



Weather Forecast

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

We Gave Poor Real Development, Not Empty Slogans..

PM Modi Highlights Govt's Achievements in Parliament Address

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his reply to the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, emphasized that his government has delivered real development to the poor rather than empty slogans. He contrasted his administration's performance with previous governments, asserting that 25 crore people have been lifted out of poverty. His speech targeted AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, emphasizing his government's commitment to real development over populist promises.

Taking an apparent swipe at Kejriwal, he said, "Some political leaders focus on jacuzzis and stylish showers, but our focus is on providing tap water to every home. We have ensured tap water for 12 crore families." His remark was seen as a reference to allegations of Kejriwal's ₹45 crore expenditure on his official residence. PM Modi also attacked AAP for failing to fulfill its pre-election promises. "We focus on youth, but some betray them. This group makes promises before elections but doesn't fulfill them. This group is an 'AAP-da' on the youth's future," he quipped.

Congress in PM's Line of Fire

Pivoting to Congress, the Prime Minister mocked its long-standing 'Garibi Hatao' slogan, asserting that his government had actually lifted 25 crore people out of poverty. "For decades, we heard 'Garibi Hatao' slogans, but nothing changed. In the last 10 years, we helped 25 crore people overcome poverty. We didn't just give slogans; we gave real development," he said.

He criticized opposition leaders for engaging in "photo ops in huts" while ignoring real issues. "We have done so much for the poor that the President spoke about it at length. Those who do photo ops in huts will find discussions on the poor boring," he remarked. PM Modi also referenced former PM Rajiv Gandhi's statement that only 15 paise of every rupee sent from Delhi reached the people. "Today, under our government, we have transferred ₹40 lakh crore directly into people's accounts," he declared.

Tax Relief & Economic Measures

Highlighting his government's economic reforms, PM Modi reminded the House of a major tax relief announced in the Union Budget. "In 2014, there was no tax exemption beyond ₹2 lakh. Today, that number has increased to ₹12 lakh. With the standard deduction, the salaried class will not have to pay tax on ₹12.75 lakh from April 1," he stated.



Key Statements from PM Modi's Address:

- "We have done so much for the poor that the President had to mention it at length. Those who do photo ops in huts will find discussions on the poor boring."
- "Some leaders are focusing on jacuzzis and stylish showers, but our focus is on providing tap water to every home. We have ensured tap water for 12 crore families."
- "They used to ridicule our sanitation programme, but today, India has transformed."
- "We removed 10 crore fake beneficiaries from government schemes, ensuring benefits reach the needy."
- "Our model is 'Bachat bhi, Vikas bhi'—the people's money is for the people."
- Through direct benefit transfers, ₹40 lakh crore has been deposited directly into people's bank accounts."
- "A former PM was called 'Mr. Clean', but even he admitted that if ₹1 was sent from Delhi, only 15 paise reached the people."
- "According to a WHO report, due to 'Nal Se Jal', families who earlier spent heavily on diseases have saved crores of rupees."
- Announces new tax relief, raising exemption to ₹12.75 lakh.

PM Modi's remarks reinforced his government's welfare-driven policies while dismissing opposition criticisms as political rhetoric. His speech came in response to Opposition criticism, including Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's remarks against the government's "failed" Make in India policy. While NDA members highlighted government achievements, opposition leaders attempted to target the ruling party on various issues.

Tactics to Malign

EC Hits Back at AAP Ahead of Delhi Polls



EC says it won't be swayed by attempts to "malign" its authority.

Atishi accuses EC of ignoring BJP leader Ramesh Bidhuri's violations.

Kejriwal alleges BJP workers are distributing liquor and cash for votes.

EC issues notices to Kejriwal over his claim of poisoning Yamuna water.

Model Code, and there is no action. I complained, but a case was registered against me instead," she posted on X.

Atishi, who is contesting from Kalkaji, has repeatedly raised concerns over Bidhuri, who was previously criticized for using communal slurs against then-BSP MP Danish Ali. Recently, she broke down after he allegedly made derogatory remarks about her father, which the AAP strongly condemned.

Arvind Kejriwal also launched a sharp attack on the EC, accusing it of enabling "hooliganism" by protecting BJP workers who were allegedly distributing liquor and money in exchange for votes. "If anyone stops them, they will be booked for obstructing work," he claimed. Kejriwal also wrote to Delhi's top election official last week, alleging attacks on AAP workers by goons linked to BJP candidate Parvesh Verma in New Delhi. On Monday, he escalated his criticism, alleging that Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar had been promised a post-retirement position by the BJP. "Rajiv Kumarji is retiring this month. What has been offered to him—Governor, President? I request him, don't destroy democracy," he said.

Additionally, Kejriwal remains embroiled in a dispute with the EC over his claim that Haryana's BJP government had polluted the Yamuna water supply to Delhi. The commission has issued two notices demanding proof or warning of legal consequences.

Delhi's 70 Assembly seats will vote in a single phase on Wednesday, with results set to be announced three days later. AAP, seeking a third consecutive term, faces a strong challenge from the BJP.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A day before Delhi goes to polls, the Election Commission (EC) hit back at the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over what it called "repeated pressure tactics" by political parties to malign its authority. In a post on X, the poll body asserted it had exercised "restraint, absorbing such outbursts with sagacity, stoicism" and reaffirmed that it would not be swayed by such insinuations. The EC emphasized that all concerns raised ahead of the Delhi elections were addressed by over 1.5 lakh officials working within an established legal framework to ensure a fair process. The response follows allegations from AAP leaders, including Chief Minister Atishi and party chief Arvind Kejriwal, questioning the commission's independence. Atishi had accused the EC of failing to act against BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri's family, alleging they were openly violating the Model Code of Conduct in the Kalkaji constituency. She claimed that despite lodging a complaint, she was instead booked by the police. "The Election Commission is unbelievable. Ramesh Bidhuri's family is openly flouting the

India vs Pakistan Champions Trophy Tickets Sold Out in Minutes

- Over 1.5 lakh fans queued online, causing hour-long waiting times.
- Grand Lounge seats costing over ₹1.8 lakh.
- Hospitality and travel sectors brace for increased demand.
- Champions Trophy 2025 to start from February 19.



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Gujarat Forms Panel to Assess Uniform Civil Code, Draft Bill

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US Military C-17 Deports 205 Indians Under Trump Crackdown

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

In a significant move under Donald Trump's immigration crackdown, a US military C-17 aircraft has deported 205 Indian migrants, marking an unprecedented use of military resources for deportation.

A US official confirmed to Reuters that the aircraft departed on January 3, but the exact Indian destination remains undisclosed. Reports indicate that as many as 18,000 illegal Indian immigrants have been identified for deportation under Trump's immigration enforcement strategy.

A US embassy spokesperson, responding to media inquiries, reiterated that the US is "vigorously enforcing its border" and "removing illegal migrants" to send a "clear message" against illegal migration. The official emphasized that the US government is tightening immigration laws and utilizing military resources, including additional personnel at the US-Mexico border,



military aircraft for deportation, and military bases to house arrested migrants.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has stated that India will accept deported migrants if proper documentation is provided to confirm their nationality. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal

emphasized that India remains firmly against illegal immigration, citing its links to organized crime.

The Pentagon has already deported over 5,000 migrants from Guatemala, Peru, and Honduras using military aircraft, with a single flight reportedly costing at least \$4,675 per deportee.

Bhutan King Takes Dip at Sangam During Maha Kumbh



pyjama, the Bhutanese monarch was joined by UP ministers Swatantra Dev Singh and Nand Gopal Gupta, as well as Vishnuwami sect leader Jagadguru Santosh Das Maharaj, also known as Satua Baba. CM Adityanath guided the King through the ceremonial bath and religious customs.

Following the dip, the King visited the revered Akshayvat tree and Bade Hanuman Temple to offer prayers. He and CM Adityanath also toured the Digital Maha Kumbh Experience Centre.

The King had arrived in Lucknow on Monday, where he was warmly received by CM Adityanath. He later met Governor Anandiben Patel at Raj Bhavan, paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, and held discussions on India-Bhutan relations.

Government officials emphasized that the King's visit would further strengthen India-Bhutan ties and cultural exchanges. This marks his second high-profile visit to India in recent months, following his Delhi tour in December 2024.

Meanwhile, Maha Kumbh authorities reported that over 54 lakh devotees took a dip at Sangam by noon on Tuesday. Since its commencement on January 13, more than 37.50 crore pilgrims have participated in the sacred event, which concludes on February 26.

- Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck takes a holy dip at Triveni Sangam.
- Accompanied by CM Yogi Adityanath, the King performed religious rituals.
- He also visited Akshayvat and Bade Hanuman Temple after the dip.
- Over 54 lakh devotees participated in the Kumbh Snan by noon Tuesday.
- Maha Kumbh has witnessed 37.50 crore pilgrims since January 13.

TPN Correspondent | Prayagraj

Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck visited the Maha Kumbh on Tuesday and took a holy dip at the Triveni Sangam, accompanied

by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The King performed rituals, including offering 'arghya' to the Sun, before entering the sacred waters.

Dressed in a saffron kurta and

PM Modi to visit Maha Kumbh, take holy dip at Sangam today



TPN Correspondent | Prayagraj

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit the Maha Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj today and take a holy dip at the Sangam around 11 am. The Maha Kumbh 2025, which began on Paush Purnima (January 13), is the world's largest spiritual gathering, drawing millions of devotees from across the globe.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, Modi will offer prayers to Maa Ganga during his visit. The Maha Kumbh will continue until Mahashivratri on February 26, marking a significant religious and cultural event for Hindu devotees.

The Prime Minister has consistently emphasized preserving and promoting India's spiritual heritage. His govern-

ment has undertaken major infrastructure improvements at pilgrimage sites, enhancing facilities for devotees and tourists.

During his previous visit to Prayagraj on December 13, 2024, Modi inaugurated 167 development projects worth ₹5,500 crore, focusing on better connectivity, amenities, and services for the public.

Delhi Declares Public Holiday on February 5 for Assembly Elections

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Delhi government has declared a public holiday on February 5, the polling day for the 2025 Assembly elections, to encourage maximum voter participation. While government and private offices will remain closed, essential services such as the Metro and public bus services will continue without disruption.

What's Closed?

As per the notification issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has ordered the closure of:

All government offices, local and autonomous bodies, and public sector undertakings under the Delhi government.

Banks across the city to ensure employees can exercise their voting rights.

Schools and colleges, many of which will serve as polling stations. Some institutions may also remain closed a day be-



fore polling.

Jamia Millia Islamia Middle School, which has declared a two-day holiday on February 4 and 5 to facilitate election arrangements.

Cinema halls, liquor stores, and licensed establishments from 6 PM on February 3 until 6 PM on February 5, following Election Commission guidelines.

What's Open?

Public transport: Delhi Metro and DTC buses will operate as

usual to ensure smooth voter movement.

Essential services: Hospitals, pharmacies, grocery stores, and eateries will remain open.

Delhi Metro Special Service: The Metro will start early at 4 AM on polling day, running trains every 30 minutes until 6 AM, after which normal operations will resume.

Voting in Delhi will take place in a single phase on February 5, with results to be announced on February 8.

Five-Year-Old Alleges Sexual Assault by Class 12 Student on Delhi School Bus

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

In a disturbing case from south Delhi, a five-year-old student attending a private school was allegedly sexually assaulted by a Class 12 student inside the school bus last August. The accused, a foreign national whose parent is employed at an embassy in Delhi, has yet to be apprehended or interrogated, according to police sources. The incident came to light in September when the child's father reported to the police that his daughter was experiencing "frequent urination" and "abdominal pain". After a medical consultation, she disclosed the assault to her parents.

An FIR was filed on September 19 under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act's Section 10 (ag-

gravated sexual assault) and Section 75 (2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) concerning sexual harassment. Initially, the identity of the accused wasn't disclosed due to the child's fear, but on November 11, the minor named the accused, and this information was subsequently shared with the police.

A senior police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, explained that after verifying the allegations, a request was made in December to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to allow for the interrogation of the accused. They stated, "We wrote to the MEA in December to expedite the matter and give us permission to question the accused and probe further. We are still awaiting approval from both

the MEA and the embassy." The FIR notes the profound trauma the young victim has endured, mentioning, "She is a five-year-old girl and has gone through a lot of trauma since then... She is very scared of the boy who molested her."

The family confirmed that the assault occurred twice on the school bus, highlighting the urgency and severity of the situation. The minor was sent to record her statement before a judge to further the legal proceedings.

This case underscores the complexities involved when diplomatic immunity and international relations intersect with criminal investigations, particularly in sensitive cases involving minors.

Light Rain Improves Delhi's Air Quality to 'Poor' Category

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Some parts of Delhi received light rainfall early Tuesday, leading to a slight improvement in the city's air quality index (AQI). The average AQI stood at 247 (poor) at 9 am, compared to 286 (poor) at 4 pm on Monday.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) reported drizzles and light rain across central, north, and southwest Delhi. A second spell of light rain is expected later in the day. Safdarjung recorded 0.3mm of rainfall in the past 24 hours, while Lodhi Road registered 0.4mm. Areas such as Palam, Ridge, and Ayanagar recorded only trace amounts. The rainfall was attributed to



a western disturbance, which will keep skies partially cloudy until Wednesday. Another western disturbance is expected to influence the region from February 8, bringing further weather changes.

Delhi's minimum temperature on Tuesday was 12.8°C, four degrees above normal, while the maximum temperature is expected to drop to 20-22°C due to cloud cover.

Delhi High Court Declines Urgent Hearing on CAG Reports

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi
The Delhi High Court on Monday rejected a plea seeking the immediate publication of 14 Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports before the Delhi Assembly elections, ruling that the issue had no correlation with the upcoming polls on February 5.

A bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyay and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela dismissed the urgency cited by the

petitioner, former civil servant Brij Mohan, stating, "Day after tomorrow, there are elections, we find no urgency." The court scheduled the matter for hearing on March 5 instead.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has repeatedly accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) of withholding the reports to prevent political damage, as they cover contentious issues such as the Delhi excise policy, CM's bungalow

renovation, pollution, public health, and the performance of government departments. However, the AAP has



dismissed these claims as fabricated. Earlier, another Delhi High Court bench had also rejected a BJP petition seeking a special assembly session to table the CAG reports, though it criticized the AAP government's delay in presenting them. The court had previously directed the Delhi government to table the reports expeditiously after the elections.

Petitioner Brij Mohan, represented by

senior advocate Geeta Luthra, argued that the public had a fundamental right to know about Delhi's financial health before voting, citing Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution. However, the court maintained that Article 151 requires the reports to be first tabled in the legislative assembly, stating, "Public has a right to know, but not in violation of constitutional provisions."

Disobedience Case Filed Against Atishi on Eve of Delhi Polls



- Police file a case against Atishi under Section 223 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.
- Incident reportedly involved a supporter slapping a cop filming Atishi's cavalcade.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi
A police case has been registered against Delhi Chief Minister Atishi less than 24 hours before the Assembly elections. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader has been booked under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at Govindpuri police station for allegedly violating poll code regulations. According to Delhi Police, Atishi was standing at Fateh Singh Marg with a group of 50-70 supporters and 10 vehicles. Despite being asked to disperse in accordance with election guidelines, they refused, leading to the case. The incident reportedly escalated after an Atishi supporter allegedly slapped a police officer who was filming the Chief Minister's cavalcade. Atishi, who is contesting from the Kalkaji constituency, hit back at the move, accusing authorities of bias. She alleged that BJP candidate Ramesh Bidhuri's family was openly violating the Model Code of

Conduct, yet no action was taken. "The Election Commission is unbelievable. Ramesh Bidhuri's family members are openly flouting the model code, and there is no action. I complained to the police and the EC, but instead, they registered a case against me," she said in a post on X. AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal also weighed in, claiming that both the Delhi Police and the Election Commission were enabling BJP's "hooliganism" while cracking down on AAP. "If anyone stops them, they will be charged under a case of obstructing work," he alleged. Police sources stated that the case was filed after canvassing hours had ended and accused Atishi of arguing with the executive magistrate leading the flying squad, which is responsible for enforcing poll code regulations. Delhi votes in a single-phase election on Wednesday, with results to be declared three days later.

'Country will run on Baba Saheb's Constitution, not BJP's terms': AAP



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi
The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) intensified its campaign in the final Sunday before the Delhi Assembly elections, urging voters to support Arvind Kejriwal for a fourth term. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann led multiple rallies and roadshows, asserting that the people had already decided to re-elect AAP. "Arvind Kejriwal resides in the hearts of Delhi people. The crowd's energy proves they have decided to vote for the 'jhaadu' (broom) on February 5. After that, our responsibility begins again for the next five years," Mann said in Sangam Vihar. Mann held a padayatra in New Delhi, a public meeting in Sangam Vihar, and roadshows for Manish Sisodia (Jangpura), Somnath Bharti (Malviya Nagar), and Durgesh Pathak (Rajinder Nagar). He alleged that the BJP was distributing money, sarees, and blankets to

buy votes but urged people to take them and still vote for AAP. AAP's Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh also held multiple 'jan sabhas' (public meetings), alleging that no matter how much BJP resorts to intimidation, Kejriwal will win. Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said, "This country will be governed by Baba Saheb Ambedkar's Constitution, not by BJP's terms." Singh further accused the BJP-led Centre of falsely jailing AAP leaders and urged voters to defeat the BJP decisively on February 5. He highlighted AAP's governance, including free electricity, water, education, healthcare, and women's free bus travel, stating that each family in Delhi saves ₹25,000 monthly due to these schemes. "Do you want to continue saving ₹25,000 or suffer losses under BJP?" he asked, drawing a loud response in favor of AAP.

Delhi Court Dismisses BJP Leader's Defamation Case Against Shashi Tharoor

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A Delhi court has dismissed a criminal defamation complaint filed by BJP leader and former Union Minister Raveesh Chandrasekhar against Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, stating that the allegations did not constitute defamation. Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Paras Dalal ruled on Tuesday that there were "no ingredients of defamation" in the complaint and refused to summon Tharoor, the MP from Thiruvananthapuram. Chandrasekhar had accused Tharoor of making false and derogatory statements on national television, alleging that the BJP leader bribed voters in the Thiruvananthapuram constituency during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Tharoor had defeated Chandrasekhar in the polls. The BJP leader claimed that the allegations were intended to tarnish his reputation and influence the election outcome. He also alleged that the in-



terviews containing the remarks were widely circulated on news channels and social media, leading to a loss of reputation and his eventual electoral defeat. The Delhi court had initially taken cognizance of the complaint on September 21, 2024. However, after reviewing the case, it found no grounds to summon

Tharoor. Meanwhile, in a separate case, the Delhi High Court on Monday issued summons to Tharoor in a ₹10 crore civil defamation suit filed by Chandrasekhar for loss of reputation. Justice Purushendra Kumar Kaurav has scheduled the matter for hearing on April 28.

Gujarat Forms Panel to Assess Uniform Civil Code, Draft Bill



TPN Correspondent | Gujarat

The Gujarat government has constituted a five-member panel to evaluate the necessity of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and draft a proposed bill, following Uttarakhand's implementation of the UCC. The committee, chaired by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Desai, has been given 45 days to submit its report to the state government. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel announced the formation of the committee, stating that the government will

take a decision on UCC implementation based on the report. Other members of the panel include retired IAS officer CL Meena, advocate RC Kodekar, educationist Daxesh Thakar, and social worker Gita Shroff. **Opposition Criticizes Move** The announcement has sparked criticism from opposition parties, with Congress and AAP accusing the BJP government of using UCC discussions to divert attention from economic and social issues.

Congress leader Manish Doshi remarked, "The Centre and Gujarat government have failed on inflation and unemployment. Instead of addressing real issues, they are forming a committee on UCC. What we need is a uniform service code, health code, and education code." AAP state chief Isudan Gadhvi also condemned the decision, stating, "The BJP is bringing UCC only because elections are approaching. There are bigger concerns like inflation, farmer distress, and unemployment. We will review the provisions and oppose the UCC." **Gujarat Cites Uttarakhand as a Model** Defending the decision, CM Patel reaffirmed that his government remains committed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of implementing UCC nationwide. Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi highlighted that the UCC model adopted by Uttarakhand respects tribal customs and traditions. The Gujarat panel is expected to consider various social and legal aspects of the UCC and will consult religious leaders, including Muslim representatives, before finalizing its recommendations.

Only BJP Can Make Delhi a Global Capital: Amit Shah



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a sharp attack on the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on the final day of campaigning for the Delhi Assembly elections, accusing the ruling party of corruption, unfulfilled promises, and misgovernance. Addressing multiple public meetings, Shah claimed that only the BJP can transform Delhi into the world's best capital under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. Shah asserted that states with a BJP "double-engine" government have seen rapid development over the past decade, whereas Delhi has suffered due to AAP's mismanagement. "For 10 years, AAP has only made excuses and fought with the Centre like a cry-baby. They have not done any real work. People of Delhi are now aware of Kejriwal's lies," Shah said while campaigning in Jangpura.

Taking aim at former Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, who is contesting from Jangpura instead of Patparganj, Shah called him the "first education minister to go to jail in a liquor case". He accused Sisodia of ruining Delhi's education system and said that under a BJP government, every penny lost to corruption would be recovered. Shah accused AAP of misgovernance and corruption, particularly in the education and excise policies, stating that the party had failed to deliver on its promises. He claimed that Kejriwal's government had neglected basic necessities like clean water, proper drainage, and infrastructure, leaving Delhi in a state of disrepair. Mocking Kejriwal's unfulfilled promise of taking a dip in the Yamuna, Shah cited a symbolic protest by BJP workers, who immersed Kejriwal's cutout in the polluted river to highlight the government's failure in cleaning it. Campaigning in Bijwasan, Shah highlighted the poor condition of water pipelines, calling them an "engineering wonder" due to their haphazard installation. He criticized Kejriwal for blaming Haryana for Yamuna pollution while failing to clean the river himself.

Kejriwal Faces Police Case in Haryana

TPN Correspondent | Haryana

A police case has been registered against former Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal in Haryana, just a day before Delhi goes to polls. The case stems from Kejriwal's recent allegations that Haryana is deliberately poisoning the waters of the Yamuna River.

The case, filed under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), includes charges of inciting riots, promoting hatred, making false accusations with intent to harm, and committing deliberate and malicious acts that insult religious sentiments. Haryana authorities have taken a strong stance against Kejriwal's remarks, terming them as an attempt to provoke unrest and create unnecessary tensions between states.

Kejriwal, who has been out on interim bail in the Delhi liquor policy case, has not yet responded to the latest charges. With Delhi voters set to cast their ballots tomorrow, this development has added further political drama, with AAP leaders calling it a politically motivated move to tarnish their party's image ahead of elections.

Political analysts believe that the timing of the case could impact AAP's campaign strategy, with party leaders expected to address the allegations aggressively. Meanwhile, the BJP and Congress have criticized Kejriwal for making inflammatory statements, accusing him of using diversionary tactics to shift focus from governance failures.

PM Modi Recommends 'JFK's Forgotten Crisis' to Lok Sabha MPs

Calls out Nehru's handling of China crisis, Congress questions relevance

- Suggested MPs read Bruce Riedel's book on JFK's diplomatic challenges.
- Criticized Nehru's foreign policy decisions during the 1962 India-China war.
- Faced pushback from Congress MP Shashi Tharoor over book's relevance.

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday recommended that Lok Sabha MPs read JFK's Forgotten Crisis, a book by US foreign policy expert Bruce Riedel. The book delves into political and diplomatic crises during John F. Kennedy's presidency, including discussions involving India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and his foreign policy decisions during the 1962 India-China war.

The Prime Minister's recommendation came amid increasing political pressure over his government's handling of the ongoing China border dispute. Modi directed the suggestion at those questioning his leadership, particularly Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav, who had raised concerns regarding India's territorial integrity. He also used the moment to take a subtle dig at Nehru, often targeted by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for his foreign policy stance, especially in relation to China.

Modi stated that the book revealed "what games" Nehru had played with India's security, referring to the historical context of India's foreign policy during the 1962 border conflict with China. He suggested that MPs interested in foreign policy should read the book, as it includes details about Nehru's communication with JFK during the crisis. According to Modi, the book highlights the games played in the name of foreign policy during that time.

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, however,



questioned Modi's recommendation, expressing confusion about how it was relevant to the discussion on the President's speech. Tharoor, who had read Riedel's book years ago, pointed out that it mentioned the US secretly helping India during the 1962 war. The book also revealed that India had asked for this assistance, acknowledging the dire situation it was facing during the conflict.

The Prime Minister's comment came in the wake of Rahul Gandhi's remarks on India's territorial loss to China. Gandhi had questioned the government about reports suggesting that over 4,000 square kilometers of Indian territory had been surrendered to China. This prompted a strong rebuttal from Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who rejected Gandhi's claims.

Meanwhile, Modi's speech also targeted the opposition over corruption allegations, particularly against Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal. The Prime Minister accused Kejriwal of spending taxpayers' money on luxury renovations for his official residence. Additionally, Modi criticized the Congress party for its failure to eradicate poverty despite decades of governance, claiming that his government had successfully lifted 25 crore people out of poverty in just 10 years.

The political attacks set the stage for the Delhi Assembly elections, with Modi using the opportunity to counter the opposition's claims and assert his government's achievements.

West Bengal's Railway Funding Sparks Tensions Between BJP and TMC



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The allocation of Rs 13,955 crore for railway infrastructure in West Bengal as part of the Union Budget 2025 has sparked a war of words between the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the BJP. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a statement on Tuesday, emphasized that the funding for the state was three times the amount allocated when Mamata Banerjee, the TMC leader, was serving as the Railway Minister. This comment was aimed at countering claims made by the TMC, which had previously alleged that the Union Budget had not done enough for the state.

Vaishnaw's remark was a pointed jab at the West Bengal Chief Minister, who had criticized the budget as being inadequate for her state. He further highlighted that the railway allocation under the current government was significantly higher than the funds allocated during Mamata Banerjee's tenure as Railway Minister during both the NDA and UPA governments. Vaishnaw noted, "When Mamata Banerjee was the Railways Minister, Bengal was given a lot of projects and funds too. But this year, the allocation has tripled."

However, the TMC was quick to counter Vaishnaw's claims. Party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh argued that the BJP's narrative was misleading, stating that during Mamata Banerjee's tenure, Bengal had received numerous railway projects, new trains, station renovations, and the establishment of new lines and factories. Ghosh criticized the current BJP-led government for not allowing proper paperwork for the ongoing projects, thus hindering progress in the state. He said, "Less funds are coming in for many projects, and in some cases, funds are not enough at all."

In response, Vaishnaw urged the West Bengal government to assist with land acquisition and law and order, emphasizing that such collaboration was crucial for the development of railway projects in the state. He also pointed out the impressive growth of the Kolkata Metro, citing that in the last decade, 32 kilometers of metro lines had been built, surpassing the total length constructed in the past 42 years.

Centre Offers Land for Manmohan Singh's Memorial at Rajghat

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Indian government has offered land in the Rajghat complex to build a memorial for former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who passed away in December 2024, according to government sources. The plot allocated is situated next to the memorial of Pranab Mukherjee, the former Congress leader and President, who served during Singh's tenure as prime minister from 2004 to 2014.

Sources have confirmed that the government is awaiting the formation of a trust by Singh's family before formally allocating the land. Once the trust is established, the government will also provide Rs 25 lakh for the construction of the memorial.

Manmohan Singh, widely credited with ushering in economic reforms as Finance Minister in 1991, played a pivotal role in transforming India's economic landscape, opening the country to global markets. His tenure as Prime Minister from 2004 to 2014 is seen as one of significant economic growth and international diplomacy.

Following Singh's death on December 26, 2024, the Congress party criticized the government for not finding an appropriate site for his memorial. In response, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) reminded the Congress that it had not built a memorial for former Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao, under whom Singh had served as Finance Minister. This controversy was further amplified when the government, in January, allocated land for a memorial for Pranab Mukherjee, who passed away in 2020. Mukherjee's daughter, Sharmistha Mukherjee, expressed gratitude for the government's decision to create a memorial at the 'Rashtriya Samiti' complex in Rajghat, noting that the gesture was unexpected yet deeply appreciated. She also took a dig at the Congress, pointing out that the party had not even convened a condolence meeting for her father.



Engines Colliding? Akhilesh Yadav Uses BJP Slogan To Jab Yogi Adityanath

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav launched a strong critique of the Uttar Pradesh government in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, accusing it of mishandling the recent stampede during the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj. Yadav questioned the Yogi Adityanath-led administration's failure to disclose the accurate number of casualties, criticizing the government's lack of transparency in the aftermath of the tragedy that occurred on January 29, 2025.

The stampede occurred during the rush for a holy dip on the banks of the Ganga, leading to tragic loss of life. The police initially reported 30 deaths and 60 injuries, but critics argue that the actual toll is likely higher. Yadav expressed his dissatisfaction with the delayed response of the administration, stating, "They gave a lot of numbers in the Budget, they should also give the numbers of the dead at Mahakumbh."

Yadav demanded that Parliament be provided with a detailed report on the incident and the government's arrangements for the event. He also called for an all-party meeting to address the tragedy and ensure that those responsible for concealing the truth are held accountable. "Hiding the truth is a crime. Who will serve the punishment for this?" he asked.

The SP chief accused the government of focusing on publicity rather than providing adequate arrangements for the millions of devotees who attended the event. He criticized the claims of a "Digital Kumbh" organized by the government, pointing out the irony that those behind such claims were unable to provide accurate numbers about the victims of the stampede. He also condemned the government's response to the aftermath, alleging that it involved superficial gestures like dropping flowers from a helicopter instead of addressing the victims' losses in a meaningful way. Yadav took further aim at Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, claiming that the CM did not express condolences over the deaths until both the President and the Prime Minister had done so. He also raised concerns over the handling of the religious practices, alleging that the government interfered with long-standing traditions and caused divisions among the akharas (spiritual groups).



Maharashtra Won't Forgive You: D Fadnavis On Rahul Gandhi's Poll Claim

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has strongly rebuked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi following his allegations of voter manipulation in the state. Fadnavis's remarks came after Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, claimed that around 70 lakh voters, roughly the population of Himachal Pradesh, were added to the electoral rolls in Maharashtra between the Lok Sabha and state elections.

Addressing the House during the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's address, Gandhi claimed that an unusually large number of voters were registered in Maharashtra ahead of the state elections, which raised suspicions regarding the fairness of the process. He alleged that more voters were added in just five months than in five years, particularly in constituencies where the BJP had emerged victorious in the 2019 state elections.

In response, Fadnavis accused Gandhi of insulting the people of Maharashtra and questioning the democratic mandate given to the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the state. He emphasized that Maharashtra, known for its legacy of prominent figures like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Mahatma Phule, and Veer Savarkar, deserved respect. He condemned Gandhi for what he described as slanderous remarks and demanded an apology from the Congress leader. "The people of Maharashtra won't forgive you for this. Apologise, Mr. Rahul Gandhi!" Fadnavis said, asserting that the Congress leader's remarks were an attack on the state's democratic integrity.

Gandhi's comments come after the Congress performed poorly in the Maharashtra Assembly elections, securing only 16 seats, while the BJP achieved its best-ever performance with 132 seats. The Congress leader's claims of voter irregularities in Maharashtra have sparked a political uproar, with the BJP accusing him of undermining the electoral process.

In addition to the allegations about voter rolls, Gandhi had previously raised concerns over the transparency of India's electoral system. He suggested that the Election Commission needed to ensure greater clarity and accountability in its operations. He also claimed that the Congress and other opposition parties had sought voter lists from the Maharashtra and Haryana elections, which they were reportedly denied access to.

UP Govt Ensures Special Services for Seniors at Maha Kumbh

Dedicated efforts to assist 2,000 elderly devotees with holy dip and essential support



- Special pandal set up for elderly and hearing-impaired.
- Free hearing aids and medical exams under Shraavan Kumbh.
- 100-bed ashram ensures comfort for senior pilgrims.

TPN Correspondent | Prayagraj

Uttar Pradesh Government Facilitates Special Services for Senior Citizens at Maha Kumbh

The Uttar Pradesh government has announced plans to ensure that 2,000 senior citizens experience the Sangam Snan (holy dip) by the end of the Maha Kumbh, which is set to conclude on February 26. The initiative is part of a broader effort by the state to offer essential services and support to the elderly, especially those from underprivileged backgrounds.

The Social Welfare Department has set up a dedicated pandal along the banks of the Sangam in partnership with the National Medicos Organization and the Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO). This collaborative effort has been provid-

ing crucial assistance to underprivileged groups, with a particular focus on the elderly and hearing-impaired.

A key program under this initiative is Shraavan Kumbh, which provides free exams and assistive devices to people with hearing impairments. For the first time at the Maha Kumbh, the Yogi Adityanath government has launched a special camp for senior citizens and those with hearing disabilities. This camp, organized by the Social Welfare Department, offers free tests and hearing aids to those in need.

The government's approach aims to ensure that elderly devotees, particularly those from state-run old-age homes, can comfortably participate in the Sangam Snan and other religious activities. To accommodate their needs, a 100-bed ashram has been established

in the Kumbh area. This ashram provides special facilities to ensure senior citizens can stay in comfort while experiencing the divine spirit of the Kumbh Mela.

So far, more than 500 senior citizens from various districts, including Mirzapur, Gonda, Siddharthnagar, Bhadohi, Kaushambi, Hardoi, Sitapur, and Lucknow, have participated in the event. The government is committed to facilitating the Amrit Snan for 2,000 elderly devotees by February 26.

Asim Arun, the Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Social Welfare, emphasized the government's dedication to the welfare and safety of senior citizens. He pointed out that the "double-engine" government is consistently working to ensure the well-being and dignity of senior citizens across the state. The initiative, including Shraavan Kumbh, has greatly benefited many elderly citizens, allowing them to partake in the sacred Kumbh experience.

The Maha Kumbh began on January 13 and will continue until February 26, attracting millions of pilgrims from around the world. The government has reported that by Monday evening, nearly 35 crore devotees had taken a holy dip at the Sangam, with expectations of over 50 crore participants by the end of the event.

BMC Presents ₹74,427 Crore Budget for 2025-26 with Focus on Infrastructure

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

On Tuesday, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) presented its budget for the financial year 2025-26, amounting to ₹74,427 crore. This marks a 14.19% increase from the previous year's budget of ₹65,180.79 crore. The budget was presented by the additional municipal commissioner to Bhushan Gagrani, the state-appointed administrator of the civic body, continuing the practice for the third consecutive year of the administrator presenting the budget instead of the municipal commissioner.

Key highlights of the budget include allocations for essential public services, infrastructure development, and efforts to generate revenue. For the Water and Sewerage Department, ₹2,363.15 crore has been proposed, while the Fire Brigade Department is expected to generate ₹759.18 crore in revenue. Additionally, the BMC plans to auction plots under the 100% Annual Statement of Rates (ASR) policy to boost its revenue.

The Roads and Traffic Department has been allocated ₹5,100 crore for the 2025-26 financial year, a significant increase from ₹4,111.51 crore in the previous year. For health ser-



VICES, the BMC has earmarked ₹5,207.70 crore in the revenue budget and ₹2,172.73 crore in the capital budget. Similarly, ₹3,544.34 crore has been allocated for the Education Department under the revenue budget, with ₹411.30 crore for capital expenditure.

The Environment and Disaster Management Departments have also received significant allocations, with ₹113.18 crore and ₹309 crore, respectively. The Security Department has been allocated ₹18.21 crore, which includes funding for installing high-tech, AI-based CCTV systems across BMC facilities.

A major provision in the budget is ₹1,000 crore for the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) undertaking. Despite the financial challenges, the BMC recognizes the

need to support BEST, which operates a fleet of around 3,000 buses serving over 30 lakh commuters daily. The ₹1,000 crore will be used for infrastructure development, capital equipment, loan repayments, employee benefits, and other operational needs.

The BMC has also pledged ₹128.65 crore, its 5% share, towards the procurement of 2,000 electric buses as part of the state's directives. Additionally, the 15th Finance Commission has sanctioned ₹992 crore for the purchase of electric buses, with ₹493.38 crore already disbursed.

The BMC's 2025-26 budget reflects a comprehensive approach to enhancing public services and infrastructure while addressing the city's growing transportation and environmental needs.

Sitharaman Defends Budget Proposals for Bihar, Emphasizing Long-Awaited Development



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday defended the Budget's focus on Bihar, stating that the eastern state has been "long waiting" for development and stressing that the proposals should not be viewed through a political lens. Speaking at the India Today-Business Today Budget Round Table 2025, Sitharaman addressed criticisms of the timing of the proposals, particularly in the context of the upcoming elections in the state.

Sitharaman pointed out that any action taken during a five-year election cycle is bound to be seen as politically motivated, but she emphasized that the proposals are part of the Prime Minister's Purvodaya plan, aimed at addressing the region's long-standing developmental needs. She also took a dig at the opposition, saying that Bihar, which attracts a

global Buddhist community, had been waiting for an international airport for several years. "Why didn't previous governments think about it for a state with such a dense population and global significance?" she asked.

One of the most significant proposals in the Budget was the establishment of a 'Makhana Board' in Bihar. Makhana, also known as foxnuts, is considered a superfood due to its high nutritional value and is predominantly grown in the Mithilanchal and Seemanchal regions. Sitharaman explained that while Makhana is exported from India, the farmers in Bihar, who belong to some of the most backward communities in the state, have not received much support or incentives. "These farmers face annual flooding from the River Kosi, and yet little assistance reaches them," she said,

stressing the need for targeted initiatives to improve their livelihoods.

Other proposals for Bihar in the 2025 Budget included the setting up of a National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship, and Management. Additionally, the state will receive ₹11,500 crore in aid for the Western Kosi Canal ERM project, which aims to address critical irrigation needs in the region.

Sitharaman's defense of the Budget highlights the government's commitment to addressing Bihar's developmental challenges, ensuring that the state benefits from long-overdue infrastructural and agricultural improvements. Despite the political backdrop, the Finance Minister urged that the focus should remain on the genuine developmental needs of the state.

Madhya Pradesh CM Announces the Birth of Two Cheetah Cubs at Kuno National Park

TPN Correspondent | Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav recently shared exciting news about the growing cheetah population in the state. On his official X (formerly Twitter) handle, he revealed that Cheetah Veera, one of the female cheetahs introduced to Kuno National Park, has given birth to two cubs. The CM expressed his joy over the birth of the cubs, describing the park as "echoing again with the laughter of little cheetahs."

Yadav shared a photo of the two cheetah cubs and added, "Today, female cheetah Veera has given birth to 2 cubs. Cheetah cubs are welcome on the land of Madhya Pradesh, and I send my hearty congratulations to the people of the state on the arrival of these cubs." The announcement marks a significant milestone in the cheetah reintroduction project in the state, which has been aimed at increasing the chee-

tah population after the species went extinct in India in the 1950s.

In his post, Yadav thanked and congratulated the doctors, field staff, and officials involved in the cheetah conservation efforts. He praised their tireless efforts, which have played a



key role in establishing Madhya Pradesh as a prominent center for cheetah conservation. "Congratulations to all the officers, doctors, and field staff associated with the project, as a result of whose hard work, today Madhya Pradesh is also known as the 'land of cheetahs'," Yadav wrote.

The birth of these cubs marks

another step forward in Madhya Pradesh's ongoing efforts to boost wildlife conservation and promote sustainable tourism. As the population of cheetahs increases in the state, the government is hopeful that it will provide a new boost to local tourism, offering new opportunities for employment and economic growth. Yadav emphasized the state's readiness to continue its work in wildlife conservation, noting that the promotion, restoration, and protection of wildlife—including cheetahs—will remain a top priority.

This successful birth follows an earlier incident where two cheetah cubs were found dead at Kuno National Park, highlighting the challenges involved in the cheetah reintroduction program. Nonetheless, the birth of these new cubs offers a hopeful sign for the future of the project and the cheetah population in Madhya Pradesh.

Rajnath Singh Slams Rahul Gandhi Over China Allegations, Calls for Introspection



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh strongly criticized Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his allegations regarding Chinese forces being inside Indian territory. The remarks were made during a debate on the motion of thanks on the President's Address in the Lok Sabha, where Gandhi claimed that the Chinese were present on Indian soil, a statement that Singh vehemently rejected.

In his speech, Gandhi accused the Prime Minister of denying the presence of Chinese forces in India, while stating that the Indian Army continues to communicate with China about their presence on the border. He also pointed to the Chief of Army Staff's statements, claiming that the Army Chief had confirmed Chinese forces were inside Indian territory.

In response, Singh refuted these charges, asserting that the Army Chief had never made such claims. He clarified that the Army Chief's statements referred solely to the disturbance of traditional patrolling practices between India and China, which had been restored following the re-

cent disengagement process. These details, Singh emphasized, had already been shared in Parliament.

Singh expressed disappointment over Gandhi's remarks, calling them a misrepresentation of the Army Chief's comments. He accused the opposition leader of engaging in irresponsible politics when discussing national security matters. "It is a matter of deep regret that Rahul Gandhi should indulge in irresponsible politics on matters of national interest," Singh said in a post on X, adding that Gandhi's statements were inaccurate and misleading.

PM Modi Likely to Visit US on February 12

Visit follows Paris AI summit, amid trade and energy discussions

- Modi's first US visit after Trump's return to the White House.
- Talks to focus on trade, defence, and energy cooperation.
- India plans nuclear energy reforms ahead of the visit.

TPN Correspondent | Washington

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to visit the United States on February 12, according to sources in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). This visit will be PM Modi's first to the US following President Donald Trump's return to the White House. Though the visit has yet to be officially confirmed, sources indicate that Modi will travel to Washington DC after his two-day trip to Paris, where he is scheduled to attend the Artificial Intelligence Action Summit on February 10-11.

PM Modi's visit to the US will place him among a select group of foreign leaders to visit Washington DC shortly after the Trump administration's return to power. This timing is significant, as it will come amid growing concerns in India over President Trump's policies on immigration and tariffs, which have raised tensions globally.

In recent days, President Trump announced a 25% tariff on Canadian and Mexican imports, alongside a 10% tax on Chinese goods. Although he later suspended the tariff on Mexican imports, there has been no relief announced for the other two. These moves are part of Trump's "America First" agenda, which has prompted mixed reactions internationally, especially in trade relations with India.

Despite these concerns, PM Modi and President Trump have already engaged in discussions. In a phone call on January 27, a week after Trump's inauguration, both leaders expressed a commitment to strengthening



India-US ties, particularly in trade, energy, and defense sectors. The White House also highlighted Trump's emphasis on India increasing its procurement of US-made security equipment and moving toward a fairer bilateral trade relationship.

Ahead of his visit, India has also signaled its interest in expanding energy cooperation with the US, particularly in clean energy. This includes India's recent announcement to amend its nuclear liability laws and set up a nuclear energy mission. These moves are seen as part of efforts to facilitate the

civil nuclear deal that both countries had initially agreed upon over 16 years ago.

India is also exploring collaboration with US-based Holtec International for small modular reactors (SMRs), a promising sector in nuclear energy. The Department of Atomic Energy is reportedly interested in working with Holtec to advance this technology. As PM Modi prepares for his visit, discussions around trade, energy, and defense are likely to dominate the agenda, marking a crucial moment in the growing India-US partnership.

India Contributes USD 37.64 Million to UN Regular Budget for 2025



TPN Correspondent | United Nations

India has made a significant contribution of USD 37.64 million to the United Nations Regular Budget for 2025, marking its place on the "honor roll" of 35 member states that have paid their assessments in full and on time. The payment was made on January 31, 2025, within the 30-day period specified in the UN's financial regulations.

As of January 31, 2025, thirty-five member states had settled their regular budget assessments in full, meeting the deadline set by the UN. The contributions are part of the UN's regular budget, which finances the organization's day-to-day activities, including peacekeeping, humanitarian efforts, and development projects.

Stephane Dujarric, the spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, acknowledged India's timely payment during a daily press briefing. He expressed gratitude for the contribution, noting, "We thank our friends in India." This continues a long-standing tradition of India fulfilling its financial obligations to the UN by paying its dues promptly and in full, strengthening its reputation as a reliable member state.

India's consistent commitment to paying its UN contributions was highlighted by UN General Assembly President Philemon Yang, who commended India's continued fulfillment of its obligations. Yang, who will visit India from February 4-8, mentioned in an interview that India "continues to fulfil its obligation as a member state of the UN by paying its dues in full and on time."

India's timely payment of its UN dues comes at a time when the country's role in global diplomacy is expanding. As a member of the UN, India has been actively involved in various international forums and peacekeeping efforts. This contribution reinforces India's status as a key player in multilateral diplomacy and strengthens its ties with other UN member states.

The "honor roll" for 2025 includes a number of countries that have consistently met their obligations to the UN. These payments play a crucial role in ensuring the smooth functioning of the organization, allowing it to carry out its work effectively. India's contribution is seen as part of its broader commitment to supporting the United Nations and its objectives.

Marco Rubio Keeps Door Open for USAID Reform Amid Musk's Calls to Shut It Down

TPN Correspondent | Washington DC

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio clarified on Monday that the US Agency for International Development (USAID) will not be shut down, as previously suggested by Elon Musk. While Musk, head of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), had raised the possibility of closing the agency, Rubio expressed the need for USAID to reform and align itself with the State Department's policies rather than operate independently.

Speaking to reporters in El Salvador, Rubio emphasized that the issue was not about ending USAID's programs but rather about how the agency operates. "This is not about ending the programs that USAID does, per se," Rubio stated. "There are things that it does that are good, and there are things that it does that we have strong questions about. It's about the way it operates as an entity." He criticized USAID for not following policy directions from the State Department, saying the agency had long adopted an attitude of independence that was not aligned with US foreign policy or national interests.

USAID, founded in the 1960s, is one of the largest US foreign aid agencies and is responsible for over half of the country's foreign assistance. It has a history of partnerships in countries such as India, helping support public-private partnerships and contributing to development goals. Rubio underscored that taxpayer dollars used in foreign aid should support the US's national interest. "Every penny that we spend in foreign aid needs to be in furtherance and aligned with the national interest and the foreign policy of the US," he added. Elon Musk, speaking as head of DOGE, previously stated that he had discussed shutting down USAID with President Donald Trump, receiving approval to do so. Musk even referred to the agency as "criminal," though President Trump has not made a public statement about Musk's comments. The controversy surrounding the agency deepened when two top USAID officials were removed after obstructing DOGE personnel from accessing rooms at the USAID headquarters in Washington, D.C.

China Launches Investigation into Google Over Anti-Monopoly Violations

TPN Correspondent | China

China has initiated an investigation into Google for suspected violations of its anti-monopoly laws, following the United States' decision to impose additional tariffs on Chinese goods. The probe was announced on Tuesday by Beijing's State Administration for Market Regulation, which stated that Google was "suspected of violating the Anti-Monopoly Law of the People's Republic of China."

The investigation comes amid escalating tensions between China and the US, particularly after Washington recently introduced a 10 percent tariff on Chinese imports. The Chinese government has made it clear that the investigation is part of its broader response to actions that it deems harmful to its national interests and economy.

In addition to the probe into Google, China also announced that it would add US companies PVH Corp. and Illumina to a list of "unreliable entities." PVH, which owns the brands Tommy Hilfiger and Calvin Klein, and Illumina, a major player in biotechnology, were accused of violating market transaction principles and engaging in discriminatory practices against Chinese businesses. The Chinese commerce ministry stated that these companies had disrupted normal transactions with Chinese enterprises, thus jeopardizing China's national sovereignty and security.

The investigation into PVH comes after the company was accused of boycotting cotton from China's Xinjiang region, a move linked to allegations of human rights violations in the area. China has long faced international criticism over its treatment of Uyghur Muslims and other minorities in Xinjiang, including reports of forced labor and mass detentions.

China's latest actions are viewed as part of a broader strategy to protect its domestic interests and assert its position in ongoing geopolitical tensions with the US. The move follows President Trump's imposition of new tariffs on Chinese goods, which he justified as necessary to counter illegal migration and the flow of drugs, particularly fentanyl, into the US.



Sri Lanka President Vows To Transform Country's 'Corrupt' Image

TPN Correspondent | Colombo

Sri Lanka's leftist president, Anura Kumara Disanayake, marked the anniversary of the island nation's independence from Britain on Tuesday with a commitment to change its international image as a "corrupt" nation. The self-avowed Marxist leader opted for a subdued observance of the 1948 handover of power, foregoing the usual lavish military parades, including jet flyovers and horse processions, in favor of a modest military march. This was in line with his promise to reduce extravagant spending on government affairs.

In his address to the nation, Disanayake reaffirmed his government's goal to steer Sri Lanka away from its reputation for corrupt governance. "We are committed to transforming Sri Lanka's global image," he stated. He also acknowledged the nation's deep-rooted issues, which stemmed from a flawed political system, but expressed confidence in the progress being made. "Despite countless obstacles and the deep-rooted flaws of the past corrupt political system, the people's government, built by the collective will of the citizens, is steadily progressing forward," he added.

Disanayake's administration has made significant strides in addressing the country's economic crisis, which reached a peak in 2022 when Sri Lanka defaulted on its \$46 billion external debt. The economic collapse resulted in shortages of food, fuel, and medicines, leading to widespread protests and the resignation of then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa. His successor, Ranil Wickremesinghe, secured a \$2.9 billion bailout loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to stabilize the economy.

Since his election last September, Disanayake has continued many of the austerity measures introduced under Wickremesinghe's administration. His government finalized a long-delayed debt restructuring deal with both bilateral and private creditors, formally ending Sri Lanka's status as a bankrupt nation.

"We have laid the foundation for a stable economy and introduced a new political culture," Disanayake said. He emphasized that the government's commitment to the four-year IMF bailout program would remain steadfast, ensuring the country's path toward recovery continues.

PM Modi Congratulates Bart De Wever on Belgium PM Oath

Modi looks forward to strengthening India-Belgium ties



Belgium's close relationship with India dates back to 1947 when the two countries established diplomatic ties soon after India's independence. Over the years, the partnership has strengthened, built on shared values such as rule of law, federalism, and pluralism. The two nations have worked together in several global and regional forums, addressing key issues and advancing mutual interests.

In addition to fostering deeper bilateral ties, Belgium has also been a strong supporter of India's bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This support further underlines the strong and growing relationship between the two countries, which continues to evolve with time.

In recent developments, Belgium's influential beer brewer, AB InBev, has also shown a keen interest in expanding its footprint in India. The company plans to invest \$250 million in India's burgeoning beverage market, signaling the continued importance of economic ties between the two nations.

As Bart De Wever begins his tenure, PM Modi's message signals India's readiness to collaborate closely with Belgium on global issues, working towards a prosperous future for both nations. The enduring and mutually beneficial relationship between India and Belgium promises to grow even stronger under De Wever's leadership, with a focus on advancing shared goals on the global stage.

- Bart De Wever sworn in after months of political negotiations.
- Belgium supports India's bid for a permanent UNSC seat.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

On Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Bart De Wever on his swearing-in as Belgium's new Prime Minister, expressing his eagerness to enhance collaboration between India and Belgium. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), PM Modi conveyed his best wishes to De Wever, highlighting the importance of deepening the bilateral relationship and strengthening cooperation on global issues.

"Heartiest congratulations to Prime Minister @Bart_DeWever on assuming office. I look forward to working together to further strengthen India-Belgium ties

and enhance our collaboration on global matters. Wishing you a successful tenure ahead," PM Modi wrote.

De Wever's appointment follows months of complex political negotiations after Belgium's parliamentary elections in June 2024. These lengthy talks culminated in the formation of a coalition government under the leadership of De Wever, whose nationalist political stance has shifted the country further to the right. On Monday, he officially took the oath in a ceremony in front of King Philippe, marking the start of his tenure as the nation's leader.

Supreme Court Raps Assam Government Over Delay in Deporting Foreigners



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Supreme Court today sharply criticized the Assam government for failing to deport individuals who had been declared foreigners during the National Register of Citizens (NRC) update process in the state. The bench, consisting of Justice Abhay S Oka and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, questioned the Assam government's reluctance to take action, asking if it was waiting for some "muhurat" (auspicious time) to deport the 63 individuals currently held in detention centres.

During the hearing, the state government argued that it could not deport the individuals because they did not have the addresses of their countries of origin. However, the bench was not convinced by this argument. Justice Oka accused the state of suppressing facts, saying, "You are supposed to come clean." Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the government, responded by admitting that there were some shortcomings in the process, and he had spoken to the highest authorities to address them.

Justice Oka expressed frustration with the Assam government's delay in taking action. He pointed out that the state had failed to provide details about when the verification of the individuals took place, calling the affidavit submitted by the government "defective." He further warned that the court would issue a perjury notice if the state did not clarify

its position.

Justice Bhuyan added that once a person is declared a foreigner, the logical next step is to deport them. "You can't detain them forever. Article 21 is there," he noted, referring to the fundamental right to personal liberty. He also questioned how many of the detained foreigners had actually been deported from Assam, given the existence of multiple foreigner detention centres in the state.

The bench rejected the state's explanation that the addresses of the foreigners were unknown, stating that deportation could still take place to the capital city of the foreigner's country. "Suppose the person is from Pakistan, you know the capital city of Pakistan," Justice Oka remarked, emphasizing that it should not be a reason to continue holding them in detention. He further pointed out that once the foreigners' citizenship status was clear, waiting for the addresses to be provided was unnecessary, as it was up to the foreign countries to decide where the deportees should be sent.

The court also questioned why Assam had not yet submitted a proposal to the Ministry of External Affairs for assistance in deporting the foreigners. The bench stressed that the deportation process must be carried out immediately, urging the state to take swift action on the matter.

Bangladesh HC issues ruling seeking government explanation on Chinmoy Das bail denial

TPN Correspondent | Dhaka

On Tuesday, the Bangladesh High Court issued a ruling directing the government to explain why Chinmoy Krishna Das should not be granted bail. Das, the spokesperson for the Bangladesh Sammilit Sanatani Jagran Jote, faces sedition charges for allegedly insulting the national flag of Bangladesh. His legal team filed a bail application after a lower court in Chittagong rejected his request on January 2.

Apurba Kumar Bhattachariya, Das' lawyer, confirmed the High Court's order, stating that the government must respond within two weeks. He further explained that the hearing would follow the order of pending cases, and he hoped that it would take place next week since the High Court only hears cases on Sundays and Mondays.

Das, who was arrested on November 25, 2024, at Dhaka airport, had initially submitted his bail plea to the Chittagong court in January. During the hearing in Chittagong, Das' defense team argued that he had deep respect for the motherland, akin to the reverence one would have for their own mother, and therefore could

not be considered a traitor. Despite these arguments, the court, led by Metropolitan Sessions Judge Md Saiful Islam, denied the bail plea. The prosecution was represented by Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Advocate Mofizur Haque Bhuiyan, and the hearing was conducted under heightened security.

Bhattachariya expressed hope that the High Court would consider the case next week, as the court only hears cases on Sundays and Mondays. The legal team remains optimistic about a favorable ruling, which could significantly impact the legal trajectory of the case.

The case has drawn significant attention, with many people following the legal proceedings closely. Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former leader of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), remains in custody as his case moves through the legal system.

As the High Court reviews his bail plea, the outcome could have important implications, not only for Das but also for the broader legal and political landscape in Bangladesh.



Bryan Johnson Walks Out of Nikhil Kamath's Podcast Over Poor Air Quality in India



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Bryan Johnson, the tech millionaire renowned for his anti-ageing research, made headlines recently when he abruptly walked out of a podcast recording with Zerodha co-founder Nikhil Kamath. The 47-year-old, who was in India for a visit, cited the country's poor air quality as the primary reason for leaving midway through the podcast. Despite the recording taking place in a five-star hotel equipped with an air purifier, Johnson claimed that the pollution caused his skin to break out, leaving his eyes and throat burning.

The episode was recorded at a hotel with an Air Quality Index (AQI) of around 120, which is considered unhealthy for sensitive individuals. Johnson wore an N95 mask during the recording but found it insufficient to mitigate the effects of the air quality. As the discussion continued, Johnson commented on his discomfort, saying, "I can't see you over there," indicating the impact of the pollution on his health.

Confirming the incident on social media, Johnson explained the situation further. He mentioned that the air purifier in the room could not handle the influx of outdoor air, which was affecting the room's indoor air quality. By the time he left the recording, the AQI in the room had reached 130, with PM2.5 levels at 75 micrograms per cubic meter—roughly equivalent to smoking 3.4 cigarettes over 24

hours. After just three days in India, Johnson reported developing a rash and experiencing persistent eye and throat irritation due to the pollution.

Johnson also expressed his concerns about how air pollution has become so deeply normalized in India. He observed people running outdoors and children being exposed to the pollution from a young age, many of whom were not wearing masks, despite the health risks. He found it troubling that the government had not declared air pollution a "national emergency" despite mounting evidence of its harmful effects. Johnson argued that improving air quality would have a greater positive impact on public health in India than curing all forms of cancer.

Drawing a comparison with his home country, the United States, Johnson pointed out that while air pollution is India's silent crisis, obesity is America's. Upon returning to the US, he was struck by the high prevalence of obesity, which affects 42.4% of Americans. He explained that living in an environment where obesity is normalized had made him oblivious to its extent until he saw it again with fresh eyes.

The incident sparked a wider conversation about the health risks posed by air pollution in India and the urgent need for action to address the country's environmental challenges.

Delhi Court Grants Bail to London Resident in Alleged Attack on Indian Case



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A Delhi court has granted bail to Inderpal Singh Gaba, a London resident, in connection with the alleged attack on the High Commission of India in London in March 2023. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) had earlier claimed that Gaba's involvement in the incident on March 19, 2023, and an associated protest on March 22, 2023, were part of a coordinated effort aimed at influencing the Indian government's actions against the "Waris Punjab De" group and its leader, Amritpal Singh.

Principal District and Sessions Judge Vimal Kumar Yadav, in his ruling on January 29, concluded that Gaba's involvement appeared to be limited to the March 22 protest. The

NIA had suggested that both the attack and the demonstration were orchestrated by a common group of individuals with the goal of pressuring the Indian authorities on the Amritpal Singh matter. However, the court stated that there was no concrete evidence linking Gaba to the March 19 incident. The NIA was unable to prove Gaba's presence at the site of the March 19 attack or show any involvement in planning the protest, either for that day or for the March 22 demonstration.

The judge emphasized that, even if the allegations related to the March 22 incident were true, they did not warrant a life sentence or the death penalty. The court further noted that Gaba was a young man with a clean record, as no criminal history or objectionable evidence could be presented against him. Additionally, while the allegations against him involved "insult to national honour," Gaba was not accused of any violence during the protest.

Debate Over Poverty in India: Government Claims vs. Rangarajan Method Findings

The release of the 2022–23 Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) sparked fresh debates around the extent of poverty in India. Following its release, B.V.R. Subrahmanyam, CEO of NITI Aayog, claimed that the poverty headcount ratio had dropped to as low as 5% of the population. This assertion was based on the adjustment of the 2011–12 poverty line (established by the Tendulkar Committee) for inflation, using the Consumer Price Index, and applying it to the latest HCES data.

Subrahmanyam's conclusion was widely celebrated as a testament to the success of government welfare schemes and rapid economic growth. However, an alternative analysis by C.A. Sethu, L.T. Abhinav Surya, and C.A. Ruthu, using the Rangarajan Method, painted a starkly different picture. According to their findings, a substantial 26.4% of Indians remain below the poverty line, a staggering 21 percentage point difference from the government's claims. The analysis revealed that 27.4% of rural Indians and 23.7% of urban Indians fall below the poverty threshold, based on updated cut-offs of Rs 2,515 and Rs 3,639 per capita per month, respectively.

The discrepancy between these two figures stems from differences in the methods used to calculate poverty. The government's approach, which adjusts



older poverty lines for inflation, fails to fully account for the rising costs of essential non-food items like healthcare, education, and housing. In contrast, the Rangarajan Method incorporates a broader consumption basket, including these essential non-food expenses, and uses updated nutritional norms, offering a more accurate reflection of current living standards.

The Rangarajan Method was developed by the 'Expert Group to Review the Methodology for the Measurement of Poverty', set up by the Planning Commission of India in 2012. Its goal was to address the limitations of the Tendulkar Committee's methodology, which estimated poverty based solely on calorie intake and per capita consumption expenditure.

While the Tendulkar Committee's approach faced criticism for setting poverty lines too low, the Rangarajan Method sought to improve upon this by accounting for a wider array of essential goods and services.

In light of these findings, questions about the accuracy and transparency of the government's poverty statistics are being raised. While the government continues to assert significant progress in poverty reduction, the Rangarajan Method suggests that a larger portion of the population still struggles to meet basic living standards. The ongoing debate highlights the challenges of measuring poverty accurately in a rapidly changing economy.

Bangladesh in Turmoil: Political Chaos and Foreign Influence



Turbulence in Bangladesh has become a common occurrence, with protests from various groups, including university students, madrasa teachers, and the general public, almost daily. The interim government, led by Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus, has come under increasing criticism, especially from the Anti-Discrimination Movement. As Yunus and his team work to reverse the policies of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, particularly regarding India, the sustainability of an unelected government's direction remains in question.

Pakistan Seeks Opportunities Amidst the Chaos

In an unexpected move, Pakistan has sought to capitalize on Bangladesh's political instability. Following the fall of Hasina's government, Pakistan's High Commissioner Syed Ahmed Maroof met Yunus and key Bangladeshi officials to discuss various issues. This interaction resulted in the restoration of direct flights and the first-ever direct cargo shipments between Pakistan and Bangladesh. These cargo shipments, including goods such as ceramics and raw materials, mark a significant development in bilateral trade, with a second consignment following soon after.

Moreover, Yunus met with Pakistani leaders, including Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, in Cairo, discussing long-standing issues between the two countries, such as the repatriation of stranded Urdu-speaking Pakistanis. Pakistan's diplomatic activities have also extended to Bangladesh's military, with high-level visits and discussions on defense cooperation, including the potential supply of JF-17 fighter jets to Bangladesh.

China's Strategic Support Amid Bangladesh's Economic Crisis

On the economic front, Bangladesh has turned to China for support as it grapples with a severe economic crisis and inflation nearing 10%. Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Touhid Hossain visited Beijing, seeking reductions in interest rates on loans and extended repayment periods. China responded favorably, agreeing in principle to reduce interest rates, extend loan durations, and offer medical assistance, including hospitals in both Kunming and Dhaka. Additionally, Chinese companies are shifting their manufacturing bases to Bangladesh, strengthening bilateral economic ties.

Bangladesh's economic dependence on China has grown significantly under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), with China investing around \$4.5 billion and another \$22.94 billion in construction contracts. However, this cooperation has raised concerns about Bangladesh's growing debt, including a \$251 million annual interest payment to China.

The Growing Triangular Influence

The increasing military and economic collaboration between Pakistan, China, and Bangladesh is creating a triangular link that could significantly impact the region's geopolitics. India faces a critical moment to act, especially concerning the Rohingya crisis, which could lead to diplomatic goodwill if handled properly. As Bangladesh navigates political and economic turbulence, the future direction of its foreign policies and internal governance remains uncertain. India's diplomatic efforts and the media's role in addressing the country's corruption and political turmoil will play crucial roles in shaping the region's future.

Uttarakhand's Uniform Civil Code: A Comprehensive Legal Reform

Uttarakhand's newly implemented Uniform Civil Code (UCC) is a significant legislative move, comprising 392 sections, seven schedules, and various forms. While a substantial portion of this legislation—nearly 80%—focuses on procedural matters such as the registration of marriages, divorces, and live-in relationships, as well as the administration of wills and deceased estates, its substantive provisions carry substantial implications for the state's legal landscape.

Key Provisions of the UCC

One of the major areas addressed by the UCC is matrimonial law. Drawing from the Special Marriage Act and the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, the code introduces several changes, notably in the registration of marriages. The code replaces the Uttarakhand Compulsory Registration of Marriages Act of 2010, mandating that all marriages in the state be formally registered. Additionally, the UCC requires the registration of divorces granted through judicial proceedings, marking a significant innovation in the state's legal framework.

This shift ensures greater transparency and accountability, particularly in cases of divorce, which will now be officially recorded. It also aims to provide legal certainty to individuals regarding their marital status and to avoid legal disputes that may arise from unregistered marriages or separations.



The UCC also focuses on the "degrees of prohibited relationship," specifying the relatives between whom marriage is prohibited. This provision aligns with the broader objectives of standardizing matrimonial practices and ensuring that there are clear, uniform guidelines for the recognition of legal marriages within the state.

The Broader Implications

While the procedural changes introduced by the UCC are aimed at improving the administration of personal laws, its substantive elements could have far-reaching consequences. By consolidating various aspects of personal and family law, including marriage, divorce, and inheritance, the UCC seeks to create a more uniform legal framework across the state.

However, the law has raised questions

about its potential impact on the diverse religious and cultural practices in Uttarakhand, particularly with regard to personal laws governed by different communities. Critics argue that a one-size-fits-all approach could undermine the autonomy of religious practices and customs. On the other hand, proponents believe that the UCC will help streamline legal processes, promote gender equality, and ensure that all citizens are governed by a single set of laws, irrespective of their religion or personal beliefs.

As Uttarakhand moves forward with the implementation of this groundbreaking legislation, its impact on the state's legal and social fabric will be closely watched. The success of the UCC in balancing uniformity with cultural diversity could set a precedent for similar initiatives in other parts of India.

US Interest in Greenland: Geopolitical Implications and Arctic Dynamics

In August 2019, President Donald Trump sparked global intrigue when he proposed purchasing Greenland from Denmark. Although met with skepticism and amusement, the idea revived discussions about Greenland's strategic significance, highlighting its growing importance in global geopolitics. With Trump now returning to the White House, it's worth revisiting the reasons behind the U.S. interest in Greenland and its implications for international relations.



Greenland's geographical position and vast natural resources, including rare earth minerals, oil, and gas, make it a critical asset in the Arctic. Historically, the United States has recognized

Greenland's importance, with efforts to secure control of the territory dating back to 1868 when William H. Seward, U.S. Secretary of State, envisioned acquiring both Greenland and

Iceland. In 1946, the U.S. even offered Denmark \$100 million in gold to buy Greenland, although the proposal was declined. However, the U.S. was successful in establishing military bases on Greenland, including the strategic Pituffik Air Base (formerly Thule), integral to its Arctic strategy.

The appeal of Greenland has only grown in recent years due to climate change and the resulting opportunities for new shipping routes and resource extraction. As the Arctic ice continues to melt, the region's geopolitical significance continues to rise, drawing more international attention.

Under international law, acquiring Greenland presents complex challenges. Greenland, while an autonomous territory within the Kingdom of Denmark, governs its internal matters but remains subject to Denmark's authority over foreign affairs and defense. Any attempt by the U.S. to acquire Greenland would require the approval of both Denmark and Greenland's government, in line with international treaties and the principle of self-determination under the United Nations Charter. Greenland's indigenous Inuit population, roughly 56,000 strong, would also need to be consulted to ensure their rights and interests are protected.

Although Trump's 2019 proposal was swiftly rejected by Denmark, it underscores a longstanding U.S. recognition of Greenland's importance. Geopolitically, Arctic states like Canada, Russia, and Norway are cautious of U.S. ambitions in the region. Canada, with shared Arctic borders, emphasizes cooperation, environmental protection, and indigenous rights. Russia may view U.S. interest as a strategic challenge, while Norway values collaboration through the Arctic Council.

China, through its Polar Silk Road initiative, has invested heavily in Greenland's infrastructure and mining sectors, further complicating the geopolitical landscape.

Markets Soar as Sensex Jumps 1,397 Points; Nifty Breaks Key Resistance



Domestic stock markets took a run today. The sky is the limit. They closed with huge gains on Tuesday. Trump's announcement that he is postponing tariffs on some countries filled positive sentiment in the market. Investors started buying as the dollar index fell, the rupee strengthened, and heavyweights were available at attractive prices. With this, Nifty 370 and Sensex rose by 1300 points. Nifty breaking the 200-day DEMA was a positive factor. Banking, finance, oil and gas stocks were the driving force behind this.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 77,186 in the previous session, opened at 77,687 on Tuesday. It touched an intraday low of 77,402. It reached an intraday high of 78,658. It finally closed at 78,583 with a gain of 1397 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,509, touched a low of 23,423 and a high of 23,762. It closed at 23,739, up 378 points. The Nifty Bank rose 947 points to settle at 50,157.

In the Nifty50, 39 companies gained and 12 lost. Shriram Finance, LT, BEL, IndusInd Bank, Adani Ports were the top gainers. Trent, ITC Hotels, Britannia, Hero Moto, Nestle India were the top losers. Bank, Finance, IT, Metal, Pharma, Healthcare, Oil and Gas indices rose. Profit booking was seen in FMCG shares.

Market breadth on the NSE is in favor of buyers today. Out of a total of 2899 stocks traded, 1951 gained and 863 lost. Shares of 34 companies touched 52-week highs. Shares of 48 companies touched 52-week lows.

The rupee strengthened by 12 paise to settle at 87.07 against the dollar. Bank of America has given a buy rating to Aditya Birla Capitals with a target price of Rs 250. Nomura has maintained a buy rating on LIC Housing Finance, reducing its target to Rs 700 from Rs 795. Motilal Oswal has given a buy rating to Vinati Organics. Kalyan Jewellers shares rose by 14% today, the most in 19 months. SBI Research has predicted that a 25 basis point cut is likely in the February monetary policy meeting. It said it would cut by 75 basis points in tiers. Thermax's net profit fell 51% to Rs 116 crore from Rs 238 crore. 21 lakh shares changed hands in Bandhan Bank. WeMart Retail's net profit rose to Rs 71 crore from Rs 28 crore.

State Bank of India (SBI):

SBI is India's largest public sector bank, offering a comprehensive range of banking and financial services. The bank has demonstrated strong financial performance, with robust growth in net interest income and profitability. Its extensive branch network and significant market share in both urban and rural areas contribute to its solid fundamentals. Analysts consider SBI a strong performer in the banking sector, citing its solid fundamentals.



HDFC Bank:



HDFC Bank is one of India's leading private sector banks, known for its strong asset quality and consistent financial performance. The bank has maintained a healthy growth trajectory in its loan and deposit portfolios, supported by prudent risk management practices. Its focus on retail banking and digital initiatives has further strengthened its market position.

Divi's Laboratories:

Divi's Laboratories is a prominent pharmaceutical company specializing in the manufacturing of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and intermediates. The company has reported a 17% year-on-year increase in net profit for Q3FY2024, amounting to Rs. 358 crores, with revenue increasing by 8.6% to Rs. 1,855 crores. Divi's ongoing investments in expanding production capacities and diversifying its product portfolio underscore its commitment to growth.



Reliance Industries:

Reliance Industries is a diversified conglomerate with interests spanning petrochemicals, refining, telecommunications, and retail. The company's stock price has corrected by 22% from its 52-week high, presenting an attractive valuation. Brokerages highlight this correction as a favorable buying opportunity, citing growth potential across its diverse business verticals.

Adani Ports & SEZ:

Adani Ports & SEZ is India's largest private multi-port operator, managing a network of ports across the country. The company's share price has declined over 10% year-to-date and 30% in the past six months, which some analysts view as a potential buying opportunity. Despite recent stock performance, Adani Ports continues to play a crucial role in India's maritime trade and logistics sector.



India's Inflation Outlook: Projected Decline in FY25 and FY26

India's retail inflation is expected to see a significant decline in the last quarter (January-March) of the financial year 2024-25 (FY25), with projections placing it at 4.5%, according to a recent report by the State Bank of India (SBI). The report also forecasts that the average inflation for the entire fiscal year will hover around 4.8%.

This decline in inflation, particularly in the fourth quarter, indicates a positive shift in the country's inflationary trend. The report points out that inflation in January is expected to trend closer to the 4.5% mark, suggesting that the effects of various policy interventions and global economic conditions are beginning to take hold in stabilizing prices.

The decline in inflation can be attributed to several factors, including the moderation of food and fuel prices, which have been key drivers of inflation in recent months. The government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have been working on managing supply-side disruptions, which have contributed to price hikes in essential commodities. Additionally, global inflationary pressures are easing, benefiting countries like India, whose domestic market has been impacted by fluctuations in international commodity prices. Looking ahead, the report also projected a further easing of inflation in FY26, with the expected



range falling between 4.2% and 4.5%. This suggests that India's inflation outlook is stabilizing, with moderate inflation becoming a more consistent trend in the years ahead.

The anticipated decline in inflation is expected to have a positive impact on household budgets, which have been strained by rising prices in recent years. A more stable inflation rate would also provide a favorable environment for economic growth, as consumers and businesses would face less uncertainty in their purchasing and investment decisions.

The SBI's report highlights that the tra-

jectory of inflation will depend on various factors, including monsoon performance, global commodity prices, and domestic policy actions. The RBI's monetary policy measures, particularly interest rate adjustments, will also play a significant role in determining the inflation path in the coming quarters.

In conclusion, India's inflation outlook for FY25 and FY26 is promising, with a steady decline expected over the next two years. This bodes well for the country's economic stability, as lower inflation can help support growth and enhance the purchasing power of its citizens.

India Increase in FDI limit in insurance sector to woo more foreign players: Moody's

India's insurance sector is set to receive a boost with the recent proposal to increase the foreign investment limit to 100% from 74%. According to Moody's Ratings, this move is expected to attract more global players to the rapidly growing Indian market, enhancing product innovation and improving the sector's overall financial health.

Currently, several foreign insurers operate in India through joint ventures. These foreign stakeholders may now look to increase their ownership stakes in their Indian affiliates following this regulatory change. Moody's views the increased foreign investment as a positive development for the sector, citing the potential for enhanced capital adequacy, financial flexibility, and improved governance standards. With foreign investors bringing their expertise, the market is expected to benefit from greater product diversification and more competitive pricing, ultimately boosting profitability.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sithara-

man announced the proposal during the presentation of Budget 2025-26, highlighting it as part of a broader initiative aimed at modernizing and reforming India's financial sector. The government's push to raise the foreign investment limit underscores its commitment to attracting more global capital and expertise into the insurance space.

The increased foreign investment could be particularly advantageous for health insurance, as rising awareness about health and well-being, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, drives demand for comprehensive coverage. The middle class, India's largest target market for insurance products, is also experiencing an increase in disposable income, further expanding the potential customer base for insurers. These trends bode well for the future growth of the sector, particularly in health insurance.

In addition to the foreign investment reform, the Budget also introduced tax measures aimed at easing the finan-



cial burden on taxpayers. The personal income tax threshold was raised to Rs 12 lakh from Rs 7 lakh, benefiting many middle and upper-income earners. A revision of the tax brackets will allow those earning above the threshold to save up to Rs 1.1 lakh annually, further boosting disposable income. These reforms are expected to have a positive impact on overall economic activity, including in the insurance sector.

In conclusion, the decision to increase the foreign investment limit in India's insurance sector is expected to bring substantial benefits, fostering innovation and growth. With rising disposable income and growing demand for health insurance, the sector is poised for strong growth in the coming years.

India's Palm Oil Imports Fall Due to Shifting Preferences and Refining Margins

India's palm oil imports in January have sharply dropped to their lowest level in nearly 14 years, as refiners opted for cheaper alternatives like soyoil due to negative refining margins for palm oil, according to industry sources. The world's largest importer of vegetable oils, India saw a staggering 46% decline in palm oil imports in January compared to the previous month, with shipments totaling just 272,000 metric tons. This is the lowest level since March 2011, as reported by dealers.

The sharp decline in palm oil imports is attributed to the ongoing economic pressures faced by refiners, who have found refining palm oil increasingly unprofitable. Refining margins for palm oil have turned negative, compelling many refineries to pivot towards soyoil, which is more cost-effective in comparison. The shift in preferences towards soyoil has led to a rise in its imports, helping to offset the reduced demand for palm oil.

This dramatic drop in palm oil imports is likely to impact global markets, particularly Malaysian palm oil prices, which may face downward pressure due to lower demand from India. Malaysia is one of the top exporters of palm oil to India, and a reduction in Indian imports could dampen market expectations for the commodity. On the other hand, the increased demand for soyoil could provide some support to U.S. soyoil futures, as refiners seek cheaper alternatives.

India's reliance on vegetable oils, particularly for cooking, means that changes in import patterns can have significant effects on global vegetable oil markets. While palm oil remains a staple for many Indian consumers, fluctuating global prices and refining costs have led to a shift in buying habits. The impact of these trends on global palm oil markets will continue to unfold in the coming months, with dealers and analysts closely monitor-



ing how refiners adapt to market conditions.

The long-term outlook for India's palm oil imports will depend on several factors, including global prices, domestic demand, and the relative pricing of other edible oils. As the situation evolves, the palm oil market will need to adjust to the changing dynamics of one of its largest consumers.

OpenAI Introduces 'Deep Research' Mode for Enhanced Multi-Step Web Research

OpenAI has unveiled a new feature for ChatGPT called 'Deep Research,' designed to tackle more complex tasks that require multi-step web research. This marks the company's second AI agent, following the debut of Operator AI for browser-related tasks just last month.

What is Deep Research and How Does it Work?

Powered by OpenAI's latest o3 reasoning model, Deep Research is optimized for web browsing and data analysis. It can search, interpret, and analyze vast amounts of text, images, and PDFs across the web to generate comprehensive reports that approach the level of a research analyst. Deep Research goes beyond simple queries, providing users with more detailed insights into complex topics.

However, unlike regular search tasks in ChatGPT, Deep Research is time-intensive. Queries can take anywhere between 5 to 30 minutes to return results, with the AI notifying users once the research is complete. Currently, the feature only supports text output, but OpenAI plans to introduce images, data visualizations, and other analytical outputs in the near future.

Why Deep Research Has Limitations

Despite its promise, Deep Research is not without its flaws. OpenAI has acknowledged that, like other AI tools, the model is prone to 'hallucination,' meaning it can generate incorrect or fabricated information. Additionally, the system can struggle to distinguish between authoritative information and rumors, and it has difficulty accurately calibrating its confidence, sometimes failing to convey uncertain-



ty about its findings.

These limitations raise important questions about the reliability of Deep Research's outputs. While users can review citations to verify information, this process effectively undermines the purpose of using an AI tool in the first place. As the AI generates more detailed reports, users must still cross-check the data manually, which can be time-consuming.

Looking ahead, OpenAI plans to connect Deep Research to specialized data sources, including subscription-based or internal resources, to enhance the robustness and personalization of its results. While this may improve the tool's accuracy, the ongoing challenge of addressing the AI's reliability remains a key hurdle for its widespread use in critical research tasks.

Chinese Astronauts Generate Oxygen and Fuel Through Artificial Photosynthesis in Space

Chinese astronauts aboard the Tiangong space station have achieved a significant milestone by successfully producing oxygen and rocket fuel through artificial photosynthesis. This groundbreaking experiment could play a crucial role in China's ambitious plans to establish a lunar base by 2035, as it allows for the generation of vital resources directly in space, reducing reliance on supplies from Earth.

Conducted by the crew of Shenzhou-19, the experiment utilized water and carbon dioxide to create oxygen and hydrocarbon fuel components, mimicking the natural process of photosynthesis found in plants. The system, which requires minimal energy, represents a promising step towards sustainable resource generation for future space missions.

The artificial photosynthesis system works through engineered physical and chemical reactions, with a semiconductor catalyst and a compact apparatus functioning as the key components. This technology converts carbon dioxide and water into oxygen and hydrocarbon-based fuels, offering flexibility to produce other fuels like methane or formic acid by simply changing the catalyst used.

This method presents a significant advantage over current technologies, particularly electrolysis, which is used on the International Space Station (ISS) to generate oxygen. Electrolysis, while effective, consumes up to a third of the ISS's power supply, making the new artificial photosyn-

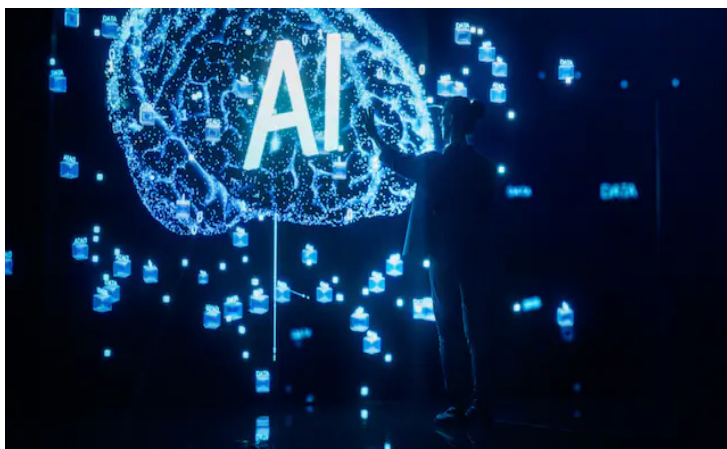


thesis system an energy-efficient alternative for long-duration space missions.

Looking ahead, China's lunar base plans are closely tied to this technology. The base, which aims to be established near the Moon's south pole by 2035, could benefit from this new approach to producing breathable air and fuel for return missions. In addition to artificial photosynthesis, China is also collaborating with Russia on a mini nuclear reactor to power the base. With astronauts expected to land on the Moon by 2030, ahead of NASA's delayed Artemis missions, this innovation could be key to supporting sustainable human presence on the Moon.

As space exploration continues to evolve, China's advancements in artificial photosynthesis may pave the way for more self-sufficient and efficient missions, marking a new era of space sustainability.

Treatment By AI? Bengaluru CEO Gets MRI Analysed By ChatGPT, Shares Result Online



As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to make inroads into various aspects of our lives, its applications in healthcare are garnering attention. Deepak Shenoy, CEO of Bengaluru-based CapitalMind, recently shared an experience that raised intriguing questions about AI's potential role in medical diagnostics. In a post on X, Shenoy detailed how he used ChatGPT to analyze his MRI report, sparking discussions about whether AI could eventually replace traditional healthcare professionals.

Shenoy recounted how, after experiencing knee issues, he consulted with a doctor who recommended an MRI scan. When he input the results into ChatGPT, the AI suggested avoiding deep squats, which was a relevant piece of advice as Shenoy had been training for them. Interestingly, the AI also identified a slight knee displacement and hypothesized that it could be related to a sports injury. Although Shenoy acknowledged the need for professional treatment, he found the insights provided by the AI to be intriguing and useful.

The response to Shenoy's post was mixed. While some users praised ChatGPT's ability to provide helpful health-related suggestions, others expressed skepticism. One user shared a positive experience, claiming, "I gave my ultrasound report to ChatGPT, and it gave me better advice than the doctor." However, others questioned whether AI, with its current limitations, could truly replace the expertise of trained medical professionals.

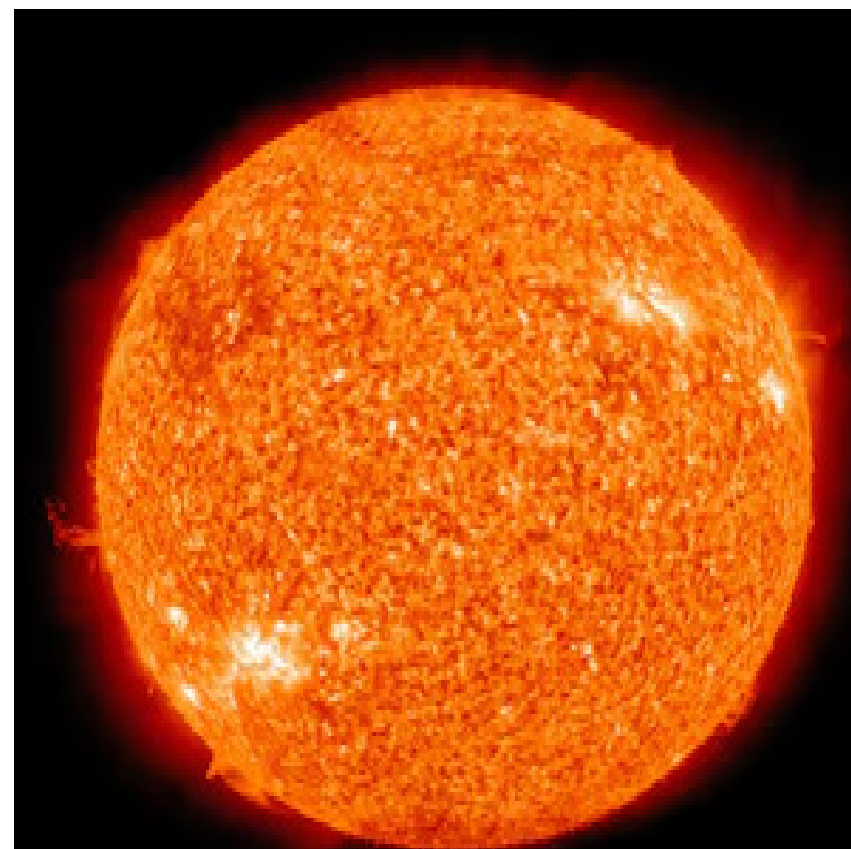
This conversation highlights the growing interest in the role of AI in healthcare, particularly in diagnostic support. While AI can process vast amounts of data and offer valuable insights, many believe it should complement, rather than replace, human expertise. In Shenoy's case, the AI's suggestions were interesting, but they will ultimately need to be validated by a doctor's expertise for accurate diagnosis and treatment. As AI continues to evolve, its integration into healthcare systems will likely continue to raise important questions about the future of medical practice.

AI Could Have Predicted May 2024 Solar Storm, Study Finds

A recent study claims that Artificial Intelligence (AI) could have predicted the powerful solar storm that impacted Earth in May 2024, which was triggered by the highly active region AR13664 on the Sun. The research, led by Sabrina Guastavino at the University of Genoa, suggests that AI could recognize patterns preceding coronal mass ejections (CMEs) by training on historical solar event data.

Traditionally, solar storm forecasts depend on human analysis of solar images and data, but these methods often provide less accurate and timely predictions. The study highlights that despite advances in technology and model development, uncertainties remain in flare forecasting and predicting the travel times of CMEs. Typically, the forecasted CME arrival time averages 12 hours, leaving little room for preparation.

AI's potential lies in its ability to process vast datasets from solar imagery and space weather parameters, including solar wind



speed, magnetic field changes, and solar flare patterns. The AI model can detect subtle signs in the solar atmosphere's behavior, offering an early warning system for space weather events.

The May 2024 solar storm, which was the most intense since 2003, serves as a reminder of how AI could refine space weather forecasting. The study suggests that

AI's precision in predicting CME travel times not only offers early warnings but can also act as a diagnostic tool for testing and enhancing existing models of CME propagation.

Coronal mass ejections are massive expulsions of plasma and magnetic fields from the Sun's corona. These high-speed gas clouds can cause significant disruptions to power grids, communication systems, GPS navigation, air travel, and satellites. The storm in May 2024 affected global communication networks and was particularly intense, underscoring the importance of accurate forecasting.

Solar activity follows an 11-year cycle, with peaks and lows corresponding to solar maximum and solar minimum phases. Currently, we are in Solar Cycle 25, which is expected to peak around July 2025. This cycle has shown unexpectedly high levels of solar activity, sparking further research to understand the Sun's behavior and improve prediction models.

I Am Single: Woman Flooded With Proposals After Unique Idea At Sporting Event

In today's digital world, predicting what will go viral can seem like an impossible task. Sometimes, content appears that leaves us baffled, while other times, it simply makes us laugh out loud. One such instance recently went viral, when a woman's inventive approach to finding a romantic partner at a sports event captured the attention of viewers around the globe.

Shilo, a single woman attending a sporting event abroad, became the center of attention when she held up a bold sign in the stands. The sign read "Single" with an arrow pointing downwards and included her Instagram handle, inviting potential suitors to connect with her. What happened next was nothing short of fascinating: the video of Shilo aired live on television, and within hours, her social media was flooded with messages and dating proposals from people worldwide.



As reported by the New York Post, Shilo's creative move led to an outpouring of interest, with individuals offering everything from

casual dates to serious romantic proposals. The surge in attention was so overwhelming that Shilo was left with no free time for the next two weeks, as her inbox was packed with messages from potential partners eager to connect. What was meant to be a lighthearted attempt to find a match turned into a viral sensation, showing just how much the digital world has changed the way we form relationships.

While this story is certainly an entertaining one, it also speaks to the power of social media in shaping modern dating dynamics. Whether or not Shilo finds her perfect match through this viral moment remains to be seen, but one thing is for sure: her creative strategy has captured the imagination of people everywhere, sparking a conversation about the evolving nature of romance in the digital age.

“Sri Lanka, Unfortunately...”: Tim Paine Predicts Australian Dominance in 2nd Test

Former Australian captain Tim Paine has made a bold prediction ahead of the second Test between Sri Lanka and Australia, stating that the hosts stand little chance of challenging the dominant visitors. The second Test is set to take place at Galle from February 6, with Australia already leading 1-0 in the series after their massive innings and 242-run victory in the first Test.

Australia, having secured a spot in the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) final, will aim to finish the series on a high. Sri Lanka, on the other hand, will be looking to salvage some pride after a promising WTC campaign.

Speaking to SEN, Paine praised Australia's clinical performance in the first Test, calling it “close to flawless.” He particularly lauded Steve Smith, Usman Khawaja, Travis Head, and debutant Josh Inglis for their batting contributions. Additionally, he highlighted the precision of bowlers Matt Kuhnemann, Nathan Lyon, Todd Murphy, and Mitchell Starc, who dismantled Sri Lanka's batting lineup.

“When you have players of that quality, playing as well as they do, there aren't too many teams that can match them,” Paine stated. “Sri Lanka, unfortunately, I cannot see them getting close to Australia on any surface.”

With the series on the line, Sri Lanka will need an exceptional performance to challenge Steve Smith's Australia and avoid a whitewash.



Squads:

Sri Lanka: Dhananjaya de Silva (c), Dimuth Karunaratne, Pathum Nissanka (fitness pending), Oshada Fernando, Lahiru Udara, Dinesh Chandimal, Angelo Mathews, Kamindu Mendis, Kusal Mendis, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Sonal Dinusha, Prabath Jayasuriya, Jeffrey Vandersay, Nishan Peiris, Asitha Fernando, Vishwa Fernando, Lahiru Kumara, Milan Rathnayake.

Australia: Steve Smith (c), Sean Abbott, Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Cooper Connolly, Travis Head (vc), Josh Inglis, Usman Khawaja, Sam Konstas, Matt Kuhnemann, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Nathan McSweeney, Todd Murphy, Mitchell Starc, Beau Webster.

India vs Pakistan Champions Trophy Tickets Sold Out in Minutes



Tickets for the much-anticipated India vs Pakistan clash in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 were sold out within minutes of going on sale, reflecting the massive demand for the high-voltage encounter. Over 1.5 lakh fans queued online, leading to waiting times of more than an hour, as they scrambled to secure seats for the February 23 match at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

Fans faced disappointment as tickets across nearly all categories, including the Dh2,000 (₹47,434) Platinum and Dh5,000 (₹1.8 lakh) Grand Lounge sections, were quickly snapped up. “I anticipated a long queue, but the speed at which tickets vanished was shocking,” said Dubai resident Sudhashree. The stadium, which has a 25,000-seat capacity, saw an overwhelming rush, underscoring the fix-

ture's popularity.

With the tournament being held on a hybrid model across Pakistan and the UAE, the India-Pakistan encounter is expected to drive a surge in hospitality and travel sectors. Experts predict increased hotel bookings and rising airfares as fans from both nations flock to Dubai.

The Champions Trophy 2025 will feature eight teams competing in 15 matches over 19 days. Group A consists of Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and New Zealand, while Group B includes Afghanistan, England, Australia, and South Africa. Hosts Pakistan, the defending champions, will kick off the tournament against New Zealand in Karachi on February 19.



Ravi Shastri Warns: India's Champions Trophy Winning Chances Could Drop 30% Without Bumrah

As the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025 approaches, former India head coach Ravi Shastri and Australia's Ricky Ponting have raised concerns about India's chances in the tournament if pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah is not fully fit.

Bumrah, the 2024 ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year, played a key role in India's T20 World Cup triumph and delivered a stellar season across all formats. However, a back spasm sustained during the Sydney Test against Australia in January has kept him out of action. While he has been named in India's initial Champions Trophy squad, his absence from the upcoming ODI series against England has fueled speculation about his fitness.

Speaking on The ICC Review, Shastri strongly advised against rushing Bumrah back, stating that forcing him into the squad prematurely would be a “high risk” decision with India's packed cricket calendar ahead. “Bumrah not fit will reduce India's chances of winning the Champions Trophy by 30-35%,” Shastri said. “Ex-

pecting him to return and immediately dominate is unrealistic. If he plays, India gets guaranteed quality death overs, but if he isn't fit, the team loses a crucial edge.”

Ponting echoed these concerns, highlighting that Bumrah's increased workload during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy could have contributed to his injury. He also pointed out that the absence of Mohammed Shami as a backup forced Bumrah to bowl extra spells, possibly aggravating his condition.

With Shami back in the squad, all eyes will be on his performance in the ODI series against England, which will determine whether he can handle the demands of a 10-over spell in 50-over cricket.

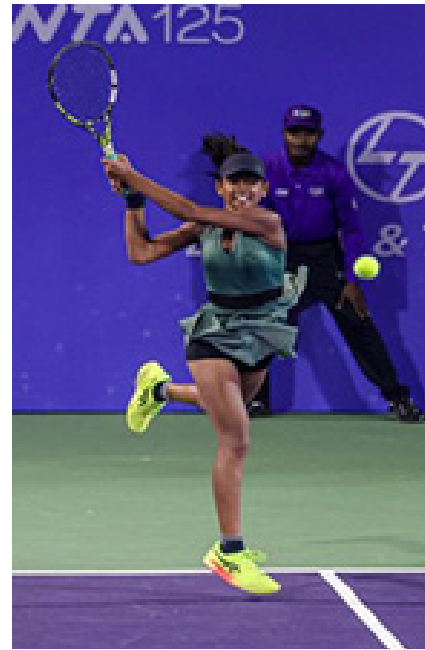
India will kick off their Champions Trophy campaign against Bangladesh on February 20 in Dubai. If both Bumrah and Shami are fit, India will have a formidable pace attack, crucial for success in fast-bowler-friendly conditions.

Magnificent Maaya Shines as Indian Players Dominate Mumbai Open

India's rising tennis sensation Maaya delivered a spectacular performance at the Mumbai Open WTA 125, defeating Belarusian Iryna Shymanovich 6-4, 6-1 to storm into the Round of 16 at the Cricket Club of India. The 15-year-old prodigy displayed remarkable composure and precision, overpowering her experienced opponent with aggressive play and powerful serves.

Maaya set the tone early, breaking Shymanovich's momentum after a 2-2 tie and firing four aces to clinch the first set 6-4. Her baseline aggression kept Shymanovich on the defensive. The Belarusian tried to mount a comeback in the second set, engaging Maaya in long rallies, but the young Indian remained composed. With well-placed shots and impeccable timing, she pressured her opponent and sealed the match with a brilliant ace, drawing huge cheers from the home crowd.

Meanwhile, India's wildcard entry Ankita Raina show-



cased her class, defeating compatriot Vaishnavi Adkar 6-2, 6-2. Raina's tactical precision was evident as she broke Adkar twice in the first set and saved two crucial break points. Her controlled baseline play and aggressive returns proved too much for Adkar, who struggled to keep pace.

In other matches, third seed Anna Karolina Schmiedlova of Slovakia survived a tough battle against Australia's Tina Smith, coming from behind to win 6-7, 6-4, 6-1. Her resilience and tactical play helped her dominate the final set.

Adding to India's success, Shrivalli Bhamidipaty dominated Russia's Elena Pridankina, securing a 6-1, 6-0 victory. With powerful serves and relentless intensity, Bhamidipaty ensured a swift and emphatic win.

With homegrown players making a strong impact, the Mumbai Open is shaping up to be an exciting tournament for Indian tennis fans.

World Padel League Set to Debut in Mumbai from February 5

The World Padel League (WPL) is all set to make its debut in India, marking a significant milestone for the sport in the country. The tournament will be held at Nesco Center, Mumbai, from February 5 to February 8, bringing together 32 of the world's top-ranked padel players to compete in a high-octane league format.

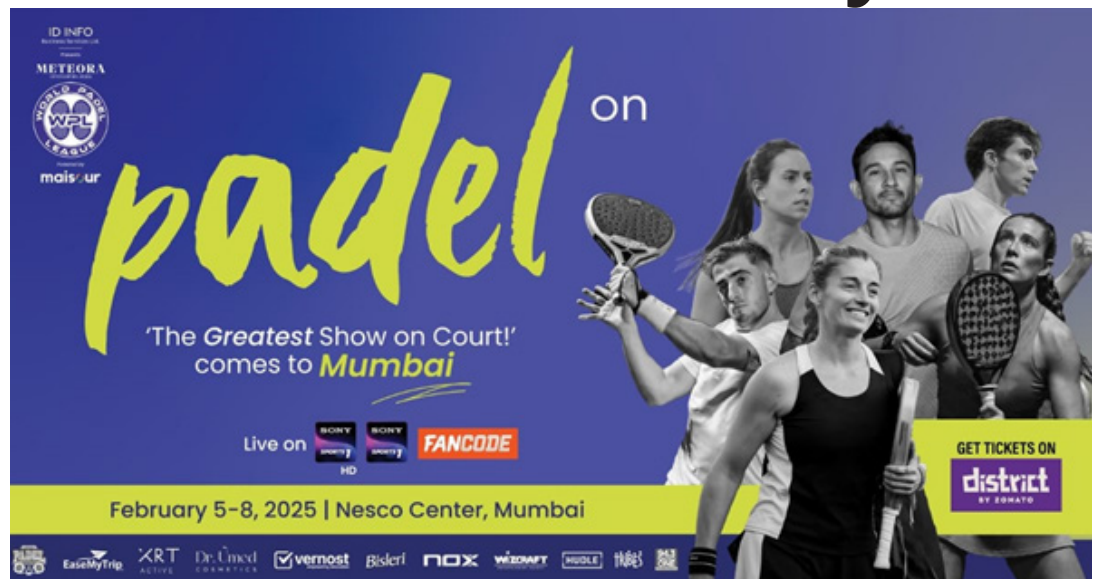
Four teams—Sohail Khan Ent. Panthers, SG Pipers Cheetahs, Game Changers Lions, and Vernost Jaguars—will battle for supremacy, each featuring eight players (five men and three women) along with a coach/captain. The tournament will follow a round-robin format, with each team playing three league-stage matches. The top two teams will face off in the grand final on February 8.

The WPL promises intense action, with top-ranked players such as Carlos Daniel Gutierrez (World No. 19), Claudia Fernandez (World No. 3), Jon Sanz (World No. 9), and Alejandra Salazar (World No. 15) leading their respective squads. Matches will feature two men's

doubles, one women's doubles, and one mixed doubles, following a tennis-style scoring system.

The opening match on February 5 will see Vernost Jaguars take on Sohail Khan Ent. Panthers, followed by a clash between SG Pipers Cheetahs and Game Changers Lions. The final showdown will take place on February 8, where the two best teams will battle for the prestigious title.

With elite global talent, high-stakes competition, and a thrilling format, the World Padel League aims to revolutionize the sport in India and attract new fans.





Rishab Shetty's 'Kantara: Chapter 1' to Feature a Grand War Sequence with Over 500 Fighters

The much-anticipated 'Kantara: Chapter 1', produced by Hombale Films, is set to be a cinematic spectacle, promising to surpass the success of its predecessor. The film, directed by and starring Rishab Shetty, is a prequel to the 2022 blockbuster Kantara, which became a record-breaking success. The first look poster featuring Rishab Shetty has already created immense excitement, with his transformed appearance drawing attention. To elevate the action sequences, the filmmakers have incorporated a grand war sequence featuring over 500 skilled fighters, making it one of the biggest battle scenes in Indian cinema.

A source close to the production stated, "Hombale Films is going all out for 'Kantara: Chapter 1,' bringing together over 500 skilled fighters to create a war sequence like never before. With top action choreography experts, this will be a cinematic experience of epic proportions."

Set in the Kadamba period of Karnataka, the film will explore a pivotal era in Indian history, focusing on the cultural and architectural contributions of the Kadamba dynasty.

'Kantara: Chapter 1' is slated for a grand worldwide release on October 2, 2025.

Netflix India Unveils 14 Exciting Films and Series for 2025

Netflix India is set to deliver a power-packed lineup of movies and series in 2025, catering to a wide range of audiences with fresh stories, star-studded casts, and highly anticipated sequels. The streaming giant is focusing on both original content and returning fan-favorite series, ensuring an exciting year ahead for Indian entertainment lovers. With Bollywood debut projects, gripping thrillers, and heartwarming dramas, Netflix India's 2025 slate promises a diverse selection of content. One of the biggest highlights is Aryan Khan's directorial debut, "The Ba*ds of Bollywood," which explores an outsider's journey in the film industry. Adding to the excitement is "Jewel Thief: The Heist Begins," starring Saif Ali Khan and Jaideep Ahlawat in a high-stakes thriller.

Romantic drama fans can look forward to "Nadaaniyan," featuring Bollywood newcomers Ibrahim Ali Khan and Khushi Kapoor, while R. Madhavan and Fatima Sana Shaikh take the lead in "Aap Jaisa Koi," a mature love story. Comedy-action lovers will be entertained by "Dhoom Dhaam," starring Pratik Gandhi and Yami Gautam, while cricket fans can look forward to "Test," starring R. Madhavan, Nayanthara, and Siddharth. Crime thriller "Toaster," produced by Rajkumar Rao and Patralekhaa, rounds up the list of new films.

Returning Fan-Favorite Series Netflix is bringing back some of its biggest hits with new seasons in 2025. "Delhi Crime Season 3" will see Shefali Shah's team tack-



ling a human trafficking case, while "Kohrra Season 2" promises another gripping investigation led by Barun Sobti and Mona Singh.

Rana Daggubati and Arjun Rampal return for "Rana Naidu Season 2," bringing more family drama and action. Additionally, the Bengali film industry takes center stage in "Khakee: The Bengal Chapter," starring Jeet and Prosenjit Chatterjee.

Another major highlight is "Akka," a powerful crime drama featuring Keerthy Suresh and Radhika Apte as gangster queens.

Exciting Reality Shows Netflix is also tapping into Bollywood's charm with its reality show "Dining with the Kapoors," which explores the Kapoor family's history through food and personal stories. Meanwhile, Kapil Sharma returns with "The Great Indian Kapil Show Season 3," promising more laughter and entertainment.

With a mix of fresh faces, established stars, and engaging stories, Netflix India's 2025 lineup is set to dominate the streaming space.

Keerthy Suresh's Fierce Look in 'Akka' Takes the Internet by Storm

Keerthy Suresh, one of India's most beloved actresses, is making waves with her upcoming film 'Akka'. The recently released teaser has left fans in awe of her intense new avatar, with many praising her raw and powerful presence on screen.

Keerthy, who recently made her Bollywood debut with Baby John, continues to impress audiences with her versatility. In Akka, she embodies a fierce and unshakable character, radiating strength and intensity in every frame. Her transformation for the role has received widespread appreciation, with fans flooding social media with admiration.

One fan commented, "Keerthy flower nahi WILD FIRE hai!" while another wrote, "Gonna witness another raw Keerthy after Saani Kaayitham." Others expressed their excitement with remarks like "Definitely a blockbuster hit because Keerthy



Suresh is there!" Her piercing gaze and rugged aura in Akka promise a performance that is bold, unfiltered, and unforgettable. This reaction highlights the immense love Keerthy enjoys nationwide, proving once again why she is one of the most admired stars in the industry.

With the teaser setting high expectations, Akka is shaping up to be another milestone in Keerthy Suresh's illustrious career.

Tabu Showcases Her 'Childhood Ties' with Beautiful 'Hyderabad Skies'

Bollywood actress Tabu, known for her stellar performances, is currently in Hyderabad after wrapping up the schedule of Priyadarshan's upcoming horror-comedy Bhoot Bangla, starring Akshay Kumar. The actress took to her Instagram stories to share a stunning picture of the sunset in Hyderabad. Alongside the image, she wrote, "Hyderabad skies, Childhood ties," hinting at her deep-rooted connection to the city.

Tabu recently joined the cast of Bhoot Bangla on January 11, announcing her involvement by posting a picture of the film's clapperboard on social media. She captioned it, "Hum yahan bandh hain (We are locked inside)."

The film also stars Paresh Rawal, Rajpal Yadav, and Asrani in key roles, promising a hilarious comedy of errors. This marks Priyadarshan's reunion with Akshay Kumar after 14 years, following their last collaboration in Khatta Meetha (2010).

On his 57th birthday, Akshay had shared a motion poster of Bhoot Bangla, revealing his excitement about reuniting with Priyadarshan. The duo has previously delivered blockbuster hits like Hera Pheri, De Dana Dan, Bhool Bhulaiyaa, and Garam Masala. The film is expected to bring another dose of classic comedy and entertainment.



'Kobali' Web Series Review: A Gripping Rural Revenge Drama on Hotstar

Kobali, the latest Telugu web series streaming on Hotstar, is an intense revenge drama set in a rural backdrop. Directed by Revanth Levaka, the series unfolds across eight episodes and is available in seven languages, including Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Hindi, Marathi, and Bengali. Featuring Ravi Prakash in a lead role, the series explores family feuds, betrayal, and violence.

Storyline: The series is set in Mullakatta, a village on the Andhra-Telangana border, where

Sambayya and his three sons—Gopi, Seenu (Ravi Prakash), and Ramu—live a life of constant struggle. Seenu takes care of the family, while Gopi secretly marries another woman, Sujatha. However, Sujatha's criminal brothers, Ramana and Peeri, bring chaos and violence into their lives. The plot takes a dark turn when Gopi's actions spark a deadly feud, putting the entire family in danger. Seenu must fight to protect his loved ones and seek revenge.

Review: With intense action, deep emotions,

and high-stakes drama, Kobali successfully captures rural life, crime, and family disputes. Ravi Prakash delivers a powerful performance, and Rohith Bachu's cinematography brings a realistic feel. However, excessive violence and profanity may not appeal to all viewers.

Verdict: A gripping revenge drama with compelling storytelling and action, Kobali is a must-watch for fans of crime thrillers.

Rating: (2.75/5)

