



Weather Forecast

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



Delhi Court Orders FIR Against Arvind Kejriwal Over Alleged Misuse of Public Funds

Case linked to 2019 complaint on hoardings in Dwarka

AAP leaders accused of diverting public money for political gain

Magistrate court reversed earlier dismissal of complaint

Police instructed to submit report by March 18, 2025

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A Delhi court has directed the registration of a First Information Report (FIR) against former Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal, along with other party leaders, over allegations of misusing public funds. The order was

issued by the Rouse Avenue Court, which found sufficient grounds to file a case regarding the alleged financial irregularities.

The court has instructed Dwarka South Police to register the FIR and submit a compliance report by March 18, 2025.

The Case Dates Back to 2019

The case stems from a 2019 complaint that accused Kejriwal, former AAP MLA Gulab Singh, and Dwarka councillor Nitika Sharma of misusing public funds for the installation of large hoardings at multiple locations in Dwarka. The complaint alleged that the money used for the hoardings was public funds, and the leaders had intentionally diverted these resources for personal or political gain.

Initially, a magistrate court dismissed the complaint, but the complainant filed a revision petition

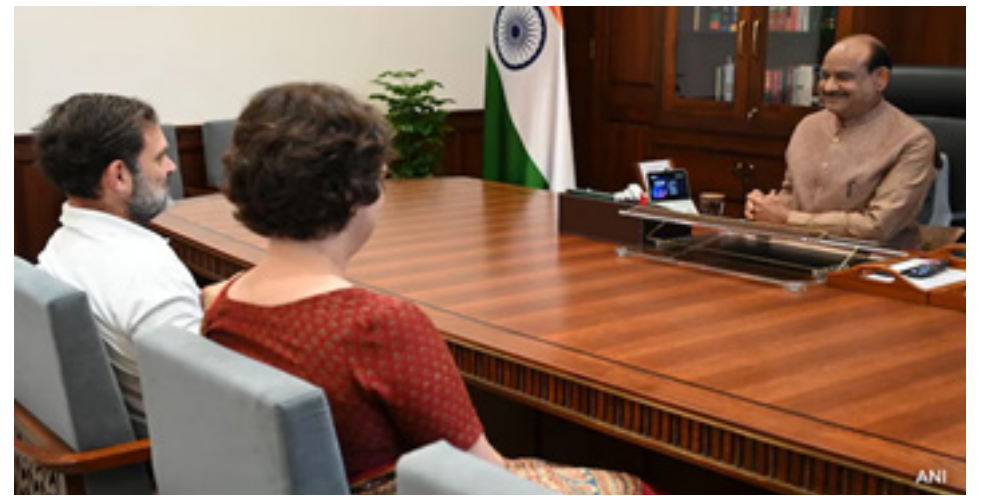
before the sessions court. The sessions court remanded the case back to the magistrate court with instructions to determine whether the matter could be considered a cognisable offence. Following a fresh hearing, the magistrate court accepted the revision petition and ordered the registration of the case against the AAP leaders.

Kejriwal's Legal Troubles Continue

This legal development adds to a series of legal issues for Kejriwal. He was previously implicated in the alleged excise policy scam, which led to his arrest and a lengthy stay in Tihar Jail. Kejriwal is currently out on bail in connection with the excise policy case. The new FIR over alleged misuse of public funds further intensifies the legal challenges faced by the Delhi Chief Minister.

The Dwarka South Police will now investigate the case and report their findings by March 18.

Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Meet Speaker Om Birla Amid Voter List Row



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, and Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to raise concerns over the voter list issue. During his address in the Parliament, Rahul Gandhi emphasized the need for a discussion on the voter list, which has been the subject of controversy in various states.

In his statement, Rahul Gandhi highlighted the ongoing concerns regarding the accuracy of the voter list across the country. He noted that questions were being raised about the black-and-white voter list in Maharashtra, and called for a comprehensive discussion in the House. "The entire opposition is calling for a discussion on the voter list," Rahul said, referring to the rising doubts about its authenticity.

Meanwhile, Priyanka Gandhi took to social media platform X, expressing her concerns over the manipulation of voter lists before every election. She called the situation "very dangerous" for democracy and urged the government to allow a detailed discussion on the issue in Parliament.

"The way reports of voter list manipulation come up before every election is very dangerous for our democracy. The entire opposition in the Parliament wants a discussion on the voter list. This discussion is essential for protecting democracy and the Constitution," Priyanka wrote in her post. She also echoed Rahul Gandhi's demand for the matter to be discussed in the House, urging the government to relent and allow the debate to take place.

Earlier on March 6, a delegation from the Trinamool Congress met Election Commission (EC) officials in Kolkata to address concerns about the same Elector Photo Identity Card (EPIC) number being assigned to multiple voters. However, the Election Commission clarified that the same EPIC number does not indicate duplicate or fake voters, urging the public to not jump to conclusions based on such reports.

The Congress party's call for a parliamentary discussion comes amid mounting concerns over the integrity of the voter list, with opposition leaders pushing for greater transparency and accountability in the electoral process.

Congress 'cannot be trusted': Atishi says AAP won't enter alliance for 2027 Goa polls

Atishi Rules Out Alliance with Congress for 2027 Goa Elections

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Former Delhi Chief Minister and Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Atishi, has firmly ruled out any possibility of an alliance between Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Congress for the upcoming elections in Goa. Atishi stated on Monday that AAP will be contesting the 2027 Goa Assembly elections independently.



sembly elections. There will be no alliance. AAP will be fighting on its own. As of now, AAP has decided that we are going to contest all the three elections on our own," Atishi said.

Speaking to the media during the inauguration of AAP's office in South Goa's Margao, Atishi emphasized that the party is preparing to contest not only the Zila Parishad (ZP) and municipal elections but also the 2027 assembly elections without any alliances. "We are preparing to fight solo for the upcoming ZP, municipality elections, and 2027 as-

sembly elections. There will be no alliance. AAP will be fighting on its own. As of now, AAP has decided that we are going to contest all the three elections on our own," Atishi said. Atishi further explained the reasons behind AAP's decision to go solo, calling it "very clear" that "Congress cannot be trusted" in any alliance. Her remarks suggest that AAP is unwilling to form a partnership with Congress, pointing to a lack of trust and possibly a difference in political strategies.

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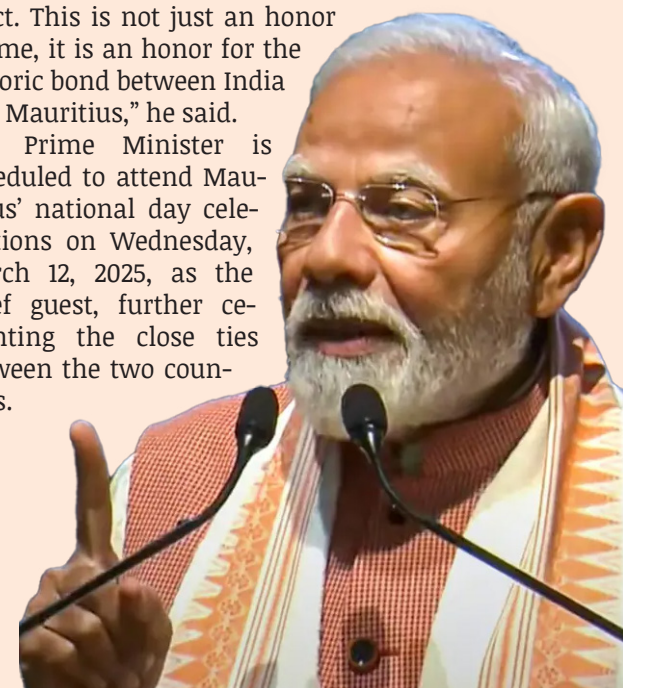
Mauritius is family, it's bridge between India and Global South: PM Modi tells diaspora

TPN Correspondent | Port Louis

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday (March 11, 2025) hailed Mauritius as a "bridge" connecting India to the Global South, emphasizing that the island nation is not just a partner, but a part of India's family. Speaking to the Indian diaspora at a community event in Port Louis, PM Modi described Mauritius as "Mini India" and underscored the deep-rooted historical, cultural, and emotional ties between the two nations. "Mauritius is not just a partner country. For us, Mauritius is family!" PM Modi said, highlighting the strong bond between the two countries, which he said is rooted in shared history, heritage, and the spirit of unity. He added that Mauritius plays a crucial role in India's vision of regional

security and growth, as reflected in the SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) initiative he announced during his first visit to Mauritius in 2015. At the event, PM Modi presented Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards to Mauritius Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam and his wife, Veena. Modi also revealed plans to extend OCI cards to the seventh generation of the Indian diaspora in Mauritius, further strengthening the relationship between the two nations. PM Modi, who was conferred with Mauritius' highest civilian honor, The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean, expressed his gratitude to the people and government of Mauritius for the prestigious recognition. "I humbly

accept this decision with great respect. This is not just an honor for me, it is an honor for the historic bond between India and Mauritius," he said. The Prime Minister is scheduled to attend Mauritius' national day celebrations on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, as the chief guest, further cementing the close ties between the two countries.



Law And Order Improved In Manipur, Will Get Financial Support: N Sitharaman

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman assured on Tuesday that the central government would provide all necessary financial support to Manipur for its economic development. During a discussion on various financial matters, including the Supplementary Demands for Grant (SDG) for 2024-25 and the Manipur Budget for 2025-26, she emphasized that the law and order situa-

tion in the northeastern state had largely improved, with only a few sporadic incidents remaining.

In her reply, Sitharaman informed the Lok Sabha that the overall security situation in Manipur had significantly stabilized, thanks to joint efforts by both the central and state governments.

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Being A Good Person More Important Than Being Successful: President Murmu

- Cites Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam as an inspiration for inquisitive thinking
- Praises Central University of Punjab's research contributions
- Stresses the importance of staying connected to one's roots



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu, addressing the convocation ceremony of the Central University of Punjab on Tuesday, emphasized that morality is the foundation of a meaningful life, asserting that being a good person holds more importance than being a successful one. She advised the graduating students to prioritize their abilities and long-term goals over immediate gains in both their personal and professional lives.

and actions.

Along with Punjab Governor Gulab Chand Kataria and Agriculture Minister Gurmeet Singh Khuddian, President Murmu highlighted the significance of the event, marking the end of one phase and the beginning of another in the students' lives. She expressed confidence that the students would contribute to the university's legacy, their families, and the nation, through their character

She advised the students to incorporate five essential qualities into their lives: curiosity, originality, morality, farsightedness, and spontaneity. "Curiosity fuels continuous learning and new discoveries," she said, emphasizing the importance of asking questions and seeking knowledge throughout life. Drawing inspiration from former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, she recounted how his curiosity about aero-

dynamics led him to pursue a career as a space scientist, demonstrating the power of inquisitive thinking.

President Murmu also spoke about the role of morality in shaping a meaningful life, stressing that one's ethical values should guide their choices, especially in work and personal life. She explained that institutions with strong ethical values are worth pursuing, even if they offer lower salaries, as they provide lasting fulfillment.

The President further discussed the importance of originality, citing Professor Raj Kumar of the Central University of Punjab as an example of innovative research, particularly in the field of cancer. She encouraged students to draw inspiration from such achievements and make originality their hallmark.

Concluding her address, President Murmu acknowledged the university's diverse representation and emphasized the importance of staying connected to one's roots. She also highlighted the university's location near Takht Sri Damdama Sahib, adding a cultural significance to the ceremony.

Vaishnav Defends Railway Safety Measures Amid Opposition Criticism in Parliament

TPN Correspondent | Delhi



Union Minister for Railways, Ashwini Vaishnav, faced heavy criticism from opposition members in Parliament over the rising number of railway accidents, including the tragic stampede at New Delhi railway station last month. Responding to concerns, Vaishnav dismissed allegations that railway safety was declining under the current government, urging that the issue not be politicized.

In his first address following the stampede, Vaishnav emphasized that railway safety should be viewed through a national lens, not a political one. He criticized opposition MPs, particularly those from the Congress, for their remarks about the worsening safety conditions and highlighted the increased investments in railway safety during the Modi government. Vaishnav claimed that India would achieve rail safety standards in five years that developed countries took two decades to reach.

The minister's comments came during a debate on the Railway Amendment Bill (2024), which was passed by the Rajya Sabha on March 10. The Bill repeals the Indian Railway Board Act of 1905 and brings provisions regarding the Railway Board under the Railways Act of 1989. The opposition, however, staged a walkout, accusing Vaishnav of being "arrogant" and unresponsive to their concerns.

Congress MP Vivek Tankha questioned Vaishnav's approach, referring to recent railway acci-

dents, including the 2023 Balasore crash that claimed over 200 lives. Tankha criticized the minister's "bureaucratic mindset" and lack of political openness in addressing the safety concerns.

Trinamool Congress MP Sushmita Dev also demanded accountability, emphasizing the government's failure to prioritize railway safety and the lack of responsibility at higher levels, including the minister's office. Dev argued that a resignation, similar to that of former Railway Ministers like Lal Bahadur Shastri, was warranted given the growing number of accidents.

In response, Vaishnav rejected allegations that CCTV cameras had been turned off during the stampede, stating that he had personally reviewed the footage. He assured that a thorough inquiry was underway and criticized the opposition for politicizing the issue.

Despite the opposition's walkout, Vaishnav remained firm, claiming that the Modi government's efforts would eventually transform railway safety standards, dismissing critics as those who would be "bid farewell" by the country.

Delimitation Will Increase Seats Even In Tamil Nadu, Says Rajnath Singh

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has sought to address concerns raised by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin regarding the proposed delimitation exercise scheduled for 2026. Singh reassured that the process would lead to an increase in seats across all states, including Tamil Nadu, and dismissed claims that only northern states would benefit.



In an interview with IANS, Rajnath Singh emphasized, "Delimitation should proceed as planned. If M.K. Stalin has objections, he is free to raise them, but the relevant authorities will deliberate, and the judiciary will have the final say." He also affirmed that the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha would naturally increase in every state following the delimitation process, including Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Kerala. Singh added that the notion that only North India

would benefit from this exercise was unjustified.

This statement came after Stalin's recent letter to seven Chief Ministers, urging them to oppose the delimitation exercise, which he described as a "blatant assault on federalism." Stalin has been vocal about his concerns, claiming that the southern states would be

unfairly impacted by the process. He has previously argued that Tamil Nadu's successful population control and economic growth should not lead to a reduction in its political representation. "We controlled our population, built our economy, and now they want to take our voice away?" Stalin remarked at a public meeting.

Stalin has even humorously suggested that the residents of Tamil Nadu should have more children to counter any potential reduction in parliamentary seats. He also emphasized that Tamil Nadu would fight vigorously to protect its rights and that the upcoming delimitation exercise should not be based on the 2011 Census.

The controversy surrounding the delimitation issue reflects broader concerns over the representation of southern states in national politics, with Stalin calling for a collective stance to safeguard their interests.

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Law And Order Improved In Manipur, Will Get Financial Support: N Sitharaman

She also mentioned that efforts to recover arms and ammunition looted during recent unrest were underway.

On the financial front, the Minister pointed out that the Manipur Budget for 2025-26 had been presented with an expenditure plan of Rs 35,103.90 crore, which represents a rise from the Rs 32,656.81 crore allocated in the current financial year. This increase is part of the government's effort to support the state's growth, particularly in the wake of challenges posed by unrest and disruptions in normal life.

Following the Proclamation under Article 356 of the Constitution issued on February 13, 2025, the powers of the State Legislature were transferred to the authority of Parliament. This decision reflects the ongoing commitment of the central government to address Manipur's needs during this period of transition.

Sitharaman assured the House that with the collaborative efforts of both the Centre and the state government, Manipur would receive all the resources and support necessary to drive its economic recovery and growth.

Congress 'cannot be trusted': Atishi says AAP won't enter alliance for 2027 Goa polls

The announcement comes as AAP looks to strengthen its position in Goa and establish a larger presence in the state. By contesting the elections alone, AAP aims to make a significant impact in the upcoming electoral contests, demonstrating its intent

to broaden its political base in the region. Atishi's firm stance on this issue highlights AAP's commitment to charting its own course in the political landscape of Goa, regardless of potential alliances with other major parties like Congress.

Rapists should be castrated like dogs: Rajasthan Governor

TPN Correspondent | Jaipur
Rajasthan Governor Haribhau Bagde sparked controversy on Monday by advocating for the castration of rapists, drawing a comparison between perpetrators of sexual violence and stray dogs. His comments were made during an address at the oath-taking ceremony of the Bharatpur Bar Association, where he was speaking to judicial officers, lawyers, and other dignitaries.



Bagde, referencing an initiative from his home state of Maharashtra, explained how a local urban body had dealt with a growing stray dog population by castrating the animals to control their numbers. He then drew a parallel to rapists, stating, "Aese jo dushkarm karte log, usi ko bhi wahi kayda banaye aur unko napunsak karke chhod diye," which translates to "Those who rape should be castrated and left to face the consequences."

His comments quickly became the subject of widespread criticism, with many questioning the appropriateness of comparing human criminals to animals. The Governor's suggestion, which was intended to emphasize the severity of sexual violence, was seen by some as an oversimplified and highly controversial solution to a deeply complex societal issue.

While Bagde's remarks were aimed at highlighting the need for stronger action against rapists, critics have argued that such extreme measures ignore the broader issues surrounding gender-based violence, including systemic failures in the legal and justice systems. Human rights advocates also pointed out that such proposals undermine the principles of justice, rehabilitation, and the rule of law.

The Governor's statement has ignited a debate on how to address sexual violence in India, where incidents of rape and assault continue to raise serious concerns. While Bagde's call for tougher measures may resonate with those seeking stronger action, his remarks highlight the complexity of tackling such sensitive issues through simplistic solutions.

By 2027, every capital of Northeast will be connected by rail, road, air: Amit Shah

Announces Full Connectivity for Northeast Capitals



- Violence in Northeast down 70% under Modi government
- Security force casualties reduced by 70% in the last decade
- Civilian deaths dropped by 89% from 2014 to 2024

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced that by 2027, every capital city in Northeast India will be connected by rail, road, and air. This ambitious plan aims to bridge the geographical divide between the Northeast and the rest of India, enhancing connectivity and fostering economic development in the region.

While addressing the Northeast Students' and Youth Parliament organized by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), Shah highlighted the BJP government's significant achievements in reducing the distance between the Northeast and the rest of the country. He emphasized that comprehensive infrastructure improvements would be a game-changer for the region, providing residents with easier access to various parts of India.

Shah also discussed the significant improvements in security and peace under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He noted that violent incidents in the Northeast have

seen a drastic reduction, stating that the number of violent incidents had dropped by 70%—from 11,000 incidents between 2004 and 2014 to 3,428 between 2014 and 2024. Additionally, the number of fatalities among security forces has reduced by 70%, while civilian deaths have fallen by an impressive 89% over the past decade.

Shah's remarks underscore the ongoing efforts of the Modi government to address longstanding issues in Northeast India, particularly regarding security, infrastructure, and development. The plan for full connectivity by 2027 is seen as a pivotal move to integrate the region more closely with the rest of India, contributing to national unity and progress.

This initiative is expected to boost trade, tourism, and overall economic growth in the Northeast, providing opportunities for both local residents and businesses. By improving transportation infrastructure, the government hopes to further solidify peace and promote stability across the region.

Chaos In Odisha Assembly: BJP, Congress MLAs Assault Each Other

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Odisha Assembly descended into chaos on Tuesday when members of the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress clashed in the well of the House, prompting Speaker Surama Padhy to adjourn proceedings until noon. The tension escalated when senior BJP lawmaker Jaynarayan Mishra rushed toward Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati, who was standing in front of Urban Development Minister K C Mohapatra as he responded to a question.

Bahinipati, speaking to reporters outside the House, described the incident, saying, "Mishra caught hold of my shirt collar and pushed me. I was requesting Minister Mohapatra to stop replying when the House was not in order. I made the request with folded hands,

but Mishra suddenly came up to me and grabbed my collar."

Following this altercation, BJP and Congress members began to push each other, further escalating the situation. Despite the chaos, members of the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) were present in the well but did not participate in the scuffle.

The protests were driven by separate issues. Congress MLAs were agitating over the alleged rise in crimes against women in the state, while BJD members demanded a statement



from Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi regarding a remark made by Mishra, in which he referred to the merger of the erstwhile Koshala region with Odisha in 1936 as a "historical mistake."

This marked the second consecutive day of turmoil in the Assembly. Despite the unrest, Speaker Padhy allowed the Question Hour for about 30 minutes, although it was overshadowed by the ongoing protests from opposition members.

In an unusual move, the BJD members staged a symbolic "search" for the Chief Minister, who had not attended the House for the past two days. Carrying a lantern, the BJD MLAs also held a sit-in in front of the Chief Minister's chamber, highlighting their frustration with his absence.

Modi govt to open 200 day cancer care centres this year: Health minister Nadda in RS



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Indian government plans to open 200 day cancer care centres across the country in the fiscal year 2025-26, with the goal of establishing such centres in every district within the next three years. This announcement was made by Union Health Minister J P Nadda during a session in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, where he discussed the government's efforts to improve healthcare access for cancer patients.

During the Question Hour, Nadda highlighted the government's commitment to making healthcare more

affordable, accessible, and equitable, particularly by offering technical and financial support to states. He also cited a recent Lancet report, which praised the Ayushman Bharat scheme for its significant contribution to cancer treatment, noting that patients have begun receiving treatment within 30 days of screening under this programme.

The minister shared that the Union Budget had allocated funds for the establishment of day cancer care centres in every district. These centres will provide essential cancer treatment services, making it easier for patients to access timely care with-

out having to travel long distances.

Nadda further informed the Rajya Sabha that India currently has 22 AIIMS (All India Institutes of Medical Sciences) with comprehensive oncology departments, ensuring cancer patients receive specialized care. He mentioned that the AIIMS in Jhajjar boasts the country's largest 700-bed cancer treatment facility, where all forms of cancer treatment are available.

In addition to the cancer care initiative, Nadda addressed another query, confirming that the AIIMS in Gorakhpur is fully operational, with both its outpatient (OPD) and inpatient (IPD) departments running at full capacity. The government has also signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Banaras Hindu University (BHU) to transform its medical college into an institution resembling an AIIMS, with the necessary budgetary allocations underway.

The health minister concluded by assuring the house that the government would continue working towards improving healthcare infrastructure and providing accessible treatment to all citizens.

Atishi Questions BJP's Promise of Free LPG Cylinders for Women on Holi

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday criticized the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over its promise to provide free cooking gas cylinders to women in Delhi on the occasion of Holi, accusing it of being a pre-election gimmick. Atishi, the Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly and a senior AAP leader, demanded that the BJP fulfill its commitment.

During a press conference, Atishi asked the BJP government and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta whether they would keep their election promise of offering free cooking gas cylinders to women in Delhi for Holi. "I want to ask the BJP government and Chief Minister Rekha Gupta if they will fulfil their poll promise of providing free cooking gas cylinders to women in Delhi on Holi, or will it prove to be another gimmick like the Rs 2,500 monthly financial assistance to women?" she questioned.

In its manifesto for the February 5 Delhi Assembly elections, the BJP had pledged to provide subsidized cooking gas cylinders for Rs 500 to women



from economically weaker sections. The promise also included two refills on Holi and Diwali.

Additionally, the BJP government had approved the Mahila Samridhi Yojana, a scheme intended to provide Rs 2,500 per month to women from poor families in Delhi, with an allocation of Rs 5,100 crore. However, the scheme's registration process has yet to begin.

Atishi pointed out that the AAP has

consistently held the BJP accountable for its unfulfilled promises. The opposition party claims that the BJP has failed to deliver on key commitments, particularly regarding the financial assistance scheme for women. AAP has been vocal in its criticism, alleging that the BJP's promises are more about political posturing than actual action.

The AAP leader emphasized that Delhi's women deserve real, actionable support, not empty assurances.

Delhi-Amritsar in 4 hours within 3 months: Gadkari

Announces Plans for Express Highways to Cut Travel Time Between Key Cities

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari announced on Monday that the government would begin constructing express highways in the next two to three months, which would significantly reduce travel times between major cities across India.

Addressing the seventh International Conference on Soaps, Detergents, and Cosmetics, Gadkari shared plans for new highways that would slash journey times dramatically. For example, the travel time from Delhi to Dehradun, currently taking seven to eight hours by road, will be reduced to just two hours. Similarly, the Delhi-Jaipur route will be cut to two hours, Delhi-Amritsar to four hours, Chennai-Bengaluru to two hours, Bengaluru-Mysuru to one hour, and Mumbai-Delhi to 12 hours by car.

The Minister emphasized that

these infrastructure improvements are part of the government's broader strategy to reduce India's logistics costs, which currently account for 14-16% of the GDP, compared to China's 8% and the EU and USA's 12%. Gadkari stated that within two years, India's logistics costs will decrease to 9% of the GDP, making Indian exports more competitive on the global stage.

Gadkari also pointed to the government's efforts to promote alternative fuels and biogas in the transport sector, focusing on reducing reliance on fossil fuels. India's annual fossil fuel import bill stands at Rs 22 lakh crore, and Gadkari highlighted the government's initiatives in biofuels, including bio-ethanol production from molasses, broken rice, and food grains. Additionally, he noted that sugar molecules are being used to create products like face washes, detergents, and body washes.



In line with the push for greener energy, Gadkari also mentioned future plans for green hydrogen as a sustainable fuel source. While addressing industry concerns over taxes, he urged businesses not to push for GST cuts, emphasizing that taxes are necessary to support welfare programs and empower the nation's poor.

The Minister concluded by reiterating the government's focus on reducing production costs to boost global competitiveness, with a strong focus on reducing imports and increasing exports.

CM Rekha Gupta Emphasizes Role of Youth in Nation's Future at Youth Parliament Event



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday underscored the crucial role young people play in shaping the future of the nation during her address at the Youth Parliament organized by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). The event, held at the NDMC Convention Centre, brought together students from across the country, and Gupta invited them to offer suggestions for the upcoming Delhi budget, which is expected to be presented later this month.

Gupta, who was the chief guest on the second day of the three-day event, particularly praised the leadership displayed by young women during the Girl's Parliament session. "It was inspiring to be among the women students from Delhi University and ABVP. Students from

all over the country participated in the Youth Parliament, and I also encouraged them to share their ideas for the upcoming budget," she said.

On social media, the CM expressed her pride in the active participation of young women, writing, "Attended the Girl's Parliament organised by @ABVPVoice at NDMC Convention Centre, where I had the opportunity to hear the dreams, ideas, and resolutions of the new generation. Seeing young women actively leading discussions was a moment of pride. Their energy, confidence, and determination are the pillars of our nation's bright future."

The event saw the participation of 300 female student representatives, selected from over 38,000 students. Topics discussed during the sessions included education, health,

security, self-reliance, and leadership development. Distinguished guests at the event included National Commission for Women Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar, National Book Trust Chairman Prof. Milind Marathe, and Supreme Court advocate Monika Arora.

During the discussions, students raised several important demands, including expanding hostel facilities for female students in higher education, introducing scholarships for rural students, and adding the contributions of women warriors, scientists, athletes, and leaders to academic curricula. Other key demands included providing grants for female researchers, installing sanitary napkin vending machines, creating pink toilets, monitoring the Nirbhaya Fund, and offering self-defense training programs in educational institutions.

- Praises young women's leadership during Girl's Parliament session
- Students propose education, safety, and self-reliance reforms for Delhi budget
- Key demands include scholarships, hostel expansion, and self-defense training

13 Of World's 20 Most Polluted Cities In India, Delhi Most Polluted Capital



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Thirteen of the world's top 20 most polluted cities are located in India, with Byrnihat in Assam leading the list, according to the World Air Quality Report 2024 published by Swiss air quality technology company IQAir. The report revealed that Delhi continues to be the most polluted capital city globally, and India ranks as the fifth most polluted country in 2024, a slight improvement from third place in 2023.

The report highlighted a 7% decline in PM2.5 concentrations in India, from 54.4 micrograms per cubic meter in 2023 to 50.6 micrograms per cubic meter in 2024. However, India still remains home to six of the world's ten most polluted cities. Delhi, in particular, showed little improvement, with an annual average PM2.5 concentration of 91.6 micrograms per cubic meter, nearly identical to the previous year's 92.7 micrograms per cubic meter.

The list of Indian cities in the top 20 most polluted includes Byrnihat, Delhi, Mullanpur (Punjab), Faridabad, Loni, New Delhi, Guru-

gram, Ganganagar, Greater Noida, Bhiwadi, Muzaffarnagar, Hanumangarh, and Noida. Alarmingly, 35% of Indian cities reported PM2.5 levels exceeding 10 times the World Health Organization's recommended limit of 5 micrograms per cubic meter.

The health impact of this pollution is severe, contributing to an estimated loss of 5.2 years in life expectancy for Indians. A Lancet Planetary Health study estimated that long-term exposure to PM2.5 pollution was linked to around 1.5 million deaths annually between 2009 and 2019.

Former WHO chief scientist Soumya Swaminathan emphasized the need for immediate action. While data collection on air quality has improved, Swaminathan stressed that solutions such as expanding clean cooking options, enhancing public transportation, and stricter enforcement of emission laws are crucial. Implementing a mix of incentives and penalties, along with better subsidies for clean energy, could significantly reduce pollution and improve public health in the country.

Newborn Baby's Body Found Between Train Coaches at New Delhi Railway Station

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A heartbreaking discovery was made on Monday when the body of a newborn baby was found between two train coaches stationed near New Delhi Railway Station, police reported. The infant's body was covered in blood, though there were no visible external injuries. Initial investigations suggest that the baby may have been abandoned shortly after birth.

The body was found lying on the couplers, which are iron structures that connect train coaches, near the Rajdhani Complex at the railway station. Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel made the shocking discovery and immediately alerted the authorities. A police team quickly arrived at the

scene, where the baby's body was carefully removed and taken to Kalavati Hospital, where doctors confirmed the infant's death.

Following the examination, the body was transferred to the LHMC Mortuary for further postmortem and identification. According to a senior police officer, the investigation is ongoing, and preliminary findings indicate that the



newborn may have been intentionally abandoned to hide the identity of the parents.

A crime team was called to the scene to document the situation, collect evidence, and take photographs. Police are now reviewing CCTV footage from the area and gathering further information in an effort to track down those responsible for the baby's abandonment.

The incident has raised concerns about the safety and well-being of infants and highlights the need for greater awareness and support systems for vulnerable children. Authorities are urging anyone with information to come forward as they continue their search for the individuals involved.

Police Conduct Identity Verification in Delhi: A Shocking Experience for Ramavati



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Around five days ago, Ramavati, a 50-year-old woman, had just put her grandson to bed and was preparing dinner when she noticed her son approaching their home. As she stood up to prepare a meal for him, she was surprised to see a group of policemen walking behind him. Fearing the worst, Ramavati thought her son had gotten into serious trouble.

However, the reality was quite different. The police officers simply asked her to show her Aadhaar and voter ID cards. They also inquired about her place of birth and how many years she had lived in Delhi. After receiving her answers, they left without further questioning.

"I thought my son had done something horrible," Ramavati recalled, explaining the shock she felt when she first saw the police. "To my surprise, they just wanted to check my identification and ask a few questions before they left."

This incident is part of a wider effort being carried out by the police in Delhi to verify the identity and residency status of individuals, especially amid

ongoing drives targeting illegal immigrants. When asked about the expected number of illegal immigrants the authorities anticipate catching through this initiative, one officer simply replied, "We're just following orders from above."

The situation highlights the increasing scrutiny on residents in the city, with many questioning the purpose and effectiveness of such drives. For Ramavati, it was a moment of unexpected tension, but it also shed light on the growing pressure faced by citizens as the government pursues measures to address concerns related to immigration and residency. While this encounter left her shaken, Ramavati was relieved that the encounter ended without any further complications.

Delhi sees surge in Influenza B, H1N1 cases Amid Seasonal Transition

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

As Delhi transitions from winter to warmer weather, the city has witnessed a notable rise in flu cases over the past few weeks. Hospitals across the Capital are reporting an increase in patients suffering from various viral infections, with Influenza B and H1N1 (swine flu) viruses leading the surge.

Healthcare professionals have noted a concerning uptick in cases of

upper respiratory tract infections, with patients presenting symptoms such as high-grade fever, persistent cough, and fatigue. These symptoms are affecting individuals across all age groups, with many experiencing prolonged illness lasting for several weeks. In some cases, viral infections have led to more severe complications, including pneumonia, bronchitis, and sinusitis, requiring hospitalization.

The spike in flu cases has raised

alarm among doctors, who are advising the public to be cautious and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or do not subside after a few days. The viral strains responsible



for these infections have been circulating widely, and experts warn that the changing weather conditions can make people more susceptible to respiratory illnesses.

While the flu season typically peaks in the colder months, the recent surge indicates that viral infections remain a concern even as the temperature rises. Doctors have stressed the importance of maintaining good hygiene practices, such as frequent handwashing and wearing masks, to

prevent the spread of these viruses.

Additionally, those affected by flu-like symptoms are encouraged to rest, stay hydrated, and seek medical treatment if necessary. With flu cases on the rise, hospitals are under increased pressure, and the healthcare system is working to manage the influx of patients. As the season progresses, experts urge the public to remain vigilant and take appropriate precautions to avoid further spreading the infections.

Delay in NEET-PG admissions unacceptable, why is this happening : Congress to govt



- Congress slams govt over NEET-PG admission delay
- Demands Health Minister Nadda's response
- Aspirants in limbo despite results in August

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Congress party on Tuesday criticized the government over the ongoing delay in NEET-PG admissions, despite the results being declared back in August of the previous year. The opposition party deemed the delay "unacceptable" and questioned Union Health Minister JP Nadda about the reasons behind it.

In a statement, Congress raised concerns over the prolonged wait for the admission process to be completed, causing significant anxiety and disruption for aspiring medical professionals. The party emphasized that students who have already completed the examination and awaited the results for months should not be subjected to further delays in their academic and profes-

sional pursuits.

"Why is this delay happening despite the NEET-PG results being announced last August? It is affecting the careers of many aspiring doctors," a Congress spokesperson said. The party expressed frustration over the lack of clarity from the government regarding when the admissions will be finalized, urging swift action to avoid further disruption.

The delay in the NEET-PG admission process has created an uncertain environment for thousands of students who had hoped to begin their postgraduate medical studies. The Congress party's criticism comes at a time when medical professionals are already facing immense challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with many doctors expressing

their concerns over the impact this delay is having on the healthcare sector.

In response to the criticism, the Congress party demanded that the government provide a clear timeline for the completion of the admissions process. The delay has sparked broader discussions about the inefficiency of the system, with many questioning the government's commitment to the education and healthcare sectors.

The opposition party has called on Union Health Minister JP Nadda to address the issue publicly and provide an explanation for the ongoing delay, emphasizing the need for urgent resolution to avoid further inconveniencing the students and the healthcare system.

"Ranya Rao Took Advantage Of VIP Protocol": Karnataka Orders New Probe



TPN Correspondent | Bangalore

The Karnataka government has initiated an inquiry into the alleged misuse of VIP airport protocol privileges by actress Ranya Rao, who was arrested in connection with a gold smuggling case. The investigation will also explore any potential involvement of her stepfather, Dr. K Ramachandra Rao, an IPS officer and the Director General of Police (DGP) in Karnataka.

Ranya Rao was detained by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) for allegedly smuggling gold bars worth Rs 12 crore from Dubai to Bengaluru. It is claimed that she used VIP airport privileges intended for senior officials to bypass security checks and facilitate

her smuggling operations.

Reports suggest that Rao exploited her stepfather's position as the Managing Director of the Karnataka State Police Housing and Infrastructure Development Corporation to gain unauthorized access to restricted areas at the airport. In response, the Karnataka government has issued an order to investigate how these privileges were granted to her and whether Dr. Ramachandra Rao had any involvement.

The state government has appointed Gaurav Gupta, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, to oversee the investigation, which is expected to conclude within a week.

The gold smuggling case has

sparked political controversy in Karnataka. The ruling Congress and the opposition BJP have exchanged accusations. The BJP claims that the Congress played a role in protecting Ranya Rao from scrutiny, while the Congress has accused the BJP of granting land to a company linked to the actress under dubious circumstances.

BJP Karnataka President BY Vijayendra criticized the state government on social media, suggesting that a prominent minister in Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's government was involved in the gold smuggling case. He alleged that such a large-scale operation could not have happened without high-level political backing, warning that attempts to shield the responsible parties could backfire, especially with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) potentially stepping in.

State Home Minister G Parameshwara confirmed that the investigation was ongoing and emphasized that the government would not interfere until the findings were clear. Karnataka minister MB Patil, in turn, pointed out that during the previous BJP-led government, land had been allocated to a company connected to Ranya Rao.

Gujarat Slums Get 'Cool Roofs' To Combat Extreme Heat



TPN Correspondent | Kolkata

A row erupted at Jadavpur University after graffiti supporting "Azad Kashmir" and "Free Palestine" was discovered on a campus wall, sparking tensions. While classes and exams proceeded as scheduled on Monday, the discovery of the controversial messages fueled protests. The identity of those responsible for the graffiti remains unknown.

The situation was further complicated by reports of plain-clothes police personnel entering the campus, coinciding with the arrival of Om Prakash Mishra, a professor with ties to the ruling Trinamool Congress

(TMC). This move was met with resistance from students and faculty, particularly those from Left-leaning groups. Mishra's visit came after the March 1 incident in which two students were injured during a protest against state Education Minister Bratya Basu. An FIR has been filed against Basu and Mishra in connection with the violence.

Kishalay Roy, president of the TMC-affiliated Trinamool Chhatra Parishad (TMCP) unit, accused ultra-Left student groups of being behind the graffiti. However, student leader Abhinaba Basu of the SFI (CPI-M's student wing) clarified that while they opposed secessionist views, they sup-

ported the rights of minorities in BJP-ruled states. Mishra also condemned the graffiti and reiterated his opposition to secessionist messages.

As tensions mounted, student activists from SFI, AIDS, and faculty unions such as JUTA and ABUTA voiced concerns over the presence of plain-clothes police. The police reportedly arrived shortly after Mishra and stayed until the afternoon. The situation led to chants against the perceived intimidation by the ruling TMC and the state administration.

Mishra, in response, claimed he was unaware of the police presence, asserting that he didn't request any security at his university. The university's General Secretary, Partha Pratim Roy, expressed disapproval of the police's presence on campus, noting that no formal notification was given to the university. Following protests, the matter calmed down after discussions between the administration and the students. A senior official clarified that while police had been stationed outside the campus since March 1, their presence inside was not authorized.

Congress Leaders, Workers Injured As Stage Collapses During Protest In Bhopal



TPN Correspondent | Bhopal

Several Congress leaders and workers were injured after the stage collapsed during a protest in Bhopal on Monday. The protest, organized by the Madhya Pradesh Congress over issues related to farmers, took place at Rang Mahal Square in the state capital. The incident occurred when the stage gave way, leaving several leaders lying on the ground as others rushed to their aid.

Among the injured were State Congress President Jitu Patwari, Leader of Opposition (LoP) Umang Singh, MLA Sachin Yadav, and several other party workers. The protest had been part of the Congress party's ongoing efforts to demand fair support for farmers, specifically calling for the state government to ensure Minimum Support Price (MSP) for rice and wheat at promised rates. The crowd had planned to march towards the state assembly to intensify their demands when the police intervened by using water cannons to disperse the demonstrators.

Speaking to reporters, Congress chief Patwari

emphasized the party's responsibility to challenge the BJP-led government for not fulfilling its promises to women, farmers, and youth. "We are demanding a Minimum Support Price of Rs 3100 per quintal for rice, Rs 2700 per quintal for wheat, and Rs 6000 per quintal. The Union Agriculture Minister, who hails from our state, has failed to speak on MSP," he said.

Patwari further declared that if the government does not adhere to its promises regarding crop procurement, the Congress party would mobilize protests at each Mandi across the state in support of the farmers.

LoP Umang Singh also voiced strong support for farmers, criticizing the Kisan Sangh, which is aligned with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), for not fulfilling its electoral promises. He stated that Congress would continue to fight for farmers' rights from the streets to the state assembly. Singh added, "The Congress party will stand with the farmers and continue this fight until the promises are fulfilled."

Telangana tunnel collapse: Robots join search operation

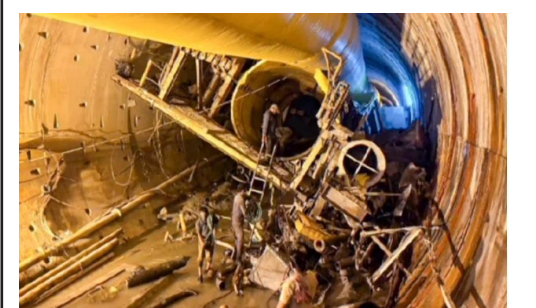
TPN Correspondent | Telangana

The rescue operation to locate seven workers trapped inside the partially collapsed Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel in Nagarkurnool, Telangana, has entered its tenth day. On Tuesday, advanced robotic technology was deployed to assist in the search efforts.

A team from a Hyderabad-based robotics company, along with a specialized robot, entered the tunnel early in the morning to aid the rescue operation. This comes after 110 rescue personnel were already working inside the tunnel. The decision to deploy robots was made by the Telangana government to minimize risk to the rescuers, as the hazardous conditions inside the tunnel, including rising water levels and accumulating slush, presented significant challenges.

The workers had been trapped in the tunnel since February 22 when part of the structure collapsed unexpectedly. Since then, teams have been waving around the clock to locate the trapped individuals and bring them to safety. The use of robots is seen as a crucial step in navigating the difficult terrain inside the tunnel, where conventional rescue efforts could prove dangerous due to unstable conditions.

The Telangana government continues to monitor the situation closely, with the primary goal being the safe retrieval of the trapped workers. The rescue teams are focused on carefully navigating the tunnel's compromised sections to ensure that they do not encounter further hazards as they push forward in the search. The community, along with authorities, remain hopeful for a positive outcome as the operation progresses.





China's Expanding Surveillance on India

A Cause for Concern?

In recent diplomatic engagements, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi emphasized that India and China should "support each other rather than undermine each other," advocating for cooperation over suspicion. On the surface, these remarks suggest an improvement in bilateral relations, particularly since October 2024, when talks resumed after a four-year deadlock following the Galwan clashes. Discussions on border patrolling and disengagement have restarted, and Beijing continues to insist that the border dispute should not define the entirety of India-China relations. However, behind these diplomatic niceties, China's surveillance and monitoring activities along India's borders tell a different story.

China's Expanding Influence in South Asia

China's growing strategic footprint in South Asia has been evident for years, largely through its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), launched in 2013. Using economic leverage, Beijing has established a strong presence across multiple countries, often leaving them in heavy debt. Sri Lanka and the Maldives are two prime examples of how China's economic influence has led to significant security concerns for India.

Sri Lanka and the Maldives: Beijing's Strategic Docking Points

One of the earliest signs of China's strategic expansion came in 2017 when Sri Lanka was forced to lease the Hambantota Port to China for 99 years after failing to repay its debts. This move immediately raised security alarms in New Delhi, as the port's location holds significant geostrategic importance. In addition to economic control, China has used Sri Lanka as a docking station for its surveillance ships under the pretext of research, allowing it to monitor naval movements in the Indian Ocean. A similar challenge has emerged in the Maldives. Since President Mohamed Muizzu assumed office, Male's growing tilt towards Beijing has been a growing concern for India. Chinese research vessels, including the advanced Xiang Yang Hong 03, have docked in the Maldives, sparking fears that these ships are collecting critical maritime data. Further talks between China and the Maldives about installing Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) in the Indian Ocean only add to India's security concerns. To counter these developments, India



is strengthening its maritime capabilities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Mauritius on March 11-12 is expected to finalize agreements that will enhance India's ability to monitor Chinese activities in the region. Additionally, India has ramped up its defense presence by establishing INS Jatayu in Lakshadweep's Minicoy island, a strategic naval base aimed at countering China's growing influence in the Indian Ocean.

Surveillance from the Skies and Across Borders

China's surveillance is not limited to maritime activities. Reports indicate that Beijing has recently deployed a Large Phased Array Radar (LPAR) in Yunnan province, close to Myanmar. With a staggering range of 5,000 kilometers, this radar gives China the capability to monitor significant portions of Indian territory, including critical military movements and missile launches. One of the key threats posed by this development is its ability to detect missile tests from Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast—India's primary launch site for nuclear-capable missiles like Agni V and K4 submarine-launched ballistic missiles. This level of surveillance significantly compromises India's strategic preparedness. To address this, New Delhi is reportedly in discussions with Russia to acquire the Voronezh early-warning radar system, which has an extended range of 8,000 kilometers and would provide India with a much-needed technological edge.

China's Sophisticated Space Reconnaissance

Beyond ground-based surveillance, China has developed an advanced space-based reconnaissance system. Since

2006, Beijing has launched over 140 Yaogan satellites, which specialize in remote sensing and surveillance. Combined with other satellite programs like Gaofen and Shiyang, China now possesses the capability to track even small objects in the Indian Ocean and beyond. This vast surveillance network places India at a significant disadvantage. Beijing reportedly operates 245 operational reconnaissance satellites, compared to India's modest fleet of 26. The superior range, resolution, and all-weather capability of Chinese satellites give them a major edge in intelligence gathering and military monitoring.

Can India Trust China's Calls for Normalization?

Despite Beijing's diplomatic overtures, India has ample reasons to remain cautious. China's defense budget for 2025 stands at a staggering \$246 billion, more than three times India's allocation of \$82 billion. While China continues to advocate for better trade ties and people-to-people exchanges, it is simultaneously expanding its surveillance, military, and intelligence-gathering capabilities along India's borders. New Delhi has been consistent in its approach—stating that diplomatic progress must be linked to resolving border tensions. However, China's relentless pursuit of strategic advantages suggests that trust and mutual respect remain elusive goals. As Beijing strengthens its security infrastructure across land, sea, and space, India must remain vigilant and take decisive steps to counterbalance China's growing surveillance network.

The question that remains is: Can India-China relations ever be built on genuine trust, or will security concerns continue to dictate their trajectory?



X Outage: A Cyber Attack or a Convenient Narrative?

THE POINT DESK

The recent cyber attack on X, formerly known as Twitter, has raised serious concerns about digital security, political narratives, and the implications of corporate leadership intertwining with governance. While U.S. officials are still investigating the nature and origin of the attack, Elon Musk's swift assertion that the attackers had "IP addresses originating in the Ukraine area" has fueled speculation, controversy, and political posturing.

The Attack and the Unanswered Questions

On Monday, thousands of X users reported difficulties accessing the platform. While outages are not uncommon in the digital world, this particular incident was quickly labeled a cyber attack by U.S. officials, triggering an immediate investigation. However, as of now, the authorities have not determined the perpetrators or their motives.

Musk's claim that Ukrainian IP addresses were involved has only added to the confusion. Cybersecurity experts were quick to point out that an IP address does not confirm the geographical origin of an attack. Hackers routinely use VPNs and compromised servers worldwide, making it difficult to trace the actual source. Musk's choice to highlight Ukraine, without presenting concrete evidence, raises questions about whether this was a genuine concern or an attempt to shape a particular narrative.

Musk's Political Entanglement

Musk's influence in both business and politics has grown significantly, particularly under Donald Trump's administration. His role in the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), an agency created by Trump to downsize federal bureaucracy, has placed him in a powerful but controversial position. His ownership of X, Tesla, and SpaceX, combined with his direct advisory role to Trump, creates an unprecedented intersection of corporate power and governance. It is also worth noting that Musk's political leanings have alienated a significant portion of Tesla's consumer base. Traditionally, Tesla has appealed to environmentally conscious consumers, many of whom lean left politically. However, Musk's increasingly vocal support for right-wing policies and aggressive government downsizing has led to protests and even acts of vandalism against Tesla. On Monday, as X suffered its outage, Tesla's stock took a 15% hit, its largest one-day drop since September 2020. This raises an important question: Is Musk's alignment with Trump costing him his customer base?

Trump's Support and the Narrative Shift

Trump, never one to miss an opportunity for political theater, quickly took to his own social media platform to defend Musk. Announcing his decision to purchase a Tesla, he framed it as an act of solidarity against what he perceives as unjust backlash. "Why should he be punished for putting his tremendous skills to work in order to help MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN???" Trump posted, further tying Musk's struggles to the larger MAGA agenda. This incident highlights how cybersecurity threats are increasingly politicized. The rush to blame Ukraine without conclusive evidence plays into broader geopolitical tensions, particularly given Musk's past controversial comments about Ukraine and Russia's war. Meanwhile, his continued political entanglements are not just shaping his public image but also affecting the businesses he leads. The X outage may have been a cyber attack, but the bigger story is how narratives surrounding it are being crafted to serve political and corporate interests.

India's Air Pollution Crisis: The Stark Reality of 2024 Rankings

THE POINT DESK

The latest 'World Air Quality Report 2024' by Swiss firm IQAir has once again put India's pollution crisis in the spotlight. A staggering 13 out of the world's 20 most polluted cities are in India, with Byrnihat, a town on the Assam-Meghalaya border, ranking as the most polluted. Surprisingly, Delhi, Mumbai, and Pune were not at the top, though the capital still retained the title of the world's most polluted capital city.

Byrnihat's Alarming Air Quality

Byrnihat's pollution crisis is a direct consequence of unchecked industrial expansion and heavy vehicular emissions. Its PM2.5 levels reached a hazardous 128 micrograms per cubic meter, making it the worst in the world. The presence of iron and steel plants, distilleries, and a constant movement of trucks between Assam and Meghalaya contribute significantly to its deteriorating air quality.

Despite public protests in January against worsening pollution, authorities have only recently taken action, shutting down seven industrial units in Byrnihat for environmental violations. However, this is merely a band-aid solution to a problem that demands long-term sustainable measures.

Delhi's Unyielding Pollution Problem

Delhi remains the world's most polluted capital, with its PM2.5 levels rising from 102.4 micrograms per cubic meter in 2023 to 108.3 in 2024. The national capital battles year-round pollution exacerbated by vehicular emissions, industrial smoke, stubble burning, and firecracker use. The winter months worsen the crisis due to stagnant air trapping pollutants.

Efforts to control pollution, such as the implementation of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) and vehicular restrictions, have had limited impact. Without stricter enforcement of policies and a shift towards greener



energy alternatives, Delhi's pollution crisis will persist.

India's Broader Pollution Problem

India's pollution crisis extends far beyond Byrnihat and Delhi. Cities such as Mullanpur, Faridabad, Gurugram, Ganganagar, Noida, and Muzaffarnagar have dangerously high pollution levels. The country's overall PM2.5 levels saw a slight 7% improvement from 2023, with India dropping from the third to the fifth most polluted nation. However, this progress is minimal, as over 35% of Indian cities still report air

pollution levels exceeding WHO's safety limits by more than tenfold.

The issue is not confined to India alone. Four cities in Pakistan and one in China also ranked among the world's top 20 most polluted cities. However, India's vast industrial and population growth, coupled with weak enforcement of pollution control measures, has made its air quality crisis particularly severe.

A Call for Action

The dangers of PM2.5 pollution cannot be ignored. These microscopic particles infiltrate the lungs and blood-

stream, leading to severe respiratory diseases, heart conditions, and even cancer. With industrial emissions, vehicle exhaust, and agricultural burning being primary sources, India needs urgent intervention.

Tackling air pollution requires a multi-pronged approach: enforcing stricter industrial regulations, promoting public transportation, transitioning to cleaner energy, and holding local authorities accountable. The government must act decisively, not just for the sake of rankings but for the health and well-being of millions of Indians.

PM Modi gets 'Order of the Star and Key of Indian Ocean' from Mauritius PM

PM Modi Becomes 1st Indian To Get Mauritius' Highest Honour



TPN Correspondent | Mauritius

Mauritius.

Mauritian Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam announced on Tuesday that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be conferred with the prestigious "Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean," the highest honor of Mauritius. This makes PM Modi the first Indian to receive this distinguished award, recognizing his significant contributions to enhancing bilateral relations between India and

The honor highlights PM Modi's efforts in fostering stronger ties between the two nations, particularly in areas such as trade, culture, and people-to-people connections. The award also emphasizes his leadership in promoting regional cooperation and strategic partnerships in the Indian Ocean region.

This recognition marks the 21st international award that PM Modi has

received from a foreign country, underscoring his global stature and the positive impact of his foreign policy. Ramgoolam also mentioned that PM Modi is only the fifth foreign national to be honored with this award, further highlighting the exceptional nature of this recognition.

The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean is a prestigious award given to foreign dignitaries who have made remarkable contributions to strengthening Mauritius' relationship with other nations. This honor not only celebrates PM Modi's leadership but also serves as a testament to the long-standing friendship between India and Mauritius.

The announcement of this award further solidifies the strong diplomatic ties between the two countries, built on shared values and cooperation in various sectors. PM Modi's recognition will undoubtedly strengthen India's relations with Mauritius and inspire continued collaboration in the years to come.

Treated like cows, drunkards ruined Iftar: Police complaint against actor Vijay's Ramzan event



TPN Correspondent | Tamil Nadu

A police complaint has been lodged against Tamil film star Thalapathy Vijay following his Iftar event during Ramzan. The Tamil Nadu Sunnat Jamath, a Muslim organization, accused the event's organizers of allowing "drunkards and rowdies" to participate, which they claim insulted the Muslim community. The group also alleged that attendees were treated disrespectfully, likening their treatment to that of "cows."

Syed Kous, the treasurer of Tamil Nadu Sunnat Jamath, voiced his grievances, stating, "Muslims were insulted at the Iftar program organized by Vijay. We believe the presence of individuals with no connection to fasting or Iftar, such as drunkards and rowdies, dishonored the community." He further criticized the presence of "foreign guards," alleging that they disrespected attendees, further fueling the group's anger.

The complaint emphasized that the action taken was not for publicity, but to prevent such incidents in the future.

Kous insisted that legal action should be pursued against Vijay to ensure such behavior does not repeat.

Thalapathy Vijay, who is also the founder of Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK), hosted the Iftar event in Chennai on March 7, 2025. During the event, he expressed his gratitude toward the Muslim community for participating and hailed the values of brotherhood and humanism. Dressed in a white shirt, dhoti, and a skullcap, Vijay joined in the prayers with the attendees and broke his fast.

Following the Iftar, the actor-politician appeared from the sunroof of his campaign van and waved at his supporters who had gathered along the streets and on a flyover. A video of the actor praying and breaking his fast quickly went viral on social media. While some praised his display of secularism, others criticized it as mere "appeasement."

As the controversy continues to unfold, both the actor's supporters and critics await further developments.

Monitoring Situation In Afghanistan, Held Discussions With Taliban: India At UN

TPN Correspondent | United Nations

India has expressed its ongoing engagement with Afghanistan's Taliban regime, focusing on humanitarian aid and potential development projects. During a recent UN Security Council meeting on Afghanistan, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, highlighted the significance of India's historical and special people-to-people ties with Afghanistan as the foundation for its current engagement.

In January, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri met Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai, marking the highest-level contact between India and the Taliban since the latter's takeover of Kabul in 2021. The two sides discussed various bilateral matters, including regional developments and the continuation of India's humanitarian support for the Afghan people. The Afghan side expressed appreciation for India's assistance, particularly in terms of providing ongoing aid.

Harish noted that India remains committed to monitoring Afghanistan's situation closely while working with international partners to ensure stability. India's approach involves providing humanitarian assistance, with an emphasis on health, food security, education, and capacity-building. India has also contributed 27 tonnes of relief material, 50,000 tonnes of wheat, and over 300 tonnes of medical supplies since the Taliban's rise to power.

India has a long-standing partnership with Afghanistan,

including more than 500 projects across the country since 2001. It has also partnered with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to support Afghan drug users, particularly women, by providing hygiene kits, food, and medical supplies.

The Afghan authorities, meanwhile, have expressed an interest in further cooperation, including the strengthening of cricket ties, which are highly valued by the youth in Afghanistan. Additionally, the use of the Chabahar port for trade, including humanitarian aid, was discussed as part of the bilateral talks.

India remains committed to working with all stakeholders to promote peace, stability, and prosperity in Afghanistan while continuing to support the Afghan people's welfare.



India Becomes the Second-Largest Arms Importer After Ukraine

Global Arms Transfers Remain Stable, India Shifts Focus from Russian Arms

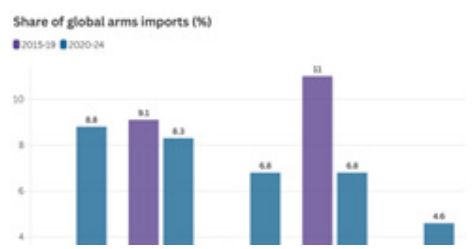
TPN Correspondent | NEW DELHI

India has diversified its arms imports in recent years, with a notable pivot away from Russian military hardware. According to the latest Economic Survey, France has emerged as a key supplier to India, securing major deals including 36 Rafale fighter jets and six Scorpene-class conventional submarines. Additional contracts for 26 Rafale-M jets and three submarines are expected to be finalized soon. France was the second-largest exporter of major arms to India, after the United States.

While the overall volume of global arms transfers remained stable between 2015-19 and 2020-24, it was 18% higher than the 2005-2009 period. Imports in Europe and the Americas increased, offsetting declines in other regions. Italy saw significant progress, jumping from 10th to 6th

place in the arms exporter list, holding a 4.8% share of global sales.

The report also highlighted the global shift in arms imports, with at least 35 countries sending weapons to Ukraine since the war began in 2022. Ukraine received 8.8% of global arms imports in 2020-24, with the United States accounting for 45% of the total arms supplied, followed by Germany (12%) and Poland (11%).



European countries have significantly increased arms imports as part of their rearmament efforts, spurred

by the ongoing conflict with Russia. Despite these increases, some major arms importers, including Saudi Arabia, India, and China, experienced substantial declines in



import volumes. Mathew George, a programme director at SIPRI, noted that the figures reflect the shifting security dynamics, with countries like India looking to reduce their dependence on Russian arms due to changing geopolitical and strategic priorities.

Airtel Partners with SpaceX to Bring Starlink Satellite Internet to India



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Airtel has signed a partnership agreement with SpaceX to introduce Starlink's satellite internet services in India, pending approval from authorities. This collaboration aims to enhance internet access across the country, particularly in remote and rural areas.

The agreement outlines several areas of collaboration. Airtel may sell Starlink equipment through its stores and offer the service to businesses. The two companies also plan to use Starlink to connect rural schools, health centers, and other remote locations, ensuring high-speed internet access where traditional

networks are limited. Additionally, Airtel and SpaceX will explore ways Starlink can support Airtel's network infrastructure, and how Airtel's existing infrastructure can help SpaceX expand its footprint in India.

Airtel already partners with Eutelsat OneWeb for satellite internet, but the inclusion of Starlink is expected to further boost the company's coverage in underserved regions. This will provide businesses and communities in remote locations with better connectivity options, improving access to high-speed broadband.

Gopal Vittal, Managing Director and Vice Chairman of Bharti Airtel, expressed enthusiasm

about the partnership, calling it a significant milestone for the company. He stated, "Working with SpaceX to offer Starlink to Airtel customers in India is a major step in advancing satellite connectivity. This collaboration will help bring world-class, high-speed broadband to even the most remote parts of the country, ensuring reliable internet for individuals, businesses, and communities."

Gwynne Shotwell, President of SpaceX, shared her excitement about the collaboration, highlighting the potential of Starlink to transform lives in India. "We are thrilled to work with Airtel and unlock the transformative impact Starlink can bring to the people of India," Shotwell said. "The Airtel team has played a pivotal role in India's telecom development, making this collaboration a natural fit."

With this partnership, Airtel and SpaceX are set to bring significant improvements in internet connectivity across India, especially in areas that have previously faced challenges accessing reliable broadband services.

US-Ukraine Peace Talks Begin



TPN Correspondent | Washington

US and Ukrainian officials have initiated peace talks in Saudi Arabia's Jeddah, with discussions led by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Andriy Yermak, Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine. The talks are taking place after Ukraine launched its largest drone attack on Moscow, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing war.

Yermak shared on social media that the meeting with the US delegation had begun positively, describing the discussions as "constructive" and reaffirming Ukraine's readiness to work towards peace. "We are ready to do everything to achieve peace," Yermak stated, emphasizing Ukraine's commitment to negotiating an end to the conflict

with Russia.

This meeting follows a strained encounter between US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during their previous White House meeting. Tensions flared when Trump criticized Zelenskyy for not being sufficiently grateful for US military aid, while US Vice President JD Vance also reprimanded the Ukrainian leader, calling him "disrespectful." The meeting's fallout had soured relations between the two countries, prompting Zelenskyy to seek a fresh approach in Jeddah.

In the backdrop of the peace talks, Ukraine launched an unprecedented drone strike on Moscow, deploying 91 drones overnight. The attack killed at least one person, led to air-

- Amid Rising Tensions Following Kyiv's Largest Drone Attack on Moscow
- US Secretary of State Marco and Ukrainian official Andriy lead negotiations
- future US aid and ceasefire terms under discussion

port closures, and caused significant flight diversions, adding pressure to the negotiations.

Secretary of State Rubio acknowledged the importance of understanding Ukraine's position in the talks, noting that both sides would need to make concessions for a ceasefire and an eventual end to the war. A central topic of discussion will be the US's continued support and military aid to Ukraine, particularly in light of Trump's previous comments and the evolving dynamics of international relations.

The outcome of these peace talks is seen as crucial in shaping the future of US-Ukraine relations and the ongoing conflict with Russia.



India Says "No Commitments" To Tariff Cuts After Trump's Tax Cut Claim

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

India has refuted claims made by President Donald Trump that it had agreed to significantly reduce tariffs on U.S. products, stating that no such commitment had been made. This clarification comes after Trump's recent remarks about India slashing import duties, which he framed as a positive development in the ongoing trade discussions between the two countries.

In his speech last week, Trump expressed frustration with India's "massive tariffs," calling them "almost restrictive" and accusing the country of unfair trade practices. He claimed that India had agreed to "cut their tariffs way down" in response to global pressure. However, India's government quickly denied these claims, telling a parliamentary panel that no formal commitment had been made to reduce tariffs. Instead, India has requested more time to address the issue, with a deadline set for September.

India's Commerce Secretary, Sunil Barthwal, emphasized that both countries were working towards a mutually beneficial bilateral trade agreement that would prioritize long-term cooperation rather than focusing solely on immediate tariff cuts. This statement signals India's intent to approach the issue carefully, considering its broader trade relationship with the U.S.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has cultivated a strong personal rapport with President Trump, has also voiced hopes for a trade agreement that would benefit both nations. Following his visit to the White House last month, Modi reiterated that the two countries would soon seal a deal aimed at fostering deeper economic ties.

While the U.S. is a critical market for India's information technology and services sectors, India has also become a significant customer of U.S. military hardware in recent years. This diverse trade relationship could influence the negotiations, as both sides seek to expand their economic and strategic cooperation.

Amidst these discussions, Trump may visit India later this year for a summit involving the Quad nations—Australia, India, Japan, and the United States—which could further shape the future of U.S.-India trade relations.



US Intel Chief Tulsi Gabbard To Visit India During Multi-Nation Trip To Indo-Pacific

TPN Correspondent | Washington

US Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Tulsi Gabbard announced on Monday that she has begun a multi-nation trip to the Indo-Pacific region, which will include visits to Japan, Thailand, and India. Gabbard highlighted the importance of fostering strong relationships, mutual understanding, and open communication to further the objectives of peace, freedom, and prosperity set by US President Donald Trump.

In a post on X, Gabbard shared her excitement for the trip, stating, "I am #WheelsUp on a multi-nation trip to the Indo-Pacific, a region I know very well having grown up as a child of the Pacific. I'll be going to Japan, Thailand, and India, with a brief stop in France enroute back to DC. Building strong relationships, understanding, and open lines of communication are vital to achieving President Trump's objectives of peace, freedom, and prosperity. First stop: Honolulu where I'll visit IC partners and INDOPACOM leaders, and our troops engaging in training."

This marks the first visit by a senior White House official to India under the Trump administration. Gabbard's visit comes shortly after Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trip to the United States in February, where he met with Gabbard and praised her as a "strong votary" of the India-US relationship. Gabbard expressed her honor in welcoming PM Modi and reiterated her commitment to strengthening the friendship between the two nations.

Zelenskyy Meets Saudi Crown Prince To Discuss Peace Efforts and Strengthen Bilateral Ties



TPN Correspondent | Ottawa

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman during his visit to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where they discussed the pursuit

of a "sustainable, fair, and comprehensive" peace in Ukraine, as per a joint statement released by the Saudi state news agency (SPA) on Tuesday.

The meeting, part of ongoing diplomatic

talks, aims to explore ways to end the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Zelenskyy, along with U.S. officials including Secretary of State Marco Rubio, arrived in Saudi Arabia on Monday for crucial discussions with both Ukrainian and U.S. officials, focused on finding a path towards peace.

In addition to peace efforts, the two leaders also talked about strengthening bilateral relations, particularly in key sectors such as energy, food industries, and infrastructure. They expressed interest in expanding cooperation in areas like oil, gas, and petrochemicals.

The talks highlight the growing partnership between Saudi Arabia and Ukraine, as both nations aim to enhance their investment relations and explore opportunities for mutual growth in these crucial industries.

Saudi Arabia's Mega-City Faces Mega Problem: The Price Of A Desert Paradise



TPN Correspondent | Saudi

Saudi Arabia's \$500 billion Neom mega-city project, intended to revolutionize urban living, is encountering significant hurdles. Despite an extravagant event to showcase the city's future vision, reports reveal substantial delays, budget overruns, and leadership issues.

The first phase of the project, Sindalah, has been plagued by problems. Originally slated to cost \$1.3 billion, the luxury resort's price tag has surged to nearly \$4 billion, years behind schedule. Notably, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the project's mastermind, was absent from the event, and weeks later, Neom's CEO, Nadhmi al-Nasr, was replaced, signaling deeper issues within the project.

Since its inception in 2017, Neom has already consumed over \$50 billion, but its most ambitious concepts, such as a floating business district, a desert ski resort, and a 170-kilometre-long linear city, remain unrealized. A Wall Street Journal report uncovered widespread financial mismanagement within Neom's leadership, revealing that executives, with the help of consultants McKinsey & Co., inflated financial projections to justify escalating costs. An internal audit found evidence of "deliberate manipulation" of figures by senior management.

The project's future appears daunting, with a draft 2023 board presentation estimating that completing Neom by 2080 would require \$8.8 trillion, more than 25 times Saudi Ara-

bia's annual budget. Even the first phase, which is expected to run until 2035, is projected to cost \$370 billion.

Neom's centerpiece, The Line, was envisioned as a futuristic city within two parallel skyscrapers stretching 170 kilometres. However, the scope of the project has proven overwhelming. Initial plans to build 16 km of The Line by 2030 have been revised to a more modest 2.4 km, with only a half-mile section, including a stadium, expected by 2034. The city's ambitious design, which includes towering structures over 1,640 feet tall, has faced engineering challenges, prompting cost-cutting suggestions, including reducing the height to 1,000 feet, though Crown Prince Salman has rejected this idea, insisting on maintaining the original vision.

Markets End Flat Amid Volatility Oil Price Drop and Quality Stocks Support Recovery



Domestic stock markets closed flat on Tuesday. Benchmark indices started the morning gap-down on the back of a crash in the US markets and negative signals internationally. Investors bought on the back of falling oil prices, falling dollar index, improving domestic earnings and availability of quality stocks at attractive prices. As a result, the indices recovered their intraday losses. As long as the Nifty is trading above 22,300 and the Sensex above 73,700, there is scope for short-term bullishness.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 74,115 in the previous session, opened at 73,743 on Tuesday. It touched an intraday low of 73,663. It reached an in-

traday high of 74,195. It finally closed at 74,102, down 12 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 22,345, touched a low of 22,314 and a high of 22,522. It closed at 22,497, up 37 points. The Nifty Bank lost 362 points and settled at 47,853.

In the Nifty50, 33 companies gained while 17 lost. Realty, oil and gas, PSE, infra, finance, healthcare, and metal stocks rose. Bank, IT, auto, media, and FMCG stocks faced selling pressure. Trent, BPCL, Sun Pharma, ICICI Bank, Shriram Finance were the top gainers. IndusInd, Infi, M&M, and Ba-



MURTHY NAIDU PAADAM
Stock Market Analyst
+91 988 555 9709

jaj Finserv lost the most.

Market breadth turned in favour of sellers on NSE today. 2958 stocks traded while 1850 lost. 1041 gained. 14 shares reached 52-week highs and 200 shares touched 52-week lows. 46 shares reached upper circuit and 205 reached lower circuit.

Poly Medicare gets Medical Device Regulation certification for 54 products in Europe. CG Power signs long-term supply agreement with Kynet Railway Solutions. Godrej Agrovet to acquire 48.06% stake in Creamline Dairy Products for Rs 930 crore. Rupee strengthens 12 paise against dollar to settle at 87.21. HSBC has given a buy rating to SBI Cards with a target price of Rs 1000. It has maintained a buy rating on BPCL, HPCL and IOC. Jefferies has retained a buy rating on Voltas with a target price of Rs 1990. Zydus Life Sciences will acquire French company Medtech Amplitude Surgical for Rs 2447 crore. Hindustan Zinc Board has approved the issue of NCDs worth Rs 500 crore. Anupam Rasayyan signs a ten-year agreement with a Korean multinational company. Bharat Electronics has secured orders worth Rs 843 crore.

KSB Ltd

KSB announced a ₹150 crore investment to expand its pump manufacturing facilities, targeting increased demand in infrastructure, agricul-

ture, and water management. The company's robust order book and focus on premium pump solutions ensure steady revenue growth. Analysts maintain a 'Buy' rating with a good target based on its strong fundamentals and expansion strategy.

BPCL (Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd)



BPCL announced a ₹10,000 crore investment to expand refining capacity by 15% over the next two years. Improved refining margins, lower crude oil prices, and stable domestic demand are positive indicators.

Laurus Labs

Laurus Labs invested ₹200 crore to expand its API (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient) production. The company's CDMO (Contract Development



and Manufacturing Organization) segment is showing strong future growth potential despite near-term headwinds. Analysts maintain a 'Hold' rating with a good target price

Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd.

Chennai Petroleum posted a 20% rise in Q3 net profit, attributed to better refining margins and improved operational efficiency. The company continues to strengthen its presence in the refining sector with increased output and cost control strategies.



Tube Investments of India (TII India)

TII India has diversified its business into EV components, enhancing its future growth trajectory. The company's strategic partnerships and investments in innovative technologies are expected to drive revenue growth. Jefferies maintains a 'Buy' rating with a target price of ₹3,600, highlighting the company's strong positioning in the engineering sector.



India's Coal Imports Drop by 8.4%, Saving Rs 42,315 Crore in Foreign Exchange

India's coal imports witnessed a notable decline of 8.4% in the April-December period of the current fiscal year, reaching 183.42 million tonnes (MT), compared to 200.19 MT in the same period last year. This reduction in imports resulted in significant foreign exchange savings, estimated at approximately Rs 42,315 crore (USD 5.43 billion), according to the Ministry of Coal.

The decline in coal imports was particularly evident in the non-regulated sector, excluding the power sector, which saw a sharper drop of 12.01% year-on-year. Despite this overall decrease, coal-based power generation registered a growth of 3.53% from April to December 2024, compared to the previous year. Notably, imports for blending by thermal power plants saw a sharp decline of 29.8%, reflecting the country's efforts to reduce reliance on foreign coal.

Several government initiatives, such as the commercial mining reforms and the "Mission Coking Coal" program, have contributed to this decline by boosting domestic coal production. These initiatives aim to increase the availability of coal within the country, thereby reducing the need for imports.

Additionally, India's coal output during the April-December period of the current fiscal grew by 6.11%, as compared to the same period in 2023-24. The government's focus on enhancing



domestic production, along with ongoing efforts to reduce imports, has played a key role in this positive shift.

Overall, the reduction in coal imports and the resulting foreign exchange savings reflect India's ongoing commitment to improving energy security and reducing dependency on foreign sources.

RBI to issue Rs 100 and Rs 200 notes bearing signature of Guv Malhotra

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced on Tuesday that it will soon release new banknotes in the denominations of Rs 100 and Rs 200, featuring the signature of the newly appointed RBI Governor, Sanjay Malhotra.

According to the statement issued by the central bank, the design of these new notes will be identical to the Rs 100 and Rs 200 banknotes currently in circulation under the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series. The RBI assured the public that all previously issued Rs 100 and Rs 200 notes, regardless of the signature, will continue to remain valid and legal tender.

Governor Sanjay Malhotra, who assumed office in December 2024, replaces Shaktikanta Das, whose term as RBI Governor concluded after an extended period. As part of the usual currency replacement cycle, the issuance of these new notes with Malhotra's signature marks a continuation of the central bank's routine process of updating currency designs to reflect leadership transitions.

The RBI's move to issue new notes comes at a time when the Indian economy is closely monitoring various monetary and fiscal measures. This step is expected to have little immediate impact on the everyday circulation of currency, as the new notes will closely mirror the existing ones in terms of design and security features.

While there is no change in the look or feel of the Rs 100 and Rs 200 denominations, the signature update highlights the shift in leadership at the RBI, underscoring the institution's role in managing the country's monetary policy and financial systems.

Overall, the issuance of these new banknotes is part of the RBI's ongoing efforts to ensure smooth currency circulation while commemorating leadership changes at the central bank.



Rupee gains 1 paisa to 87.30 against US dollar in early trade



The Indian rupee traded almost flat against the US dollar on Tuesday morning, gaining just 1 paisa to reach 87.30. This marginal gain was supported by a weaker American currency and a dip in global crude oil prices. However, the rupee's progress was tempered by ongoing volatility in domestic equity markets, which have been negatively affected by concerns over a potential recession in the United States and uncertain-

ties surrounding trade relations.

Forex traders noted that despite the positive movement from the US dollar's weakness and lower oil prices, investor sentiment remained cautious. Fears of an economic slowdown in the US and the resulting uncertainties in global trade have raised concerns among market participants, contributing to instability in the Indian stock markets. These factors have impacted the rupee's ability to make more significant gains, as traders remain wary of the broader economic environment.

The combination of these global and domestic factors has led to a mixed outlook for the rupee, with investors closely monitoring developments in both the equity markets and international trade negotiations. Although the weakening of the US dollar has provided some short-term support to the Indian currency, the outlook remains uncertain, and much depends on the resolution of key geopolitical and economic challenges.

Overall, while the rupee's small gain on Tuesday was a positive sign, the forex market's volatility suggests that further fluctuations could occur as investors continue to navigate global uncertainties.

2025 BYD Seal, Atto 3 Launched in India; Bookings Open



BYD has launched the 2025 models of the Seal electric sedan and the Atto 3 electric SUV in India, marking its first anniversary in the country. The new models come with several feature upgrades, while bookings have officially opened.

2025 BYD Seal: Key Updates

The BYD Seal electric sedan receives several enhancements, including:

New standard features: Power sunshade, upgraded AC system with enhanced purification, and silver-plated dimming canopy.

Connectivity: Wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto.

Suspension Upgrades: The Performance variant gets BYD's DiSus-C intelligent damping system, while the Premium variant comes with Frequency Selective Dampers for improved ride comfort.

Battery, Range, and Variants

Seal Dynamic – 61.44 kWh battery, 510 km ARAI range.

Seal Premium – 82.56 kWh battery, 650 km ARAI range.

Seal Performance – 82.56 kWh battery, 580 km ARAI range.

The pricing for the Seal sedan is yet to be announced.

2025 BYD Atto 3: Key Updates

The Atto 3 electric SUV gets a refreshed feature list, including:

All-black interior for a sportier look.

Ventilated front seats for improved comfort.

Upgraded low-voltage Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) battery, claimed to have five times better self-discharge control and a 15-year lifespan.

Battery, Range, and Variants

The Atto 3 is available in three variants:

Dynamic – 49.92 kWh battery, 468 km ARAI range.

Premium & Superior – 60.48 kWh battery, 580 km ARAI range.

Booking and Pricing

Bookings for both models are now open.

The BYD Seal requires a booking token of ₹1.25 lakh, with pricing yet to be revealed.

The Atto 3 will be offered at 2024 model prices for the first 3,000 customers, starting at ₹24.99 lakh (ex-showroom).

Would you consider these EVs for your next car purchase?

SAFF U19 Championship 2025 India Drawn With Nepal, Sri Lanka in Group B

India's Fixtures
May 9: India vs Sri Lanka
May 13: India vs Nepal
May 16: Semi-finals
May 18: Final

The draw for the SAFF U19 Championship 2025 was conducted on Tuesday in Kathmandu, placing defending champions India in Group B alongside Nepal and Sri Lanka. The tournament will be hosted at the Golden Jubilee Stadium in Yupia, Arunachal Pradesh, from May 9 to 18, 2025. Maldives, Bhutan, and Bangladesh have been placed in Group A. The competition format

sees the top two teams from each group advancing to the semi-finals on May 16, with the final set for May 18. The draw was based on the latest FIFA men's rankings as of December 2024.

India won the previous edition in 2023, defeating Pakistan 3-0 in the final held in Kathmandu. In 2024, the tournament was played at the U20 level, where India exited in the semi-finals after a penalty shootout loss to Bangladesh. This will be the fourth time India hosts a SAFF age-group competition, following previous tournaments in Bhubaneswar (U20 men, 2022), Jamshedpur (U18 women, 2022), and Kalyani (U15 men, 2019).



Lauki for Skin Health The Secret to Naturally Glowing and Hydrated Skin

THE POINT DESK

Lauki, or bottle gourd, is more than just a common kitchen ingredient—it's a powerhouse of skin-nourishing nutrients. With a high water content (92%) and rich reserves of vitamin C, zinc, iron, and antioxidants, lauki helps maintain clear, glowing skin. From fighting acne to preventing premature aging, this humble vegetable offers multiple skincare benefits.

How Lauki Boosts Skin Health

- **Deeply Hydrates** – Keeps skin soft and supple by maintaining hydration.
- **Promotes Natural Glow** – Rich in vitamin C, it boosts collagen and enhances

skin elasticity.

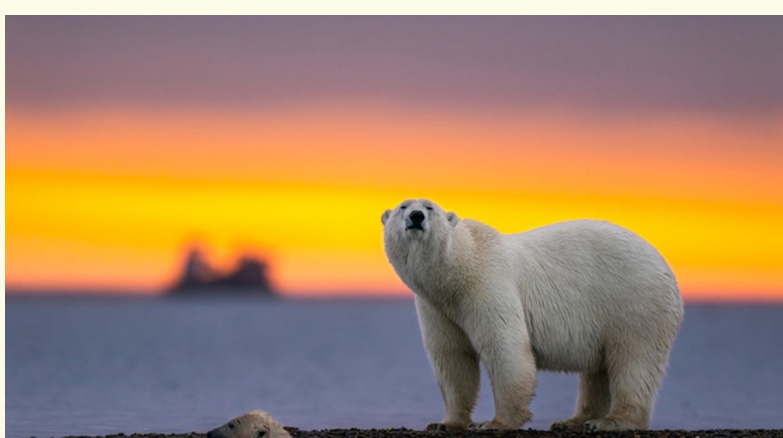
- **Fights Acne & Blemishes** – Its antibacterial properties control oil and prevent breakouts.
- **Detoxifies the Skin** – Flushes out toxins, reducing impurities and inflammation.
- **Reduces Skin Inflammation** – Soothes redness, puffiness, and sunburn.
- **Delays Premature Aging** – Packed with antioxidants that combat fine lines and wrinkles.
- **Evens Out Skin Tone** – Helps lighten dark spots and pigmentation.
- **Heals Sun Damage** – Repairs and

soothes tanned or sunburnt skin.

- **Prevents Dark Circles** – Hydrates and refreshes under-eye skin, reducing puffiness.
- **How to Use Lauki for Skincare**
- **Drink Fresh Lauki Juice** – Detoxifies and enhances skin clarity.
- **Include in Diet** – Add to curries, soups, or smoothies for long-term benefits.
- **Apply as a Face Mask** – Mix lauki juice with turmeric or aloe vera for a soothing skin treatment.
- **A natural skincare secret**, lauki can be your go-to solution for achieving youthful and radiant skin!



6 Places Where the Sun Never Sets



Imagine a world where the sun refuses to sleep, where midnight feels like midday, and night is just a concept. Welcome to the land of the midnight sun! In regions near the Arctic and Antarctic Circles, Earth's tilt keeps the sun visible for weeks or even months. If you've ever wanted to experience broad daylight at 2 AM, these destinations should be on your travel list.

1. Tromsø, Norway



From late May to late July, Tromsø enjoys uninterrupted daylight. Locals embrace the sun with late-night hikes, music festivals, and even midnight golf—because why sleep when the sun never sets?

2. Svalbard, Norway

Four months of continuous daylight? Yes, you read that right. From April to August, this Arctic archipelago basks in endless sunshine, making it perfect for glacier trekking and polar bear spotting.

3. Reykjavik, Iceland

Between mid-May and mid-July, Reykjavik experiences nearly 21 hours of daylight, with the sun merely hovering near the horizon. Celebrate with the Secret Solstice Festival or soak in a geothermal lagoon at midnight.

4. Yukon, Canada

In June and July, the Yukon basks in endless daylight. The Midnight Sun Baseball Game, played at 10:30 PM without artificial lights, is a must-see. Road-trippers can also drive through the

Arctic Circle under a never-ending sunset.

5. Finland

Lapland experiences up to 70 days of continuous daylight, known as "yötön yö" or "nightless night." Midnight marathons, sauna sessions, and lakeside parties make the most of this surreal phenomenon.

6. St. Petersburg, Russia

Though not fully sunlit 24/7, St. Petersburg's "White Nights" (late May to mid-July) keep the city glowing. The White Nights Festival transforms the city into a vibrant cultural hub with ballet, opera, concerts, and fireworks.

How Do People Sleep Here?

Locals rely on blackout curtains, sleep masks, and sheer exhaustion from taking full advantage of the endless daylight. Some stick to a routine, while others embrace the midnight sun lifestyle.

Would you visit one of these places to experience the magic of a sleepless sun?



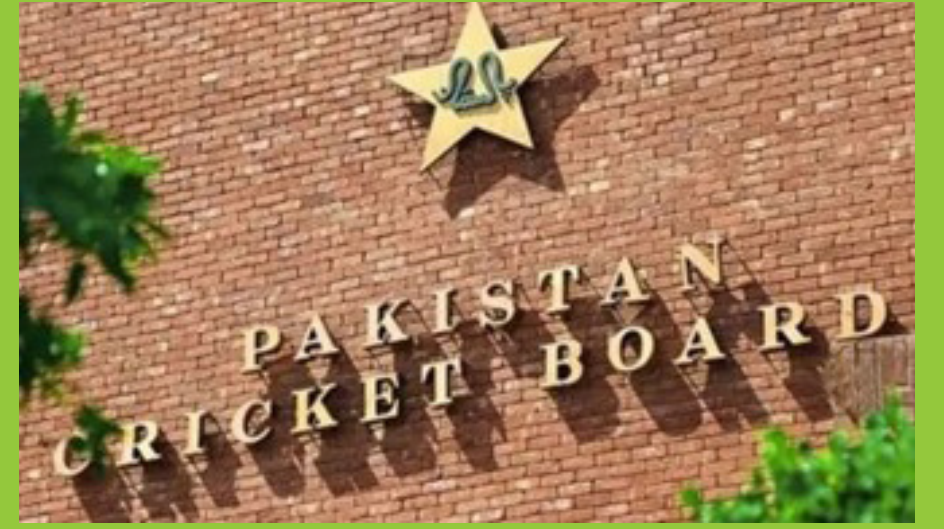
Rohit Sharma Joins Elite Captains' Club After CT Win



Indian skipper Rohit Sharma has etched his name alongside legendary captains after delivering a match-winning performance in the Champions Trophy final against New Zealand in Dubai. Rohit became only the fourth captain and the second Indian, after MS Dhoni, to win the Player of the Match award in an ICC tournament final. Joining an exclusive list featuring Clive Lloyd (1975), Ricky Ponting (2003), and Dhoni (2011), Rohit powered India's chase with a blistering 76 off 83 balls. His aggressive approach dismantled New Zealand's 251-run defense, ensuring India's four-wicket triumph at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

Despite wickets tumbling at the other end, Rohit anchored the innings with calculated aggression. His explosive start in the powerplay set the tone, and even after his dismissal, India remained in control. Speaking after the match, Rohit emphasized his consistent approach, saying, "I have not done anything different. I know how important it is to score runs in the powerplay because after 10 overs, it becomes difficult when the field spreads and spinners come into play." His fearless batting and leadership sealed India's dominance, adding another ICC trophy to his captaincy record.

PCB's Financial Struggles Exposed Amid Drastic Cost-Cutting



The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is facing serious financial concerns, as evidenced by a series of cost-cutting measures, including a drastic reduction in domestic match fees and downgraded player facilities. The upcoming National T20 Championship will see player match fees slashed from ₹100,000 to just ₹10,000 per match, with reserve players receiving ₹5,000. According to sources, PCB's domestic cricket head, Abdullah Khurram Niazi, has overseen multiple facility downgrades in recent months. Players who previously stayed in four and five-star hotels are now being accommodated in budget lodgings, and air travel privileges have been reduced. Additionally, outstanding payments from the previous season remain unpaid for players and umpires.

Despite these cuts, the PCB continues to pay hefty salaries to top officials, selectors, and mentors. Misbah ul Haq, Waqar Younis, Shoaib Malik, Sarfaraz Ahmed, and Saqlain Mushtaq—appointed as mentors—are reportedly receiving ₹5 million per month under two-year contracts. Meanwhile, the PCB has spent approximately ₹1.8 billion on stadium upgrades for the upcoming Champions Trophy. The financial strain has also affected former cricketers, with the board yet to implement the promised annual pension increase. The stark contrast between the PCB's cost-cutting for players and its lavish spending on officials has raised serious questions about its financial management.



Manchester United Plans 100,000-Seater Stadium

Manchester United has announced plans to build a new 100,000-capacity stadium near Old Trafford, with co-owner Jim Ratcliffe calling it the "world's greatest" football ground. The decision follows extensive consultations on whether to upgrade Old Trafford or construct a new venue as part of the Old Trafford Regeneration Task Force. The club estimates that the stadium, expected to cost around £2 billion (\$2.6 billion), will take approximately five years to complete. However, a start date has yet to be confirmed. The project, designed by renowned architects Foster + Partners, aims to transform the surrounding area and potentially contribute £7.3 billion per year to the UK economy while creat-

ing 92,000 jobs. "Our current stadium has served us brilliantly for 115 years, but it has fallen behind the best arenas in world sport," Ratcliffe said. "United is the world's biggest football club, and it deserves a stadium that reflects its stature." The move has received backing from legendary former manager Sir Alex Ferguson, who emphasized the need to "be brave and seize this opportunity to build a new home, fit for the future, where new history can be made." Old Trafford, England's largest club ground with a 74,000 capacity, has been United's home since 1910 but has faced increasing criticism over maintenance issues. The proposed

new stadium will feature an umbrella-like design covering a public plaza twice the size of Trafalgar Square and three towering masts known as "Trident," visible from 40 kilometers away. Concerns remain over funding, with United already burdened by nearly £1 billion in debt. CEO Omar Berrada stated that financing options are being explored, calling it a "very attractive investment opportunity." The Manchester United Supporters' Trust urged the club to involve fans throughout the process, questioning potential ticket price increases, impact on atmosphere, and whether the project would divert resources from squad investments.

52nd Senior National Carrom Championship in New Delhi

Top players to compete in national event from March 17-21

The All India Carrom Federation (AICF) is set to host the 52nd Senior National Carrom Championship (Men & Women) for 2024-25, from March 17 to 21, 2025, in New Delhi. The event, which will witness participation from top carrom players across the country, promises to be a grand affair, with a strong lineup of officials and umpires ensuring smooth conduct. Key Officials Overseeing the Championship The championship is being organized under the leadership of Mrs. Bharti Narayan, General Secretary of AICF, along with Mr. V. D. Narayan and Mr. Shahid Farooq, General Secretary and Secretary of the Delhi Carrom Association (DCA), respectively. International umpires Mr. Gurinder Singh and Mr. Kashi Ram will be officiating matches, while Mr. S. Shoban Raj, Convener of the Um-

pires Committee, will oversee umpiring responsibilities. Several other senior officials, including Mr. SK. Abdul Jaleel, Mr. J. Srinivasan, and Mr. M. P. Hemantha Kumar, will also play key roles in the tournament's management. The Championship Committee includes several prominent personalities, led by AICF President and Member of Parliament, Mr. Rakibul Hussain. Other notable members include: Mr. Girish Vyas - Patron, AICF Dr. Neeraj Kumar Sampathy - Senior Vice President, AICF Mr. B N Singh - Associate Vice President, AICF Mr. S. Madan Raj - Treasurer, AICF Mr. Prabhjeet Singh Bachher, Mr. Gurinder Singh, and Mr. Vijay Kumar - Vice Presidents, AICF Mr. Nazar Khan, Mr. Khursheed Khan, Mr.



Santhosh Kumar, Mr. Maneksh P.S., and Mr. Sooraj Khatri - Associate Vice Presidents, AICF Participation and Expectations The tournament will bring together top carrom players from across India, competing for national honors. With Delhi hosting the event, anticipation is high for a competitive championship that will showcase the best talent in the sport. The AICF's commitment to promoting carrom at the highest level is evident in the meticulous planning and the presence of experienced officials.

Satwik, Chirag and Lakshya Sen Drop Out of BWF Top 10

Indian badminton stars Satwik-Isairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty and Lakshya Sen have suffered a major setback, dropping out of the top 10 in the latest Badminton World Federation (BWF) rankings. This marks the first time since November 2021 that the men's doubles duo has fallen outside the top 10, slipping five places to 12th. The decline follows a rough phase for Rankireddy and Shetty, who last played at the Badminton

Asia Team Mixed Championships in February. Their disappointing run at the 2024 Paris Olympics led to significant changes in their training setup, including parting ways with coach Mathias Boe. They are now under the mentorship of Tan Kim Her, the coach who originally paired them together. Despite the drop, they remain India's highest-ranked men's doubles pair. In men's singles, Lakshya Sen has also fallen in the rankings, slip-

ping from 10th to 15th. His early exits at the Malaysia Open and India Open, along with a Round of 16 finish at the Indonesia Masters Super 500, have contributed to his decline. Meanwhile, PV Sindhu has dropped one place to 16th in women's singles but remains the only Indian shuttler in the top 20. In contrast, the women's doubles duo of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand continues to hold the ninth spot, keeping India's pres-

ence strong in the category. In mixed doubles, Tanisha Crasto and Dhruv Kapila reached a career-best ranking of 19th, making Crasto the first Indian female shuttler to break into the top 20 with three different partners across categories. Among emerging talents, Ayush Shetty climbed to a career-high 43rd after his semi-final run at the Orleans Masters, solidifying his position as India's fifth-highest-ranked men's singles player.





Anushka Sen's Beach Look Takes Social Media by Storm!



Bollywood sensation Anushka Sen, known for her vibrant screen presence, is once again in the spotlight. At just 22, she has carved a niche for herself in films, TV shows, web series, and music videos. With a massive fanbase of over 40 million followers on Instagram, every post of hers grabs instant attention.

Recently, Anushka's stunning beach look set the internet ablaze. The actress shared a series of breathtaking pictures from her beach getaway, exuding effortless charm and confidence. Dressed in a chic yet breezy outfit, she perfectly complemented the sun-kissed shores, leaving fans in

awe of her style.

Her post quickly went viral, with fans flooding the comments section with heart and fire emojis, praising her beauty and elegance. Known for her impeccable fashion sense, Anushka continues to be a trendsetter for Gen Z.

From television to digital platforms, Anushka Sen's journey has been nothing short of inspiring. Whether it's her acting prowess or her social media presence, she never fails to make headlines. With several exciting projects in the pipeline, the young starlet is all set to take her career to even greater heights.

Rajamouli Infuses Mythological Essence Into SSMB 29

Superstar Mahesh Babu's much-anticipated film with master storyteller SS Rajamouli, tentatively titled SSMB 29, has been creating a buzz ever since its announcement. Initially promoted as a high-stakes action-adventure set against a dense forest backdrop, new reports suggest the film carries a deeper narrative rooted in Indian history and mythology.

According to sources, SSMB 29 will unravel an intriguing storyline that originates in the ancient city of Kashi. The film is expected to weave together elements of divinity and history, setting the stage for an intense action saga that unfolds in the present era. Since filming in Kashi poses logistical challenges, the makers are recreating a grand set in Hyderabad to bring the historical elements to life.



These revelations have further heightened anticipation, with Rajamouli reportedly planning to deliver a visually spectacular cinematic experience. The film is set to be shot across breathtaking locations in India, Africa, and other international destinations, ensuring a global scale for its narrative. Currently, the team is shoot-

ing crucial sequences in Odisha. SSMB 29 boasts a stellar cast, with Priyanka Chopra and Prithviraj Sukumaran playing key roles alongside Mahesh Babu. The legendary MM Keeravani is composing the music, promising yet another memorable soundtrack for this ambitious project.

Vicky Kaushal's Chhaava Overtakes Gadar 2 Becomes 10th-Highest-Grossing Indian Film



Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna's historical drama Chhaava continues its strong run at the box office, surpassing Gadar 2 to become the 10th-highest-grossing Indian film. Released on February 14, the film has maintained its momentum, collecting ₹6.25 crore on its 25th day across all languages, as per a report by Sacnilk. With this, Chhaava has amassed a total domestic collection of ₹526.05 crore, overtaking Gadar 2, which had a lifetime collection of ₹525.7

crore.

Following the film's entry into the ₹500 crore club, Vicky Kaushal took to Instagram to express his gratitude. Sharing a poster of the film, he wrote, "What you all have given to Chhaava goes much beyond numbers... you all have made this an emotion." He further thanked audiences for celebrating the legacy of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj and urged them to continue watching the film.

Directed by Laxman Utekar, Chhaava is adapted from

Shivaji Sawant's Marathi novel of the same name. Vicky Kaushal portrays Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, while Rashmika Mandanna plays Maharani Yesubai. The film also features Akshaye Khanna as Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, Diana Penty as Aurangzeb's daughter Shehzadi Zinat-un-Nissa Begum, and Ashutosh Rana as Sarsenapati Hambirao Mohite. The film is produced by Dinesh Vijan under Maddock Films.

Kim Soo Hyun Denies Dating Rumors With Late Actress Kim Sae-Ron

Sae-Ron



Kim Soo Hyun has found himself at the center of controversy following allegations about his alleged past relationship with the late actress Kim Sae-Ron. The rumors surfaced after Kim Sae-Ron's aunt made serious accusations in a video posted on the YouTube channel Garosero Research Institute. She claimed that Kim Soo Hyun had been in a six-year relationship with Kim Sae-Ron, which allegedly began when she was just 15. The aunt also accused the actor of distancing himself from her after her DUI incident in 2022 and alleged that his agency, Gold Medalist, played a role in her financial struggles, which she claimed contributed to her tragic passing last month. In response, Gold Medalist strongly refuted these claims, calling them "baseless and malicious." In an official statement, the agency stated, "The claims made by Garosero Research Institute regarding Kim Soo Hyun on YouTube today are completely false. They alleged that our company and Kim Soo Hyun colluded with YouTuber Lee Jin Ho to ha-

arrass the late Kim Sae-Ron, that Kim Soo Hyun had been dating her since she was 15, that our agency's response to her drunk driving accident was unfair, and that our manager had a close relationship with YouTuber Lee Jin Ho." The agency further stated that they are reviewing legal action against Garosero Research Institute for spreading false information.

Expressing their sorrow over Kim Sae-Ron's passing, Gold Medalist added, "We are deeply heartbroken by the news of the late Kim

Sae-Ron's death, as she was once part of our company, and we mourn her passing. However, the dissemination of such false information directly continues the very same cyber harassment that caused her great distress during her lifetime." The agency also criticized Garosero Research Institute for spreading baseless rumors and condemned the false claims made by Kim Sae-Ron's aunt. They urged fans to refrain from spreading, amplifying, or reproducing false information.

Why Pooja Hegde Was the First Choice for Suriya's Retro

Pooja Hegde has made a name for herself in Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi cinema, working alongside some of the biggest stars. After her Bollywood debut with Hrithik Roshan in Mohenjo Daro, she is now gearing up for her next Tamil film, Retro, alongside Suriya.

Stone Bench Films, the production house behind Retro, recently

revealed why Pooja Hegde was their top choice for the female lead. They highlighted her dedication and willingness to dub in her own voice for the Tamil film, a first for her.

The team shared that when director Karthik Subbaraj was searching for the lead actress, several names were considered, but Pooja stood out. Even the

film's lead character, Pandiyaa, was convinced she was the perfect fit. The only concern was her fluency in Tamil. However, known for taking on challenges, Pooja assured the team that she would overcome the language barrier.

After an impressive look test, she started daily Tamil training and surprised everyone by delivering

lengthy monologue sequences effortlessly. The team also recalled fun moments on set where they tested her with difficult Tamil words.

Retro features Suriya and Pooja Hegde in lead roles, along with Joju George, Jayaram, and Karunakaran in key supporting roles. The film is set to release in theatres on May 1, 2025.

