post quickly went viral, with many agreeing that her message was spot on, urging accountability from influencers and their content.