

Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD

H 33° C

L 25° C

VIJAYAWADA

H 35° C

L 26° C

TIRUPATHI

H 36° C

L 26° C

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Delhiites will witness real change in next 100 days: Parvesh Verma meets MLAs

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Delhi's Public Works Department (PWD) and Water Minister Parvesh Verma held meetings with MLAs to discuss the 100-day action plan aimed at addressing critical infrastructure issues across the city. The agenda focused on a range of development works, including road and drain repairs, sewer cleaning, drainage management, and tackling flooding and waterlogging problems. The plan also includes measures to combat illegal encroachments and expedite pending development projects.

Verma emphasized the urgency of these initiatives, stating, "For years, no work was done in Delhi due to a lack of intent. The situation has now reached a point where we need to take action on a war footing to bring relief to the people. Concrete steps are being taken to repair roads, clean sewers, and clear drains. Our priority is development, and within the next 100 days, Delhi residents will witness visible changes. The BJP government doesn't just make promises; we work to serve the people," he added.

The meeting, held at the Delhi Sec-

Minister Parvesh Verma vows visible improvements soon

MLAs meet officials for direct problem-solving approach

Plan aims to tackle flooding, waterlogging, and encroachments

retariat, was attended by MLAs from various constituencies, including Shakur Basti, Trilokpuri, Patparganj, Laxmi Nagar, Mundka, Nangloi Jat, Moti Nagar, Madipur (West Zone), Manglapuri, and Kirari. Officials from PWD, Delhi Jal Board, and the Irrigation & Flood Control Department were also present to ensure coordination and implementation of the planned works.

Verma explained that the decision to hold one-on-one meetings with MLAs and concerned officials was made to expedite the development process. "Every MLA is now directly presenting the issues from their constituencies to the officials. Immediate instructions are being given to the relevant departments for resolution. The BJP government is committed to working on a war footing to provide relief to the residents of Delhi, and the results will be visible on the ground within the next 100 days," Verma said.

The 100-day plan aims to address urgent infrastructure needs and improve the living conditions of Delhi's residents, with a focus on visible and tangible outcomes.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

At the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar strongly criticized the United Nations for its handling of the Kashmir issue, highlighting the West's selective approach to global sovereignty and territorial integrity. Jaishankar pointed out that the Kashmir dispute, marked by Pakistan's illegal occupation, represents the "longest-standing" instance of illegal territorial occupation since World War II.

Jaishankar reminded the forum that Jammu and Kashmir, including Gilgit and Baltistan (formerly called Northern Areas), acceded to India in 1947. However, Pakistan's unilateral aggression resulted in its occupation of parts of the region. He emphasized that despite the clear violation of India's sovereignty, the United Nations failed to act decisively, treating what was a direct invasion by Pakistan as a mere "dispute." This led to both the aggressor and the victim being equated in international discussions, which Jaishankar deemed an injustice.

He criticized the West for its role in perpetuating this distortion, singling out countries like the UK, Canada, Belgium, Australia, and

Jaishankar Highlights UN's Blunder On Kashmir, Calls For New World Order

the USA for their failure to condemn Pakistan's actions. Jaishankar's remarks questioned the fairness and consistency of the UN's approach, asserting that global rules must be applied uniformly.

Jaishankar also advocated for a reformed and stronger United Nations. He argued that global norms and rules should not only be consistent but should ensure fairness to all nations, large or small. He stressed the importance of maintaining a strong international order, similar to the order within a domestic society, to prevent smaller countries from exploiting global disorder to their advantage.

In his speech, Jaishankar also addressed the selective international responses to military rule in neighboring countries. He highlighted the contrasting attitudes towards Myanmar's military regime and similar regimes elsewhere, suggesting that a more honest and balanced international discourse is needed.

Jaishankar's remarks called for a reformed world order that reflects the changed global dynamics, emphasizing the need for fairness and consistency in addressing international conflicts.

FM Sitharaman Assures Support for Manipur's Recovery Calls for Unity Amid Opposition Criticism

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday assured the Rajya Sabha of the Central Government's commitment to restoring normalcy in Manipur and fostering the state's economic growth. Speaking during a discussion on the passage of the Manipur Budget for the current fiscal year and the vote of account for 2025-26, she urged opposition parties to support peace efforts in Manipur rather than engaging in political blame games.

In response to the criticism surrounding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's failure to visit the violence-affected state, Sitharaman reminded the House that previous Prime Ministers, including P.V. Narasimha Rao and I.K. Gujral, had also not visited Manipur during similar times of unrest. She stressed that the current government had already sent Union Home Minister and Minister of State for Home to the state to help restore peace.

"The situation in Manipur has negatively affected economic activities, but I am

confident that with improvements in law and order, economic recovery will follow. We are fully committed to supporting the state's recovery, and we want Manipur to prosper as much as any other state in India," Sitharaman said.

She added that the unrest in the state led to a decline in economic activities but expressed hope for a strong recovery with improvements in governance. "With better law and order, I expect the state's GSDP to show recovery in the coming year," she stated.

Sitharaman also defended the government's handling of the situation in Manipur, responding to the

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'Weakened': Sonia Gandhi Demands Wage Hike Under Rural Employment Scheme

Calls for restoring MGNREGA as a key rural safety net

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi raised alarms on Tuesday about the weakening of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Speaking during Zero Hour in the Rajya Sabha, Gandhi accused the Central government of systematically undermining the scheme by reducing its budgetary allocations.

She pointed out that while the budget allocation for MGNREGA remained at Rs 86,000 crore, the actual funding had been reduced by Rs 4,000 crore. "In reality, the allocation has decreased by Rs 4,000 crore," she said. Gandhi further explained that about 20 percent of the

current allocation would be used to clear pending wage payments from previous years, leaving little room for the scheme's expansion.

Gandhi highlighted the importance of MGNREGA, noting that it was introduced by the UPA government led by Dr. Manmohan Singh as a historic initiative to provide crucial support to rural India. "MGNREGA has been a safety net for millions in rural areas, offering economic security and dignified employment," she said.

The Congress leader also raised several concerns that were affecting the scheme, including the mandatory Aadhaar-based payment system and the

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47 People Detained, 14 Cops Injured In Nagpur Violence: Minister

Violence in Nagpur Over Aurangzeb's Grave Demand Leads to Curfew and Arrests

Tensions erupted in Nagpur on Tuesday following violence sparked by demands for the removal of Aurangzeb's tomb, leading to the detention of 47 individuals and several injuries. Maharashtra Junior Minister for Home (Urban), Yogesh Kadam, confirmed that 12 to 14 police officers were injured, including some with ligament tears, while two to three civilians also sustained injuries. The cause of the violence remains under investigation, though the police have registered FIRs to address the situation.

Kadam noted that after the initial conflict was resolved when the FIRs were filed, a group engaged in vandalism several hours later, prompting the government to promise stringent action against the perpetrators. "Stringent

action will be taken on those who took the law into their hands," he stated.

In response to the unrest, BJP MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat called for unity and harmony, urging citizens not to be swayed by rumors. She emphasized the importance of understanding the facts and staying together in peaceful coexistence. Meanwhile, BJP MLA Pravin Datke alleged that the violence was pre-planned. He pointed out that Hindu-owned shops were primarily targeted, while Muslim-owned stalls were left unharmed, and cameras were destroyed, indicating a deliberate attack.

Datke also criticized the police for their handling of the situation, suggesting

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BJP wants to make Maharashtra next Manipur

Aaditya Thackeray attacks state govt over Nagpur violence

- **Questions CMO’s inaction despite early warnings**
- **Compares India’s economic growth with Vietnam’s progress**
- **Nagpur violence leads to prohibitory orders, multiple FIRs**

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Shiv Sena UBT leader Aaditya Thackeray on Tuesday (March 18, 2025) strongly criticized the Devendra Fadnavis-led BJP government over its handling of the recent violence in Nagpur. Thackeray accused the BJP of attempting to push Maharashtra into a situation similar to Manipur, which has been marred by ongoing conflicts since 2023.



Thackeray raised concerns about the Maharashtra government’s lack of response to the escalating violence, particularly questioning the Chief Minister’s Office (CMO) for not acting when rumors about violence began spreading. He pointed out, “Whenever such incidents occur, the first report should reach the Chief Minister’s office and the Home Department. Did they not have any information? I believe the BJP wants to make Maharashtra the next Manipur.” In a broader critique, Thackeray compared India’s situation with that of Vietnam, highlighting the country’s economic progress, especially in the electronics industry. He argued, “Vietnam is smaller and less populated than India, yet their

electronics industry is three times bigger. Meanwhile, the BJP seems intent on dividing the country along religious and caste lines, which hampers growth and investments.” The violence in Nagpur, which was reportedly triggered by protests by Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal, led to widespread unrest. Maharashtra Chief Minister Fadnavis described the incident as a “well-planned attack,” blaming rumors about religious content being destroyed. He assured the public that strict action would be taken against those responsible, particularly emphasizing the government’s commitment to addressing violence against police personnel. The violence also led to injuries among police officers, including three Deputy Commissioners of Police (DCP), one of whom was attacked with an axe. Prohibitory orders were issued in 11 police stations across Nagpur, and five FIRs were registered. The CM appealed for peace while urging authorities to take decisive action against anyone engaging in riots, regardless of their caste or religion. Opposition parties, including Shiv Sena UBT, staged protests in the assembly, blaming the government for the deteriorating law and order situation. Meanwhile, MLAs from the ruling alliance accused the opposition of glorifying Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, which they claimed contributed to the unrest.

Attacker, victim put on par: Jaishankar on Kashmir

Bats for a strong and fair United Nations at the Raisina Dialogue

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

In a session at the Raisina Dialogue, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar called attention to what he described as the “longest-standing” illegal occupation of a territory since World War II, referring to Pakistan’s occupation of Kashmir. Jaishankar’s remarks underscored the selective application of global rules on sovereignty and territorial integrity and emphasized the need for fairness in international governance.



Addressing the gathering, Jaishankar highlighted the historical injustice faced by India, especially in relation to Kashmir, and criticized the global community’s treatment of the issue. He pointed out that despite Pakistan’s illegal occupation, the United Nations treated the invasion as a mere dispute, effectively equating the attacker and the victim.

“After World War II, the longest-standing illegal presence and occupation of a territory by another country pertains to India in Kashmir,” Jaishankar stated. He emphasized that when India approached the UN for a resolution, the organization failed to distinguish between the aggressor and the victim, ultimately placing both parties on equal footing.

Jaishankar also stressed the impor-

tance of consistency and fairness in global standards. “We need a strong UN, but a strong UN requires a fair UN,” he said, calling for an international system that applies its rules impartially to all nations. He further added, “A strong global order must have some basic consistency of standards.”

Jaishankar’s comments come as part of his broader appeal for a more equitable global governance system. He reiterated that global norms and international rules should not be selectively applied but must be upheld uniformly to ensure fairness and justice for all nations.

The Raisina Dialogue 2025 continues to serve as a significant platform for discussing key global challenges, and Jaishankar’s remarks on Kashmir reflect India’s ongoing diplomatic efforts to address issues related to sovereignty and territorial integrity on the world stage.

ED raids premises of George Soros-backed organisation in Bengaluru

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Multiple teams of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) have launched searches at eight locations, including the premises of Open Society Foundations (OSF) in Bengaluru, as part of an investigation into alleged violations of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). The organization, supported by US billionaire George Soros, is being scrutinized for its financial dealings in India.

or Reference Category” by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2016. This categorization effectively restricted the organization from making unregulated donations to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in India. However, it is alleged that OSF circumvented this restriction by establishing subsidiaries in India, through which funds were funneled as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and consultancy fees.

Sources have revealed that the ED’s preliminary investigation suggests that OSF was placed under the “Pri-

According to ED sources, these funds were allegedly used to finance the activities of various NGOs, potentially violating FEMA

regulations. The ED’s investigation is focused on uncovering how these financial transactions were structured to bypass the legal limitations imposed on OSF.

The agency’s action comes amid ongoing scrutiny of foreign entities operating in India and their financial activities, particularly in relation to NGO funding. The investigation into OSF’s operations is expected to shed light on how foreign organizations navigate India’s regulatory framework and whether any violations have occurred.

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47 People Detained, 14 Cops Injured In Nagpur Violence: Minister

that the police failed to protect Hindu citizens and accusing the police administration of not standing with them. He further suggested that the violence might have been fueled by outsiders joining the mob.

In light of the disturbances, Nagpur authorities imposed a curfew in several areas, including Kotwali, Ganeshpeth, and Shantinagar, under Section 163 of the

Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). The curfew, which restricts movement and gatherings, is aimed at maintaining public order. The curfew will remain in effect until further notice, with violators facing legal penalties. Police have been given authority to close roads in the affected areas and prevent the spread of rumors to ensure peace is maintained.

‘Weakened’: Sonia Gandhi Demands Wage Hike Under Rural Employment Scheme

National Mobile Monitoring System. She said these systems were causing significant difficulties, particularly in the timely disbursement of wages.

Gandhi also expressed concern over delayed wage payments and the inadequate rates that fail to keep up with inflation. She made several demands on behalf of the Congress party to strengthen MGNREGA, including increasing the budget allocation to ensure the scheme’s sustainability and expansion. She also called for a raise in the daily minimum wage

to Rs 400 and the removal of the Aadhaar-based payment system and the National Mobile Monitoring System. Additionally, she proposed increasing the guaranteed workdays from 100 to 150 per year.

“These reforms are crucial to maintain the integrity of MGNREGA and ensure it continues to provide meaningful employment and economic security to rural households,” Sonia Gandhi emphasized. The Congress party has urged the government to address these issues and protect the scheme’s future.

FM Sitharaman Assures Support for Manipur’s Recovery

opposition’s criticism of the BJP’s “double engine government” slogan. “Double engine, of course, double engine. That is why the Home Minister was in the state for four days, and the MoS for Home was there for over 23 days,” she said.

Highlighting the financial aid provided to the state, Sitharaman informed the Rajya Sabha that ₹913 crore had been allocated under Special Assistance for State Capital Investment for 2024-25, and ₹500 crore had been set aside

in a contingency fund for Manipur. Furthermore, the capital outlay for the state’s budget has been increased by 19%, reaching ₹7,773 crore for the coming year.

The state is currently under President’s rule, with all legislative powers exercised under Parliament’s authority following the Proclamation issued on February 13, 2025. The Manipur government’s total receipts are projected at ₹35,368.19 crore, up from ₹32,471.90 crore in the previous fiscal year.

Lt Gen Rana to visit Australia for strategic engagement

TPN Correspondent | Chandigarh

Lieutenant General DS Rana, the Director General of the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), will undertake an official visit to Australia from March 19 to 21. The visit aims to bolster defense intelligence cooperation and enhance strategic collaboration between the two nations.



This visit follows the recent trip of India’s Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, to Australia earlier this month, and occurs against the backdrop of a global conference on security issues held in New Delhi, attended by intelligence chiefs from various countries.

Australia, a key member of the “Five Eyes” intelligence-sharing alliance, is central to discussions on global intelligence cooperation. The alliance, which includes the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and New Zealand, focuses on the collection and exchange of intelligence among its members. Three of these countries—the U.S., the UK, and New Zealand—are also attending the New Delhi security conference.

During his visit, General Rana will engage with senior Australian defense officials, including the Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defence, the Director General of National Intelligence, the Chief of Defence Intelligence, and the Chief of Joint Operations of the Australian Defence Forces. The discussions will revolve around intelligence-sharing frameworks,

regional security collaboration, and further opportunities for partnership in the Indo-Pacific region.

Lieutenant General Rana will also visit the Headquarters Joint Operations Command to gain a deeper understanding of Australia’s operational structure and joint command processes. A key component of the visit includes meetings with the Director of the Australian Geospatial Organisation. The DIA chief will also engage with experts at the Lowy Institute, a prominent international policy think tank, to discuss strategic defense and security matters.

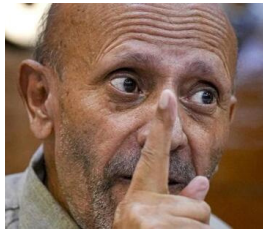
Honoring the strong defense relations and shared military history between India and Australia, General Rana will pay a visit to the Australian War Memorial, where he will lay a wreath and attend the Last Post Ceremony, a moving tribute to the nation’s fallen soldiers.

This visit highlights the deepening defense and intelligence ties between India and Australia, reinforcing their shared commitment to ensuring peace, stability, and security in the Indo-Pacific region.

NIA opposes Rashid Engineer’s plea for interim bail before Delhi HC

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has opposed the petition of jailed Jammu and Kashmir MP Rashid Engineer, seeking custody parole to attend the ongoing Parliament budget session. The agency accused Engineer of abusing the court’s process by engaging in forum shopping, as he sought relief from multiple courts for the same issue.



In an affidavit filed on Monday, the NIA argued that Engineer had already applied for regular bail before the city court, and therefore, he could not seek the same relief through different proceedings. The agency stated that Engineer was attempting to bypass the proper legal process and was abusing the court’s procedure.

“The appellant is indulging in forum shopping, which is an abuse of the process of the court,” the affidavit read. “The petitioner has already applied for regular bail, and the matter is set for an order on March 19 by the NIA special court. The current petition is seeking the same relief, and it cannot be allowed to file multiple proceedings for the same matter.”

The second phase of the Parliament Budget session, which began on March 10, is set to conclude on April 4. Engineer, who is currently in jail, had sought parole to attend the sessions of Parliament during this period.

The Delhi High Court will hear the matter on Tuesday, with a bench of Justices Chandra Dhari Singh and Anup Jairam Bhambhani considering the NIA’s arguments against Engineer’s parole request. This case highlights the complex legal dynamics around high-profile figures seeking special reliefs while under investigation.

Delhi CM Rekha Gupta Holds Meeting with BJP MPs to Discuss 2025-26 Budget



- Focus on infrastructure, healthcare, and environment
- Proposals include Yamuna cleanup, EV promotion, and hospital upgrades
- Budget aims to transform Delhi into a global city

TPN Correspondent| Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta held a key meeting with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Members of Parliament (MPs) on Monday to discuss the upcoming 2025-26 annual budget, which is set to be presented in the Delhi Assembly on March 25. The meeting focused on shaping the vision for the capital's development and addressed several critical issues

concerning infrastructure, healthcare, and environmental sustainability.

According to officials, suggestions put forth during the meeting included the swift completion of ongoing infrastructure projects, a strong emphasis on cleaning the Yamuna River, expansion of green spaces, and the promotion of electric vehicles. Additionally, the MPs proposed the modernisation of

government hospitals and improving overall healthcare facilities in the city.

Among the MPs who participated in the meeting were Ramvir Singh Bidhuri from South Delhi, Bansuri Swaraj from New Delhi, Kamaljeet Sehrawat from West Delhi, and Praveen Khandelwal from Chandni Chowk, alongside other prominent leaders.

CM Rekha Gupta emphasized that the 2025 budget would be more than just a financial document, describing it as a "roadmap for a bright future" for every Delhi resident. She outlined the government's goal to provide modern infrastructure, a clean environment, quality education, better healthcare, job opportunities, and the overall transformation of Delhi into a global city that ensures equal opportunities for all citizens.

Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, after the meeting, suggested that the budget should include provisions for upgrading healthcare infrastructure, prioritizing preventive healthcare, and addressing issues like road improvement, sewer system enhancements, reliable transport services, and sanitation. He also called for a significant reduction in Delhi's average air quality index (AQI) over the next five years and the development of the Yamuna riverfront, following the success of the Sabarmati riverfront project.

The Delhi Assembly's budget session is scheduled to begin on March 24, with CM Rekha Gupta, who also holds the finance portfolio, set to present the budget.

LoP should be allowed to speak but not given permission in ‘new India’: Rahul Gandhi



TPN Correspondent| Delhi

Following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks about the success of the Maha Kumbh, which sparked protests by opposition members, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi expressed his dissatisfaction outside Parliament on Tuesday. The protests led to a brief adjournment of the Lok Sabha session.

Gandhi took issue with the fact that the Leader of Opposition (LoP) was not allowed to speak, which he argued contradicted the democratic principles of the country. "According to the democratic structure, the LoP should be permitted to speak, but we are not given permission in this 'new India,'" Gandhi said, implying that the government's refusal to allow opposition voices was a setback for democratic values.

In his statement, the Prime Minister had hailed the Maha Kumbh, held from January 13 to February 26, as a resounding success, emphasizing its scale and significance as a reflection of India's rising stature on the global stage. Modi pointed out that the event was a response to those who doubted India's ability to organize such a massive

religious congregation, symbolizing India's grandeur and spirit.

However, Gandhi criticized Modi for failing to acknowledge the tragedy that occurred during the Maha Kumbh. On January 29, a stampede at the gathering resulted in multiple fatalities. Gandhi said that the prime minister should have paid homage to those who lost their lives in the unfortunate incident.

Beyond the Kumbh's success, Gandhi pointed out the need for addressing the real concerns of India's youth. "The youth who attended the Kumbh are seeking something more from the government – they need employment," he emphasized. He called on Modi to focus on providing job opportunities, which he described as a pressing issue for young Indians.

While Modi's speech aimed to underscore the cultural and historical importance of the Kumbh, Gandhi's remarks highlighted the opposition's growing frustration over the government's handling of both democratic rights and critical socio-economic concerns.

Asaduddin Owaisi blames intelligence failure for Nagpur violence: ‘Fault of govt’

Asaduddin Owaisi blames intelligence failure for Nagpur violence: ‘Fault of govt’

TPN Correspondent| Delhi

AIMIM chief and Lok Sabha MP Asaduddin Owaisi on Tuesday accused the Maharashtra government of an intelligence failure concerning the recent violence in Nagpur. He also pointed to provocative statements made by certain ministers as a factor contributing to the unrest.

Owaisi condemned the violence but emphasized the role of government officials in fueling the tensions. "It is the responsibility and fault of the government, an intelligence failure," he said. He further criticized ministers for making provocative statements despite having taken an oath to uphold India's constitution. "How can they make such statements? This is really wrong," Owaisi added, suggesting that the provocative remarks had aggravated the situation. He pointed out that the violence occurred near a minister's house, highlighting the failure of local authorities to prevent

the clash.

The violence in Nagpur escalated after reports surfaced that Quran verses were allegedly burned in some areas on Monday night. According to Owaisi, both Muslims and Hindus immediately reported these incidents, but no preventive action was taken by the authorities at the time. This delay in responding to the situation, he claimed, allowed tensions to spiral into violence.

Owaisi's remarks reflect growing concerns over the role of political leaders and the state machinery in managing communal tensions. He called for greater responsibility from government officials and an overhaul in how such sensitive matters are handled to prevent future violence. As the situation continues to unfold, the Maharashtra government faces increasing pressure to address the issues surrounding the violence in Nagpur.



"Maha Kumbh Will Inspire New Achievements": PM Modi In Lok Sabha



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the immense unity demonstrated by citizens during the Maha Kumbh, a grand month-long religious gathering of Hindu pilgrims. Held in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, the event saw the participation of over 66 crore devotees, nearly ten times the population of France. The Maha Kumbh concluded last month, and PM Modi used the opportunity to acknowledge the collective efforts that made it a success.

Speaking in the Lok Sabha during the ongoing Budget session, the Prime Minister expressed his gratitude to the people of India, particularly those from Uttar Pradesh and Prayagraj, the host city. "I bow to the countrymen whose efforts led to the successful organisation of the Maha Kumbh," he said. He emphasized that the event epitomized India's strength, highlighting the unity in diversity that defines the nation. "All differences faded away during the Maha Kumbh. This is India's great strength, showing that unity is deeply rooted in our society," Modi

The Prime Minister noted that the Maha Kumbh was a people's movement, driven by devotion and resolve. He said it not only showcased India's grandeur to the world but also instilled a sense of national pride and awakening, with the potential to inspire future accomplishments. "This is a response to those who doubt India's strength," he said.

Modi also shared that he had immersed sacred water from the Sangam at the Ganga Talao in Mauritius, symbolizing India's global spiritual outreach.

However, the Prime Minister's speech did not mention the tragic stampede deaths that occurred during the event. At least 30 people were killed in a stampede at the Prayagraj venue, and another 18 lost their lives due to a rush at a railway station in Delhi. The Congress party criticized Modi for overlooking these fatalities in his address. Despite this, the Maha Kumbh remains a significant reflection of India's spiritual and cultural unity.

Probe Agency Issues Fresh Summons To Lalu Prasad Yadav In Land-For-Jobs Case



TPN Correspondent | Patna

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) president and former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad, his wife Rabri Devi, and son Tej Pratap Yadav for questioning in connection with the land-for-jobs money laundering case, sources confirmed on Tuesday.

Lalu Prasad, 76, has been asked to appear before the federal probe agency in Patna on Wednesday, while his family members, including Rabri Devi and Tej Pratap Yadav, are scheduled to be questioned on Tuesday. Their statements will be recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), sources said.

However, it is unclear whether Prasad and his

family members will appear before the ED as required. The family has been questioned previously in connection with this case, including Lalu Prasad's younger son, Tejashwi Yadav.

In 2024, the ED filed a chargesheet against members of Prasad's family, including Rabri Devi, Misa Bharti, and Hema Yadav, as well as other individuals. The probe centers on allegations that Lalu Prasad, during his tenure as Railway Minister under the UPA-1 government from 2004 to 2009, facilitated corrupt appointments to Group D positions in the Indian Railways.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) filed an FIR alleging that candidates were instructed to "transfer land as a bribe" in exchange for securing jobs in the railway department. The money laundering case is based on the CBI's complaint. According to the ED, Rabri Devi, Misa Bharti, and Hema Yadav received land parcels from the families of selected candidates at nominal prices.

Delhi HC Refuses to Stay Trial Against Kapil Mishra Over Alleged Provocative Remarks



- Court sees no prejudice in continuing trial proceedings
- Mishra's appeal against summons to be heard on May 19
- Trial court directed to make an independent decision on charges

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday refused to halt the trial proceedings against Delhi Law Minister Kapil Mishra, who is accused of making provocative remarks ahead of the 2020 Delhi Assembly elections. Mishra had allegedly posted inflammatory statements on social media in January 2020, which sparked controversy.

A bench headed by Justice Ravinder Dubeja dismissed the request by senior advocate Mahesh Jethmalani, representing Mishra, to stay the trial. The court stated that there was no

necessity to stay the proceedings at this stage, adding that continuing the trial would not cause any prejudice to the parties involved.

“Why? There is a possibility that you may be discharged at the trial stage. There is no need to stay the trial,” the bench stated. It further explained that even if charges were framed against Mishra, it would not make the proceedings infructuous. The court emphasized that the consideration of charges is a separate issue and that some material had already been found to support the case, which led to the notice being issued.

However, the court did issue a notice regarding Mishra's appeal against a March 7 order, which had refused to dismiss the summons in the case. It also directed the trial court to disregard any previous observations made by the special judge and to make its decision on the framing of charges based on independent submissions.

Mishra's controversial remarks were posted on January 23, 2020, on his social media account ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections. He allegedly claimed there would be an “India vs Pakistan” contest on the streets of Delhi on election day, a statement that was met with widespread criticism. The returning officer had filed a complaint in response to these remarks.

The matter will be next heard on May 19, 2025, with the court emphasizing that the trial court must independently assess the framing of charges.

Delhi woman held with loaded pistol at Vaishno Devi shrine



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

A woman pilgrim from Delhi was arrested on Tuesday after a loaded pistol was recovered from her possession at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta Hills in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, officials reported.

The woman, identified as Jyoti Gupta, who claimed to be a retired police constable, was intercepted by security personnel at a checkpoint near the ‘Bhawan’ (sanctum sanctorum) on the night of March 14-15. During the search, Gupta was found in possession of

a loaded pistol along with six rounds of ammunition.

Upon further investigation, authorities discovered that the firearm in Gupta's possession had an expired license, which had lapsed a few years ago. The police have registered a First Information Report (FIR) and launched a probe into the incident.

This arrest comes on the heels of a similar security breach. On Monday, another pilgrim, Sanjay Singh from Uttar Pradesh, was booked after two cartridges were found in his bag near

the Bhawan. Both incidents have raised concerns about security measures at one of India's most visited pilgrimage sites.

The CRPF, along with other security agencies, maintains strict vigilance at the Vaishno Devi shrine, which attracts millions of devotees every year. Following these incidents, authorities are likely to review and enhance security protocols to prevent any potential threats and ensure the safety of all pilgrims visiting the shrine.

Delhi records minimum temperature of 14.6 degrees Celsius

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Delhi experienced a minimum temperature of 14.6 degrees Celsius, which is 1.9 degrees above the normal range for this time of year, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The city's weather has been relatively warmer than usual, with the IMD predicting strong surface winds throughout the day. The maximum temperature is expected to rise to around 32 degrees Celsius.



Delhi's air quality remains in the ‘moderate’ category, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) reading 130 at 9 am, as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). AQI values between 101 and 200 are classified as ‘moderate,’ indicating that the air quality is acceptable, though there may be some health concerns for people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.

tive, the AQI is measured on a scale of 0-500, with values from 0 to 50 considered ‘good,’ 51 to 100 categorized as ‘satisfactory,’ 101 to 200 as ‘moderate,’ 201 to 300 as ‘poor,’ 301 to 400 as ‘very poor,’ and 401 to 500 as ‘severe.’

Delhi recently witnessed its cleanest air in three years for any day between January 1 and March 15, when the AQI dropped to 85 on Saturday, a notable improvement compared to the usual pollution levels seen during this time of year.

While the forecasted weather and air quality in Delhi are relatively moderate, authorities continue to monitor the situation, especially with the anticipated strong winds that could affect pollution levels later in the day. Residents are encouraged to take necessary precautions, particularly those with respiratory conditions, to minimize exposure to air pollution.

To provide a broader perspec-

Delhi Sewer Tragedy: Victims Were Not Wearing Protective Gear, Police Say



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

New Delhi, March 18, 2025 – Two days after a tragic incident in southeast Delhi's New Friends Colony, where a 43-year-old worker died and another suffered injuries while cleaning a sewer, Delhi Police officials revealed on Tuesday that the victims were not wearing any protective gear or carrying the necessary equipment for the task.

The incident, which occurred on Sunday evening, claimed the life of 43-year-old Panth Lal Chandra, a resident of Chhattisgarh, while his brother, Ramkishan Chandra, was injured. A third worker, Shiv Das, was rescued safely. According to police, the victims were working inside a manhole reportedly on behalf of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) when they suddenly lost consciousness.

“The initial investigation revealed that the workers were not equipped with any protective gear,” a police officer stated. “The cause of their unconsciousness is still under investigation.”

The DJB, however, clarified that the three workers were neither regular employees nor contractual staff with

the organization. In response to the police inquiry, the DJB said it had no formal record of employing the men for the job.

“We have received a letter from the DJB regarding the incident, but a letter alone is not sufficient to prove that the men were not employed by the DJB or engaged in their work,” said a Delhi Police officer. “The investigation is ongoing, and we are examining every angle.”

The tragedy occurred when the workers, reportedly engaged by the DJB, entered the manhole near House No. 17 in New Friends Colony. The police received a PCR call around 5:45 pm on Monday, alerting them to the workers' plight. Firefighters arrived at the scene and pulled the men out of the manhole in an unconscious state, rushing them to the AIIMS trauma center. Unfortunately, doctors declared Panth Lal Chandra dead upon arrival, while Ramkishan Chandra remains in critical condition in the ICU.

Panth Lal Chandra is survived by his wife, Kamla Bai Chandra, one son, and four daughters, two of whom are married.

Gunman Opens Fire, Snatches Bag With Rs 80 Lakh In Delhi

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

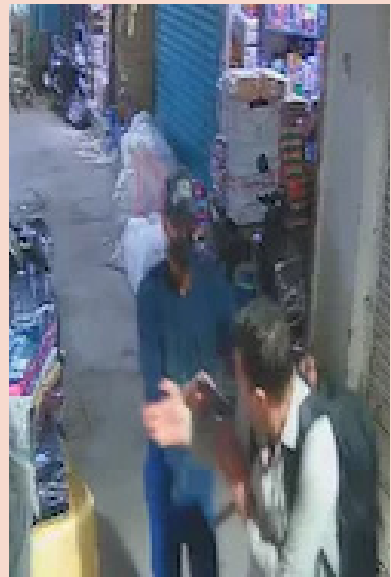
A man was allegedly robbed of Rs 80 lakh at gunpoint near Delhi's Chandni Chowk on Monday evening. The incident occurred around 6 pm in Kucha Ghasiram, a narrow road lined with shops, and was captured on CCTV.

The video footage shows a masked man, wearing a cap, approaching the victim and holding him at gunpoint. The robber then attempts to snatch the victim's bag, which is filled with cash. After firing a warning shot into the air, the accused successfully grabs the bag containing the money and makes a quick getaway.

Despite the violent nature of the robbery, bystanders nearby remain passive throughout the one-minute encounter. Police sources later revealed that six people were involved in the robbery, and they fled the scene on a two-wheeler.

Authorities are now working to identify the culprits by analyzing the CCTV footage. The police have launched an investigation to track down the individuals involved in the robbery and recover the stolen money.

This shocking incident highlights the growing concern over street crime in Delhi, as such robberies continue to occur in broad daylight, often with little intervention from passersby.



"Come Clean...": Supreme Court On Row Involving Arunachal Chief Minister's Wife



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the Union Home and Finance Ministries to provide clear answers regarding the award of government contracts worth several hundred crores to the family of Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu. Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna emphasized the need for transparency, questioning the process through which these contracts were awarded. “We must have a clear-cut answer about who received the contracts and what the process was. If tenders were not called for, it must be stated,” he said.

The Court ordered the Arunachal Pradesh government to file a detailed affidavit within five weeks, revealing the parties to whom contracts

were awarded. Additionally, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, whose previous report was dismissed as insufficient, was instructed to submit a final report on the matter. The next hearing is scheduled for July 21.

The state government had earlier filed some details regarding contracts awarded from 2019 onwards, citing the CAG’s report. However, the Supreme Court rejected the report, calling for further investigation into the issue. The Court was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by two NGOs, Save Mon Region Federation and Voluntary Arunachal Senaa. The petitioners claimed that hundreds of contracts, totaling several hundred crores, were awarded to the Chief Minister’s family, particularly his wife’s company.

Lawyer Prashant Bhushan, representing the petitioners, argued that the state was being “looted,” with at least 70 contracts allegedly given to the Chief Minister’s wife’s company. He accused the state of functioning like a “private limited company,” with contracts funneled to the Chief Minister’s relatives.

The state government, however, defended its actions, calling the PIL an abuse of the legal process. It stated that the questions raised only pertained to one of Arunachal Pradesh’s 28 districts and dismissed the claims as politically motivated, asserting that the contracts were awarded according to the law to promote employment generation.

- CAG ordered to provide a final report on alleged irregularities
- Petitioners claim 70+ contracts given to CM’s wife’s company
- State govt defends process, calls PIL politically motivated

Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan assures timely completion of Kannur airport land acquisition

TPN Correspondent | KANNUR

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan assured the Assembly on Tuesday that the land acquisition process for the development of Kannur International Airport will be completed in a timely manner. Addressing concerns raised by Leader of the Opposition V. D. Satheesan and MLA K.V. Sumesh, the CM acknowledged the seriousness of the issue, which had also been consistently raised by Mattanur MLA K.K. Shailaja.

The Chief Minister outlined the progress made so far, highlighting that in the first phase, 1,113.33 acres of land had already been acquired and handed over to Kannur International Airport Limited. The acquisition of an additional 804.37 acres in the second phase is currently underway. Additionally, as part of the airport’s expansion, 21.81 hectares of land from Kolari and Keezhloor villages have been acquired for

the establishment of an industrial park and transferred to the Kerala Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (KINFRA).



Mr. Vijayan further detailed that funds have been allocated for the acquisition of 202.34 hectares of land in Keezhoor and Pattanur villages, with further steps being taken. He also mentioned that 245.33 acres of land in Keezhallor village have been notified for the extension of the airport’s runway to 4,000 meters, and a pro-

posal for ₹900 crore, including ₹750 crore for the runway extension and ₹150 crore for rehabilitation, has been submitted by the Kannur District Collector and is under government review.

The Government Engineering College in Kozhikode is conducting the valuation of buildings and structures in the project area, with 39 structures already assessed. ₹3,70,466 has been allocated for the assessment, and 162 more structures remain to be evaluated.

In addition, the District Collector has been authorized to acquire the land and properties of 14 families, and a special package is being recommended due to the absence of land allotment provisions for evictions. The Chief Minister emphasized that the government is committed to resolving all related issues within a fixed timeframe.

Pakistani Terrorist Killed In Operation By Joint Security Forces In J&K



TPN Correspondent | Srinagar

A Pakistani terrorist was killed on Monday during a joint operation conducted by security forces in Kupwara district, Jammu and Kashmir, officials reported. The operation, which was launched early in the morning based on specific intelligence inputs, led to the neutralization of the terrorist, identified as Safiullah, a long-time militant from Pakistan.

SSP Handwara, Mushtaq Ahmad Choudhary, confirmed that security forces—comprising the Handwara police, 21 Rashtriya Rifles, and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)—recovered an AK-47 rifle, four magazines, a grenade, and other incriminating materials from the encounter site.

The operation began after security forces received intelligence regarding the presence of terrorists in Krumbhoora (Zachaldara) village in the Rajwar area. A Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) was initiated, and as forces closed in on the terrorist, he opened fire, resulting in a gunfight. The area was quickly secured, and additional reinforce-

ments were deployed to ensure the operation’s success.

Civilians in the area were advised to stay indoors for safety, as the encounter unfolded. Investigations are ongoing.

The terrorist activity has been linked to handlers across the border in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), with intelligence agencies suggesting that recent terrorist actions have been fueled by frustration over the peaceful, participatory elections in India. Recently, terrorists killed three civilians in Kathua district, including a 14-year-old boy, further intensifying security concerns.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has led several security review meetings focused on J&K, emphasizing zero tolerance for terrorism and reinforcing counter-infiltration measures. Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha has also chaired security reviews, urging security forces to dismantle the entire terror ecosystem, including underground workers (OGWs) and sympathizers, with particular focus on cutting off funding through drug smuggling and hawala networks.

Sri Lankan Navy arrests three Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu, seizes boat



TPN Correspondent | RAMESWARAM

Three Indian fishermen from Thangachimadam, Ramanathapuram district, were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy for trespassing into Sri Lankan waters. The men, A. Shankar (53), D. Arjunan (35), and S. Murugesan (49), were apprehended while fishing near Neduntheevu in Sri Lankan waters.

According to sources, the three fishermen had set out from Rameswaram on the night of March 17, 2025, aboard their mech-

anised fishing boat. Early on the morning of March 18, the Sri Lankan Navy, during their routine patrolling, intercepted the boat after it crossed the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) into Sri Lankan territorial waters.

The fishermen were arrested on charges of poaching and violating maritime boundaries. In addition to the arrests, the Sri Lankan Navy also seized the fishing boat, which was found to be engaged in illegal fishing activities in Sri Lankan waters.

This incident is part of a broader pattern of ongoing tensions over fishing rights in the Palk Bay region, where both Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen frequently cross the IMBL. The arrests highlight the strained relationship between the two nations regarding maritime disputes, particularly in areas rich with marine resources.

The arrest of these fishermen follows a

series of similar incidents involving Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu. Recently, a group of 14 Indian fishermen was detained by the Sri Lankan Navy, and 32 fishermen from the same region were also arrested earlier this year for similar violations.

The issue of fishermen’s rights has been a contentious one between India and Sri Lanka, with repeated calls for dialogue to resolve disputes over fishing zones and the protection of livelihoods in both countries. The Sri Lankan Navy has stepped up its patrols in the area to prevent illegal fishing activities and ensure compliance with maritime laws.

Authorities from Tamil Nadu have been in regular communication with the Sri Lankan authorities to secure the release of the arrested fishermen, although such incidents continue to strain bilateral relations.

Nagpur Violence: 47 Detained, Curfew Imposed Amid Tensions Over Aurangzeb's Tomb



TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

Maharashtra Junior Minister for Home (Urban) Yogesh Kadam confirmed on Tuesday that 47 people had been detained in connection with

the recent violence in Nagpur, which erupted following demands for the removal of Aurangzeb’s tomb. Kadam stated that the police had suffered injuries, including ligament tears, and two to three civilians were also injured. He added that while the cause of the violence is still under investigation, the situation had been brought under control after FIRs were registered.

Kadam explained that the issue was largely resolved by the afternoon when police filed reports, but tensions flared again hours later when a group engaged in vandalism. “Stringent action will be taken against those who took the law into their own hands,” he asserted.

Meanwhile, BJP MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat called for national unity, urging the public to stay calm and not be influenced by rumors. “People must understand the facts and stay together harmoniously,” Sehrawat said, condemning those who try to take advantage of such situations.

BJP MLA Pravin Datke, who visited the affected area of Hansapuri, alleged that the violence was pre-planned. He claimed that the destruction of shops and cameras, as well as the selective targeting of Hindu-owned establishments, pointed to a coordinated effort. Datke criticized the police for not standing by the citizens, suggesting that outside elements contributed to the mob.

In response to the escalating tensions, authorities have imposed a curfew across several areas of Nagpur, including Kotwali, Ganeshpeth, and Shantinagar, under Section 163 of the Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). The curfew, which restricts movement and gatherings, is aimed at maintaining peace and preventing further incidents. The police have been authorized to close roads and enforce strict penalties for violations.

The unrest began on March 17, when members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal gathered to demand the removal of Aurangzeb’s tomb, triggering protests and clashes later in the day.



RSS @ 100: An Unstoppable Journey – Part I

Over the span of a century, many political parties and organizations have emerged and faded away, yet the RSS has continually grown, a phenomenon made possible by genuine public acceptance and aspiration.

As the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) approaches its centenary celebrations, my wishes to feature this unique National organization's formation, ideals, and goals in a three-part series. The RSS's contribution to the nation is immeasurable—an indisputable fact. This series aims to address apprehensions among some sections regarding its entrenched controversies.

A century ago, a small stream in a lesser-known area of Nagpur, Maharashtra, grew into a powerful river the RSS reaching every corner of our nation. The rise in Sangh shakhas, now surpassing 57,000, showcases the organization's expanding influence. Like the Vamana Avatar of Lord Mahavishnu, which teaches that power is not always about size but about restoring balance and righteousness, the RSS has grown to become a transformative force for the nation and the world. The Congress and Mahatma Gandhi's support for the Khilafat Movement (1919-1924) marked a significant turning point in Indian history. During this period, they failed to gauge the sentiments of Hindus, many of whom felt marginalized. This oversight contributed to the rise of nationalist movements, including the RSS.

The nation's freedom movement was transformed into a political party by congress party but it lacked a strong organizational framework. It began developing ideologies to win elections and hold onto power.

The Congress, under Nehru's leadership, feared that the RSS, with its clear ideology and strong organizational structure, could become a formidable political force. As a result, the organization faced repeated bans and its leaders endured public



Dr. Buragadda Srinadh

humiliation. Though falsely implicated in Mahatma Gandhi's assassination, the RSS was banned three times post-independence. However, with unwavering public support, it continued to grow steadily. RSS swayamsevaks have consistently risen to the occasion during national crises, whether natural disasters or human-induced challenges. Their humanitarian assistance to refugees returning from Pakistan earned them widespread

The root cause of its growth is the spirit, sacrifice and selflessness of millions of patriotic Indians.

recognition. Many Congress leaders acknowledged the good work of the RSS. In October 1948, the Congress Working Committee initially allowed RSS members to join Congress. However, Nehru opposed this move and later ensured that RSS members were denied membership unless they renounced their affiliation. Nehru's hostility towards the RSS persisted throughout Congress's six-decade rule at the central and state levels. RSS members were often labeled extremists and anti-social elements, facing false accusations and persecution. Yet, truth endures—attempts to suppress it only make it emerge stronger. The RSS's core ideology has resonated with millions of patriotic Indians. Disillusionment with Congress and regional parties grew as they disregarded Hindu sentiments, distorted history, and attempted to erase Indian heritage. As public discontent grew, the RSS emerged as a guardian of national identity, much like Lord Krishna revealing his divine

form at a critical juncture in the Kurukshetra battle.

Today, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh has approximately 5 to 6 million active members in India, demonstrating a robust grassroots presence. With this strength, the Sangh Parivar has become an influential force shaping Indian politics and society. Through its extensive network of affiliated groups, the RSS plays a crucial role in fostering societal transformation, guided by its unwavering ideology:

“Param Vaibhavam Tumhe Tat Swarashtram” – A commitment to elevating the motherland to greater heights.

For the welfare of society and the country, a great number of people have sacrificed pleasures, quit their jobs and families, stayed single, and worked as humble RSS workers without expecting recognition or renown. Millions of patriotic Indians were moved by this commitment and selflessness.

As the world's largest non-governmental organization, the RSS boasts 200 million members in India alone. After the United Nations, the RSS is the only organization globally recognized by the UN for its human welfare programs. Spread across 39 countries, including Europe and Arab nations, the RSS first expanded beyond India in 1947 with a branch in Kenya. With 580 branches in Nepal, it has the highest presence outside India, followed by the United States, with 146 branches. Internationally, the RSS is known as Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), dedicated to promoting Hindu culture, traditions, and history worldwide.

Today, an RSS member can proudly proclaim his affiliation anywhere in the world. India's highest offices—including the President, Prime Minister, Vice President, and Lok Sabha Speaker—are all held by individuals shaped by the RSS.

As the RSS marks its 100th year, its journey remains unstoppable, influencing the nation's destiny with an unwavering commitment to service, unity, and national pride.

(To be concluded) (The author is the President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh)

AAP's Patchy Performance in Punjab: A Mixed Report Card

As the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Punjab completes three years in power, it finds itself under scrutiny over its performance. While the ruling party claims significant achievements, opposition parties argue that it has failed on multiple fronts. The reality lies somewhere in between. AAP's historic win in the 2022 elections had raised expectations, as the party swept aside established political forces like the Congress, the Shiromani Akali Dal, and the BJP. However, delivering on its ambitious promises has proved challenging. One of the biggest concerns remains Punjab's ongoing drug crisis. Despite Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's aggressive crackdown, the state's vision of becoming drug-free in three months remains far from reality.

Corruption Crackdown and Political Gambles

In an effort to maintain its anti-corruption image—especially after alle-



gations in Delhi dented its credibility—AAP has intensified its campaign against graft. The Vigilance Bureau's crackdown on corrupt officials, including revenue officers, has sent a strong message. However, it has also sparked resistance from government employees.

In a bold political move, Mann has not hesitated to confront Punjab's farmers—one of the state's most influential voter groups. Unlike previous governments that avoided direct confrontation, AAP has taken a firm stand on certain farm-related issues. This deci-

sion carries significant risks ahead of the 2027 elections, particularly in the rural heartland.

Security Concerns and Political Challenges

Law and order remain a major concern, with a series of bomb and grenade attacks adding to the state's unrest. Ensuring security while maintaining political stability will be a key test for the government moving forward.

Meanwhile, AAP's national convener, Arvind Kejriwal, has increased his focus on Punjab following the party's significant electoral setback in Delhi. Both Kejriwal and Mann are aware that any misstep now could hurt their long-term prospects. With two more years left in its term, the AAP government faces mounting challenges. Its ability to deliver on governance, fight corruption, and restore public confidence will determine its fate in the next elections.

The Fight for Federalism and Telugu Language Representation

India's strength lies in its diversity, and the federal structure is the foundation of our democracy. However, in recent years, we have witnessed a steady erosion of federal principles through various policy decisions by the central government. From demonetization to the three black laws against farmers, NRC, CAA, Waqf laws, ONOP, NEP, delimitation, GST, and the controversial three-language formula—each of these decisions has challenged the very essence of federalism.

It is disappointing that Chandrababu Naidu (CBN), who once positioned himself as a champion of state rights, has chosen to align with the central government's anti-federal policies. His endorsement of the three-language formula is particularly concerning at a time when people across the country are resisting the imposition of Hindi. Andhra Pradesh was the first state formed on a linguistic basis, and we, as Telugu people, must stand firm in defending our language and cultural identity.

The Need for Telugu Representation

Language is not just a means of communication; it is deeply tied to our history, heritage, and identity. The Telugu-speaking population has a significant presence across India, particularly in Hindi-speaking states. Yet, their linguistic needs are often ignored. During the recent Kumbh Mela, Telugu pilgrims faced great difficulty due to the absence of Telugu signboards. The same issue exists in Ayodhya, where thousands of Telugu devotees visit every year, yet there is no recognition of their language. I call upon Mr. Naidu to write to Union Minister Nitin



Kolanu Konda Shivaji
Vice President, APCC

Gadkari, demanding that Telugu nameplates be installed on National Highway signboards in Hindi-speaking states. Similarly, the Congress party urges that Telugu be made a mandatory second language in these states to safeguard the interests of Telugu-speaking people. Furthermore, railway stations in Hindi-speaking regions must have Telugu name boards to ensure easier navigation for Telugu travelers.

A Call for Collective Action

The fight for federalism is also a fight for linguistic dignity. The central government must recognize that India is a multilingual nation and ensure that no language is unfairly imposed upon others. The Congress party will continue to push for policies that uphold the spirit of federalism and protect the linguistic rights of Telugu-speaking people.

It is time for all leaders, regardless of political affiliation, to prioritize the interests of their people over their political alliances. The preservation of our language and the respect for federalism should not be negotiable. We will not remain silent as our rights are diluted. The fight for Telugu representation is a fight for justice, and we will persist until our demands are met.

PM Modi's Latest Podcast: A Masterclass in Tech-Driven Outreach



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has once again demonstrated his ability to adapt and leverage emerging communication trends, this time through the podcasting medium. Over the past two months, Modi has engaged in nearly five hours of deep discussions on various topics, ranging from his personal life, political philosophy, and governance strategies to domestic and international affairs.

In his most recent appearance on American podcaster and AI researcher Lex Fridman's show, Modi participated in an extensive three-hour discussion. This followed his previous two-hour-long conversation with Nikhil Kamath, the co-founder of Zerodha. Both hosts are highly regarded figures, particularly among younger audiences, adding credibility and depth to the discussions. Fridman, who announced the episode to his 46 million social media followers, described it as “one of the most powerful conversations” of his life.

Innovative Communication Strategy

Modi's adoption of podcasts marks a shift in his outreach strategy. Unlike traditional media interviews, podcasts allow long-form, in-depth conversations that cater to a more diverse audience, including those disillusioned with mainstream media. This format has enabled Modi to address sensitive topics, such as the role of the RSS, the 2002 Gujarat riots, and India's geopolitical stance on China, Pakistan, and the Russia-Ukraine war, in an informal yet comprehensive manner.

His embrace of technology extends beyond podcasts. He has used AI-powered voice translation to make his speeches accessible in multiple languages, ensuring wider reach. Similarly, his governance initiatives, such as the JAM trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and Mobile), reflect his focus on leveraging technology for efficiency and transparency.

Digital-First Approach

Modi's innovative outreach techniques have been evident throughout his political career. As Gujarat's Chief Minister, he pioneered the use of holograms for campaign rallies. Before the 2014 elections, he engaged party workers through an “Audio Bridge” and connected with voters via the interactive “Chai pe Charcha” sessions.

Will begin linking Voter ID card with Aadhaar: EC

- UIDAI and EC's technical experts to start consultations soon
- Govt says linking is voluntary, no deletion of names for non-linking

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday announced that the linkage of voter cards with Aadhaar would be carried out in accordance with prevailing laws and Supreme Court directions. The poll body also confirmed that technical consultations between UIDAI and its experts would commence soon for the exercise. The EC held a high-level meeting with Union Home Secretary, Legislative Secretary from the Law Ministry, MeitY Secretary, and the UIDAI CEO to discuss the process of voter card-Aadhaar seeding. The move comes as part of efforts to streamline voter authentication while ensuring compliance with legal provisions. The poll authority clarified that while Aadhaar establishes a person's identity, voting rights can only be granted to Indian citizens under Article 326 of the Constitution. "The linking of elector photo identity card (EPIC) with Aadhaar will be done only as per the provisions of Article 326 of the Constitution, sections 23(4), 23(5), and 23(6) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950,



and in line with the Supreme Court judgment of 2023," the EC stated. The government has reiterated that the Aadhaar-voter ID linkage is a voluntary process and no voter's name will be deleted from the electoral rolls for not linking their Aadhaar details. The law, under the Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 2021, al-

lows electoral registration officers to seek Aadhaar details from voters to establish identity, but only on a voluntary basis. While there is no set deadline for the linkage, the government has assured that the process-driven exercise will be carried out in a systematic manner without any mandatory enforcement.

"You Remain Close to Our Hearts": PM Modi's Letter to Sunita Williams



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has written a heartfelt letter to Indian-origin NASA astronaut Sunita Williams, who began her return journey to Earth on Sunday after being stranded on the International Space Station (ISS) for over nine months. In his letter, dated March 1 and shared by Union Minister Jitendra Singh on X, PM Modi expressed India's pride in her achievements and acknowledged the challenges she faced during her extended stay in space. He mentioned that he had inquired about her well-being during his

meetings with former US President Donald Trump and current President Joe Biden. "We discussed how proud we are of you and your work. Following this interaction, I could not stop myself from writing to you," the Prime Minister wrote, referring to a recent conversation with former NASA astronaut Mike Massimino in Delhi. Highlighting the admiration of 1.4 billion Indians for her perseverance, PM Modi also extended his regards to her family. "Your mother, Bonnie Pandya, must be keenly awaiting your return. I am sure that Late Deepakbhai's blessings are with you as well," he said, recalling his 2016

meeting with her and her father, Deepak Pandya, a native of Gujarat who passed away in 2020. PM Modi assured her that the entire nation was praying for her safe return. "Even though you are thousands of miles away, you continue to remain close to our hearts. The people of India are praying for your good health and success in your mission," he wrote. The Prime Minister also invited her to visit India upon her return, calling her "one of its most illustrious daughters." Sunita Williams' Extended Mission in Space Sunita Williams and fellow astronaut Butch Wilmore flew to the ISS on June 5, 2023, aboard Boeing's Starliner spacecraft for what was initially planned as a short-duration test mission. However, due to propulsion issues, the spacecraft was deemed unfit to bring them back, leading to an uncrewed return of the vehicle. NASA reassigned the astronauts to the Crew-9 mission, reducing the incoming crew size to accommodate them on the ISS. Their long-awaited homecoming was made possible after Crew-10 docked with the station on Sunday, allowing them to return along with NASA astronaut Nick Hague and Roscosmos cosmonaut Aleksandr Gorbunov. The journey back to Earth marks the end of an unexpectedly prolonged stay for Williams, who has now completed her third mission in space.

Home Ministry Says No Central Data on Maha Kumbh Stampede Deaths

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Six weeks after the deadly stampede at the Maha Kumbh in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, the Union Home Ministry informed the Lok Sabha that it has not conducted an inquiry into the incident and does not maintain data on the number of casualties. Responding to a question from Congress MPs KC Venugopal and Kirsan Namdeo, Junior Home Minister Nityanand Rai stated that handling such disasters and providing financial aid to affected families falls under the purview of the respective state governments. "State governments are competent to deal with such situations. No such data is maintained centrally," Rai said, clarifying that 'public order' and 'police' are state subjects. He added that organizing religious congregations and crowd management are closely linked to 'public order,' making it the responsibility of the state government to investigate and respond to the tragedy. The stampede, which occurred on January 29, resulted in at least 30 deaths and left



60 others injured, according to Vaibhav Krishna, the senior Uttar Pradesh police officer in charge of security during the event. Venugopal and Namdeo had sought details on the exact number of casualties and the steps taken to probe the cause of the stampede. In response, Rai pointed out that the National Disaster Management Authority and the Bureau of Police Research and Development had issued detailed crowd management guidelines, which were circulated to all states. The Ministry of Home Affairs also advised all states and Union Territories to create their own Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) based on these templates.

The tragic incident has sparked a major political row, with the opposition, led by Samajwadi Party chief and former UP Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav, attacking the central government. Yadav criticized the administration for its handling of the situation, citing the massive 300-km-long traffic jam that left thousands of devotees stranded. "Is this 'Viksit Bharat'? The government cannot even manage traffic. What is the point of going to the Moon when we cannot settle issues on Earth?" Yadav questioned in Parliament. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also joined the criticism, referring to the event as 'Mrityu Kumbh' (Death Kumbh) and demanding clarity on the actual number of casualties. The issue was reignited today when Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke about the success of the Maha Kumbh, which took place between January 13 and February 26. His speech, however, made no mention of the stampede or the people who lost their lives, prompting strong reactions from the opposition.



Six SC Judges to Visit Manipur Relief Camps, Meet Displaced People

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Six Supreme Court judges will visit relief camps in Manipur on March 22 to assess the condition of internally displaced people and strengthen legal and humanitarian support in the violence-hit state, the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) announced. The visiting judges include Justice BR Gavai, who also serves as NALSA's Executive Chairman, along with Justices Surya Kant, Vikram Nath, MM Sundresh, KV Viswanathan, and N Kotiswar Singh. Their visit comes nearly two years after the sectarian violence of May 3, 2023, which resulted in hundreds of deaths and the displacement of over 50,000 people. Many of them continue to live in relief camps, highlighting the ongoing need for legal and humanitarian aid. During the visit, Justice Gavai will virtually inaugurate legal services and medical camps in all districts of Manipur and open legal aid clinics in Imphal East, Imphal West, and Ukhrul. The judges will also distribute relief materials to displaced individuals. NALSA stated that these legal service camps aim to connect the displaced population with government welfare programs, ensuring access to crucial benefits such as healthcare, pensions, employment schemes, and the reconstruction of lost identity documents. Additionally, each participating state department will outline at least five key schemes tailored to support those affected by the crisis. A team of 25 specialized doctors from Chennai will also set up medical camps in all relief centers, providing sustained healthcare support for six days. They will offer treatment and essential medicines to displaced families. NALSA has played a crucial role in assisting communities affected by the Manipur violence, having set up 273 special legal aid clinics in relief camps. These clinics have helped people regain access to government benefits, retrieve lost documents, and receive medical assistance. The upcoming visit by the Supreme Court judges underscores NALSA's commitment to justice, particularly for marginalized and vulnerable communities. By bridging the gap between legal rights and accessibility, NALSA aims to ensure that every displaced person receives the necessary support to rebuild their lives with dignity. The visit by the Supreme Court judges coincides with the bi-decennial event of the Manipur High Court on March 22.

"Uddhav Thackeray Bowed Before PM Modi": Eknath Shinde's Big Claim



TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has claimed that former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had "bowed down" before Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking relief from investigating agencies. Speaking in the Legislative Council, Shinde alleged that Thackeray had traveled to Delhi, expressed willingness to form a coalition government with the BJP, but later changed his stance upon returning to Maharashtra. Shinde further accused Thackeray's Shiv Sena UBT of forsaking the ideals of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and embracing what he called the "Aurangzebi ideology" by joining hands with Congress. He emphasized that his faction had "freed the bow and arrow," referring to the Shiv Sena symbol, which had come under dispute following the party split. "We have never been tempted by power and position. Our priority has always been addressing the issues of the people who entrusted us with responsibility," Shinde asserted. His remarks come amid renewed political tensions after Shiv Sena UBT MP Sanjay Raut claimed that Shinde himself had once sought to join the Congress. "I know what was happening. If Ahmed Patel were alive today, he could confirm it. You can ask Prithviraj Chavan about it," Raut had said. The controversy follows Maharashtra Congress leader Nana Patole's recent remarks during Holi celebrations, where he suggested that Shinde and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar could switch to the opposition in exchange for a rotational chief ministerial post.

Ukraine's Zelenskyy arrives in Finland, will meet defence industry



- Talks with Alexander Stubb to discuss defense cooperation and support for Ukraine.
- Discussions on advancing peace and strengthening the defense industry.
- Visit coincides with Trump’s negotiations with Putin on a potential ceasefire.

TPN Correspondent | Helsinki

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has arrived in Helsinki for an official visit to Finland, ahead of a key meeting with Finnish President Alexander Stubb on Wednesday. The two leaders are set to discuss Finland's continued support for Ukraine in the wake of Russia's ongoing invasion and efforts to end the conflict. The discussions

will include potential measures to advance peace and strengthen cooperation, particularly in defense, with a focus on the defense industry.

The visit comes as US President Donald Trump is engaged in talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, attempting to negotiate a ceasefire and a more permanent resolution to the three-year-long war between Russia and Ukraine.

Zelenskyy's schedule in Finland will also include discussions with other key officials, such as Finland's finance, defense, and foreign ministers, as well as a meeting with Prime Minister Petteri Orpo and parliament speaker Jussi Halla-aho. The Ukrainian president's wife, Olena Zelenska, is accompanying him on the trip and will be visiting local schools alongside Suzanne Innes-Stubb,

the wife of Finland's president.

This marks Zelenskyy's second visit to Finland since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, highlighting the ongoing international diplomatic efforts aimed at bringing an end to the conflict. Finland, a NATO member, has been a staunch ally of Ukraine in the fight against Russian aggression, providing significant military and humanitarian aid.

Trump Engages in Critical Talks with Putin Over Ukraine Conflict

Trump-Putin Call On Ending Russia-Ukraine War Continues For Over 2 Hours

TPN Correspondent | Washington

Nearly three weeks after a tumultuous meeting with Ukraine's President Zelensky at the White House, US President Donald Trump has reached out to Russian President Vladimir Putin in a fresh attempt to broker an end to the ongoing war in Ukraine. The phone call, which began at 10 a.m. Eastern Time, has been ongoing for over two hours, with the White House reporting that "the call is going well, and still in progress."

Both leaders are discussing potential solutions to secure a ceasefire in the Eastern European conflict, which has already claimed tens of thousands of lives and has been raging for more than three years. Trump has expressed his readiness to negotiate with Putin on terms for Russian control over certain parts of Ukraine, including the division of "certain assets," as he mentioned over the weekend.

However, the prospect of dividing up Ukrainian territory has raised concerns in Europe, particularly regarding the future of Ukraine and the risk of Moscow gaining too much leverage. European leaders are anxious that Trump, who has previously voiced admiration for Putin, may concede too much to Russia without consulting Ukraine.

In the aftermath of Trump's previous



meeting with Zelensky, Ukraine agreed to temporarily halt military operations for 30 days and engage in dialogue with Russia. However, Putin has set stringent conditions, which Moscow insists are non-negotiable. Ukraine, in response, has demanded an "unconditional" ceasefire, with Ukraine's Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga stressing the importance of Russia showing genuine intentions for peace.

President Putin has doubled down on Moscow's demands, firmly stating that

Russia would not accept NATO troops in Ukraine and reaffirming that any ceasefire deal would be contingent on NATO halting arms supplies to Ukraine. Putin has also stated that Russia's forces are "steadily advancing" and has made it clear that any peace deal would need to reflect these advances.

As Trump continues his talks with Putin, the fate of the conflict and the potential for peace remains uncertain. The results of this crucial phone call are eagerly awaited by both global leaders and citizens alike.

Three Earthquakes Strike Indonesia, Causing Casualties and Damage

TPN Correspondent | Jakarta

On Tuesday, Indonesia was rocked by three significant earthquakes, including a 5.5-magnitude tremor that hit North Sumatra province in the morning. The other two quakes, with magnitudes of 5.7 and 5.2, struck Maluku and East Nusa Tenggara provinces earlier in the day, according to the country's Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency.

The 5.5-magnitude earthquake in North Sumatra occurred at 5:22 a.m. local time, with its epicenter located 17 kilometers southeast of North Tapanuli Regency, at a depth of 10 kilometers. The quake resulted in one fatality and left another person injured. In addition, several houses and a road were severely damaged, making the road impassable. Sri Wahyuni Pancasilawati, head of the emergency and logistics unit at North Sumatra's Provincial Disaster Management Agency, stated that risk assessments were ongoing.



Earlier, a 5.7-magnitude earthquake struck Maluku province at 00:32 a.m. local time, initially recorded as a 6.0 magnitude before being revised downward. Just ten minutes later, another earthquake, registering a 5.2 magnitude, hit East Nusa Tenggara province. Fortunately, no tsunami alerts were issued, as the tremors were not expected to generate large waves.

Indonesia, located along the seismically active Pacific Ring of Fire, is no stranger to frequent earthquakes. The country has 127 active volcanoes and is particularly vulnerable to earthquakes and tsunamis. The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, triggered by a massive 9.1-magnitude earthquake off the west coast of Sumatra, killed over 165,000 people. Similarly, a tsunami in 2006 struck the south coast of Java, killing more than 600 people.

Due to its geological setting, Indonesia remains highly susceptible to both earthquakes and tsunamis, posing ongoing risks to the archipelago's coastal communities.

Tulsi Gabbard: Trump’s ‘America First’ Policy Should Not Be Misunderstood as Isolation



TPN Correspondent | US

US Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, clarified on Tuesday that President Donald Trump's "America First" policy should not be interpreted as a stance of isolation. Speaking at the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi, Gabbard emphasized the importance of expanding the India-US relationship, calling it a "huge opportunity" for both nations.

Gabbard explained that while President Trump's approach focuses on prioritizing American interests, it should not be seen as America turning inward. She drew a parallel to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "India First" approach, as-

serting that both leaders are committed to their respective countries while fostering strong global partnerships. "It should not be misunderstood that 'America First' means America alone," Gabbard stated, adding that the US and India share a strong friendship and that the bilateral ties will continue to grow.

Reflecting on the recent meeting between Prime Minister Modi and President Trump in Washington DC, Gabbard described it as a "reconnection of two old friends" and underscored the growing cooperation between the two nations. She also praised the Raisina Dialogue as an essential platform for open discussions on global issues, providing opportunities for direct dialogue between nations on the most pressing matters.

Touching on broader geopolitical issues, Gabbard highlighted President Trump's unwavering commitment to peace and security. She reiterated that Trump's approach is centered on securing peace through strength, noting that Trump has also voiced strong support for ending ongoing conflicts, including the war in Ukraine.

The Raisina Dialogue, held from March 17-19, serves as India's premier conference on geopolitics and geoeconomics, organized by the Observer Research Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs. Gabbard's remarks further solidified the growing collaboration between India and the US, particularly in security and intelligence-sharing.

"Stop The Killing": Families Of Hostages To Israel PM After Strike On Gaza



TPN Correspondent | Jerusalem

The families of Israeli captives held in Gaza have demanded that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu intervene immediately to stop the killing and disappearance of hostages now! First, return them -- then everything else," the statement read.

In a statement, the Hostages and Missing Families Forum called for a meeting with Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, and the head of the negotiation team to discuss how Israel plans to protect the hos-

tages from military actions and work toward their release. "The families of the hostages will demand: Stop the killing and disappearance of the hostages now! First, return them -- then everything else," the statement read.

The families also announced plans to protest outside Netanyahu's office in Jerusalem later on Tuesday, as their calls for meetings with key officials have so far gone unanswered. They expressed frustration, saying that government officials had ignored their pleas for a discussion, and now it appears they were planning to escalate military action, which could endanger the lives of the captives.

Israel's recent airstrikes on Gaza have been its most intense since the ceasefire on January 19, following the brutal October 2023 Hamas attack that led to the abduction of 251 Israelis. Of those taken, 58 remain in Gaza, and the Israeli military reports that 34 of the hostages are believed to have died.

The families are urging Netanyahu's government to focus on bringing the hostages back safely, asserting that their return must be prioritized before any further military escalation. The growing tension between the ongoing conflict and the efforts to secure the captives' release has left families in anguish, calling for decisive action from Israel's leadership.

Stock markets surge as bulls take charge after consolidation

After a period of consolidation, the domestic stock markets witnessed a strong rally on Tuesday, closing with significant gains. Investor sentiment turned highly positive as expectations grew that the US Federal Reserve would maintain interest rates. Additionally, positive global cues and the availability of fundamentally strong stocks at attractive prices encouraged investors to adopt a buy-on-dips strategy. The result was an unrelenting surge in benchmark indices from the opening bell to the closing session.

The BSE Sensex, which had closed at 74,169 in the previous session, opened higher at 74,608 and maintained upward momentum throughout the day. It touched an intraday high of 75,385 before settling at 75,301 with a remarkable gain of 1,131 points. Similarly, the NSE Nifty opened at 22,662, reached a high of 22,857, and ended the session at 22,834, marking an impressive increase of 325 points. The Nifty Bank index also rallied, climbing 960 points to close at 49,314.

Investor enthusiasm was evident in the broad market participation, with 2,288 stocks advancing on the NSE compared to 646 declining, while 82 stocks remained unchanged. The bullish momentum was reflected across all sectoral indices, with media and realty stocks soaring by 3%, while the auto, public sector banks, and metals sectors registered gains of over 2%. Stocks from banking, finance, and consumption segments also played a crucial role in driving the indices higher.

Among the top gainers in the Nifty50 were ICICI Bank, Larsen & Toubro, Shriram Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, and Tata Motors, while Bajaj



Finserv, Tech Mahindra, and Bharti Airtel emerged as the day's biggest losers. The rupee strengthened by 23 paise to close at 86.56 against the US dollar, reflecting increased investor confidence. Steel and metal stocks, particularly Hindalco, played a key role in pushing Nifty to a one-month high.

Several corporate developments influenced market movements. Paytm Money received SEBI approval for registration as a research analyst, while PB Fintech continued its upward rally for the second consecutive day. Stocks such as Uttam Sugar, Mobikwik, TT, Sindhutrade, and Hind Rectifiers hit the 20% upper circuit. CG Power's board approved an interim dividend of ₹1.30 per share, while a major block deal involving 27 lakh shares took place in Jio Financial. Tech Mahindra announced a strategic partnership with Google Cloud, and Bajaj Finserv revealed its plan to acquire Allianz's 26% stake in Bajaj Allianz Life. Meanwhile, Varun Bev-

erages surged 5% amid expectations of increased demand in the summer season, and 20 lakh shares were exchanged in Tata Steel.

The bullish rally indicates strong market momentum, with investor confidence driving key indices higher. With favorable economic cues and robust sectoral performance, markets are expected to maintain their positive trajectory in the coming sessions.

1. Torrent Power Ltd



The company secured a 1,200 MW renewable energy project from the Gujarat government. Plans to invest ₹5,500 crore in green energy expansion over the next three years. Jef-

eries has maintained a 'Buy' rating with a target price of ₹1,750, citing strong cash flows and expansion in renewables.

2. NLC India Ltd



The company signed an MoU with the Tamil Nadu government to set up a solar and wind power project worth ₹7,000 crore. It achieved a 14% increase in coal production YoY, ensuring steady fuel supply for power generation. Motilal Oswal gave a 'Buy' rating with a target price of ₹280, expecting continued growth in power generation.

3. Tata Motors Ltd

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) reported 16% YoY growth in global sales, boosting Tata Motors' overall revenue. The company launched three new electric vehicle (EV) models, strengthening its presence in the EV mar-



ket. HSBC has raised its target price to ₹1,050, maintaining a 'Buy' rating due to strong demand in domestic and international markets.

4. CG Power and Industrial Solutions Ltd

CG Power bagged a ₹1,100 crore order from the Indian Railways for traction motors.

The company is expanding its manufacturing facility to support increasing demand for power equipment. ICICI Securities upgraded its rating to 'Buy' with a target price of ₹740/800, citing strong earnings potential.



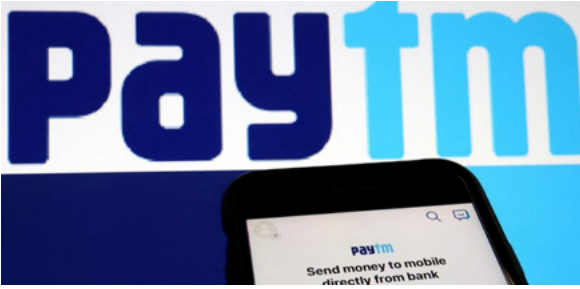
5. Indian Hotels Company Ltd (IHCL)



IHCL announced the addition of 10 new hotels under the Taj and Vivanta brands, expanding its luxury segment. The company's revenue per available room (RevPAR) grew 12% YoY, supported by rising domestic and international tourism. Morgan Stanley has given a 'Buy' rating with a target price of ₹960, expecting further expansion in premium hospitality.

PayTm money receives SEBI nod to start research analysis business

Paytm Money has received a registration certificate from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to operate as a research analyst, according to filings with the exchange. This milestone marks a significant step in Paytm Money's efforts to broaden its investment services and enhance its offerings to users.



insights and comprehensive market analyses.

By adding research and advisory services to its platform, Paytm Money is looking to offer a more holistic approach to investing, empowering its users with the tools and information needed to navigate the financial markets more effectively.

The company highlighted that this new development aligns with its goal to expand its presence in the investment ecosystem. By obtaining this certification, Paytm Money aims to improve the user experience by providing expert-backed research and insights for both retail and institutional investors. With SEBI's approval, Paytm Money is now authorized to offer research reports and

investment analyses to its users, enhancing the value it brings to its platform.

The new research services will soon be integrated into the Paytm Money app, allowing users to access advisory and research-backed recommendations directly through the app. This expansion is set to help investors make more informed decisions by providing access to expert

As part of its long-term strategy, Paytm Money aims to continue developing its platform to cater to a diverse range of investors, from individuals making their first investment to seasoned institutional investors. The SEBI certification is expected to significantly bolster the company's position in India's rapidly growing investment ecosystem.

India's trade deficit in Feb drops to \$14 bn; petroleum exports to Europe shrink by 30%

India's merchandise trade deficit narrowed sharply to a three-year low of \$14.05 billion in February, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on Monday. This significant reduction was largely driven by a 30% decline in petroleum exports to Europe and a more than 60% drop in gold imports. The decline in petroleum exports, which had been a major contributor to India's export growth following the Russia-Ukraine war, was particularly notable. The decrease came shortly after the imposition of sweeping US sanctions targeting Russia's oil trade in January 2025, which placed 183 Russian oil tankers under sanctions. The sanctions appear to have had a direct impact on India's petroleum export volumes to Europe, a key market. Additionally, India's petroleum imports also saw a decrease of 26%, contributing further to the reduction in the trade deficit.

Gold imports, another significant factor in India's merchandise trade, fell dramatically by over 60%, further influencing the decline in the trade deficit. Gold has been a major import for India, driven by seasonal demand and cultural factors. However, lower demand for gold, coupled with rising prices, contributed to the steep drop in imports. The reduced trade deficit reflects a contraction in both exports and imports, but it highlights India's improved balance of trade. Despite the challenges posed by external factors such as sanctions and global price fluctuations, India's merchandise trade deficit appears to be stabilizing. With the reduction in both petroleum exports and gold imports, India is likely to focus on diversifying its export base and increasing trade with emerging markets to sustain its economic growth while managing its trade balance.

India imposes provisional anti-dumping duty on import of Chinese aluminium foil

India has imposed a provisional anti-dumping duty on aluminium foil imports from China, ranging from \$619 to \$873 per metric tonne (MT). This move, which will remain in effect for six months, aims to provide relief to domestic aluminium foil manufacturers by addressing the impact of cheaper imports from China.

The Finance Ministry issued a gazette notification on March 17, detailing the provisional duty applicable to aluminium foil imports with a thickness of up to 80 mi-

crons. However, the duty will not apply to aluminium foil below 5.5 microns used for non-capacitor applications. This action follows preliminary findings of material injury to Indian producers, who have faced increasing competition from low-priced Chinese imports. The imposition of this anti-dumping duty aligns with India's ongoing efforts to protect its domestic industries from unfair trade practices. The move is also reflective of broader global trade tensions, particularly in light of recent tariff measures imposed by other coun-

tries. In addition to India's actions, the United States has implemented reciprocal tariffs on a range of Chinese goods, including a 25% tariff on aluminium imports, further highlighting the growing trade friction between major economies. This decision by the Indian government is expected to help curb the influx of cheap Chinese aluminium foil, which has been undercutting local manufacturers and putting pressure on their profitability. Domestic producers have long complained about the import of cheaper aluminium foil from

China, which has resulted in significant market distortions. The provisional anti-dumping duty is a temporary measure while a more comprehensive investigation continues. The Indian government's response underscores its commitment to supporting local industries and ensuring fair trade practices. The six-month duration of the duty will allow Indian producers to adjust to the market changes, with the possibility of further action based on the outcomes of the ongoing investigation.



iPhone 17 Air Was Supposed to Be Port-Free, But Apple Scrapped the Idea: Mark Gurman



The iPhone 17 series has been a topic of extensive speculation, with rumors suggesting the lineup will include the iPhone 17, iPhone 17 Air (or iPhone 17 Slim), iPhone 17 Pro, and iPhone 17 Pro Max, with an expected launch in the second quarter of this year. Among these, the iPhone 17 Air was slated to be Apple's thinnest iPhone yet, potentially replacing the Plus variant in the lineup. Bloomberg's Mark Gurman has revealed new details about the iPhone 17 Air, including an ambitious plan that Apple initially considered. According to Gurman's weekly Power On newsletter, Apple originally planned to make the iPhone 17 Air "Apple's first completely port-free iPhone." The device would have relied on wireless charging and cloud-based data syncing, eliminating the traditional charging ports altogether. This move was intended to pave the way for even slimmer models in the future, with a sleek, minimalist design that further pushed the limits of device thinness. However, Apple reportedly scrapped this plan to avoid po-

tential regulatory issues, particularly from the European Union (EU), which has recently mandated that tech companies like Apple adopt the USB Type-C charging standard. Apple's decision was likely influenced by the need to comply with the EU's regulations and maintain its broad consumer appeal. The iPhone 17 Air's thin design would have required a thinner battery, which could have compromised battery life. To avoid this, Apple instructed engineers to redesign key components, including the display and silicon, to optimize efficiency while maintaining performance. Expected Specifications: The iPhone 17 Air is expected to feature a 9.5mm thick profile, including the 4mm camera bump. It may offer a 6.6-inch OLED display with a 120Hz ProMotion refresh rate and Dynamic Island. The device could house a 24MP front camera, a 48MP rear camera, and be made with a titanium frame. It may also include Apple's first 5G modem and Wi-Fi chip. Rumored pricing is between \$1,299 and \$1,500.

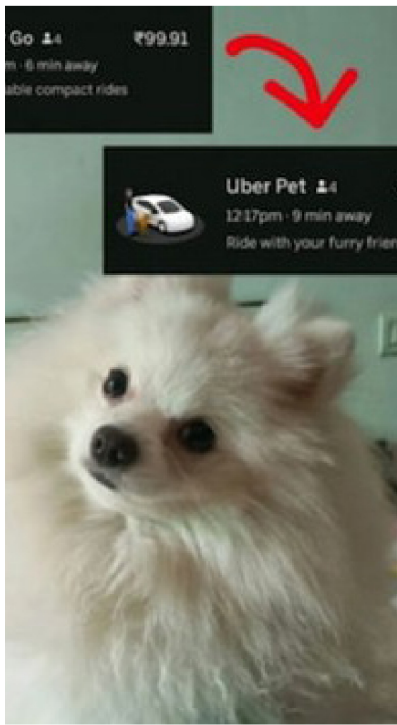
Amazon Echo Users Will No Longer Have Option to Process Alexa Voice Recordings On-Device



Amazon has announced that starting March 28, Echo users will no longer have the option to process their voice commands and recordings locally on their devices. Instead, all Alexa voice recordings will be sent to Amazon's cloud for processing, as the company expands Alexa's capabilities with generative AI features. This change affects all Echo devices such as smart speakers and displays. In an email to users who had previously enabled the 'Do Not Send Voice Recordings' option, Amazon explained that on-device processing is being discontinued to enable the new AI-driven features that require the processing power of Amazon's secure cloud. The company emphasized that Alexa voice requests will remain encrypted during transmission to the cloud, where they are processed under security protections. Although voice recordings will still be deleted automatically after processing, the new policy raises privacy concerns. Many users may be uncomfortable with Amazon having access to their voice data, especially in the context of

in-home devices that can listen continuously. Amazon assures users that privacy controls will still be available through the Alexa Privacy dashboard, where they can manage how their data is handled, including the option to prevent their voice recordings from being stored at all. Amazon also announced the upcoming launch of Alexa+, a subscription-based, generative AI version of Alexa, which will include advanced features like Alexa Voice ID. This feature will allow Alexa to recognize individual users based on their voice, and share personalized content like calendar events and music. However, Amazon clarified that Voice ID may not function if users choose not to save voice recordings. This shift in policy is part of Amazon's ongoing push to enhance Alexa's AI capabilities but raises concerns about privacy, particularly in light of past controversies surrounding the handling of user data. Notably, Amazon has faced scrutiny over allowing employees to listen to Alexa voice recordings for training purposes and other privacy violations related to its Ring doorbell cameras.

Gurugram Woman Calls Out Uber Pets For Overpricing



A Gurugram woman has raised concerns over the steep pricing of Uber's new service, Uber Pets, which allows passengers to travel with their pets. In a LinkedIn post, she highlighted the significant price difference between regular Uber rides and Uber Pets. For a short 2 km ride, the regular Uber fare was ₹100, while Uber Pets cost a staggering ₹530, over five times the price of a regular ride. The woman questioned whether the price hike was justified, speculating that it could account for cleaning fees, premium drivers, or simply be an added charge for pet owners. She pointed out that her local auto-rickshaw charges just ₹60 for a similar ride and even

offers belly rubs for her dog, making the Uber Pets pricing seem excessive. In her post, she expressed her surprise at the service's pricing, asking, "If the goal was accessibility, why is this service a luxury?" She further criticized the fact that many pet owners might struggle with these higher costs, especially when pets are considered family members. While some commenters suggested booking a regular Uber and informing the driver about the pet, others speculated that Uber might be capitalizing on the growing trend of pet ownership in India. One user pointed out that Uber may be trying to monetize this shift in consumer preferences.

Forget 2 Minutes, This Eatery Serves Noodles in Just 48 Seconds!



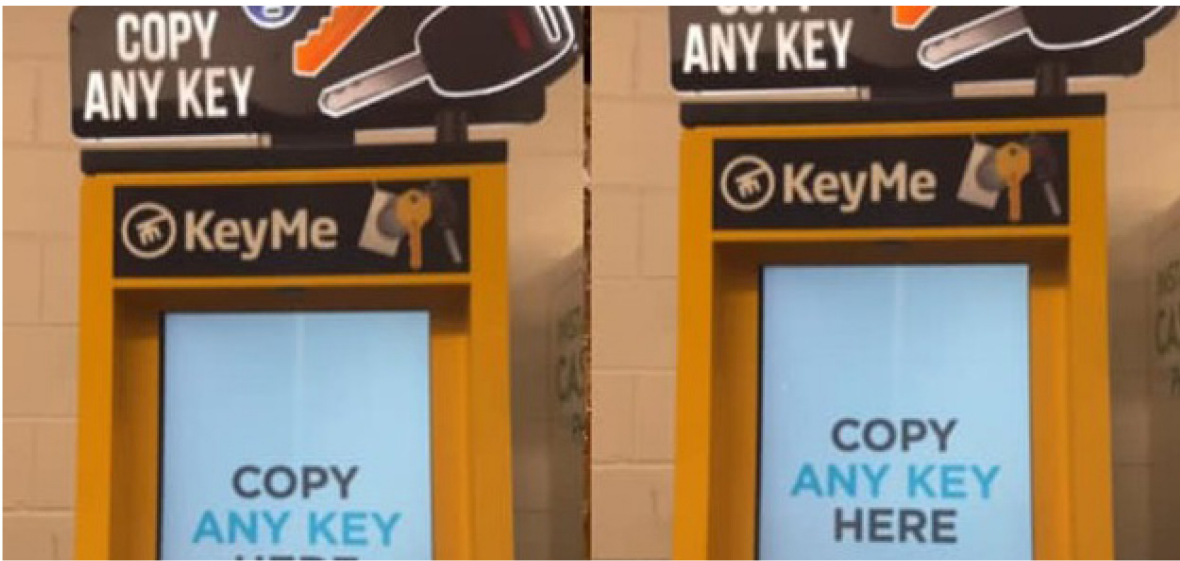
In the bustling city of Shenzhen, China, a new eatery is turning heads with its incredible speed of service, offering freshly cooked noodles in just 48 seconds. The Future Noodle Restaurant, a small but highly efficient establishment, has taken fast food to a whole new level. While most noodle dishes take at least two minutes to prepare, this restaurant uses a robotic system to make noodles from scratch in record time. The process is nothing short of fascinating. A robotic arm mixes flour and water, shaping the dough into perfect noodles in just eight seconds. The noodles are then plunged into hot water, where they cook with various ingredients like marinated eggs and grilled sausages for 40 seconds. The result is a hot, fresh, and delicious bowl of noodles, served in under a minute. The restaurant, which spans only eight square

meters, uses a self-service kiosk for ordering. Customers can choose from ten different noodle varieties, paired with sides such as marinated eggs and grilled sausages. The price of a meal ranges from 6 to 20 yuan (roughly Rs 122 to Rs 250), making it an affordable and quick dining option. A transparent window allows customers to observe the robotic cooking process, which has garnered praise for its speed, efficiency, and, most importantly, the flavor of the final product. With its cutting-edge technology and quick turnaround time, Future Noodle Restaurant is setting a new standard for fast food, proving that great meals don't need to take long to prepare. This innovative concept is a glimpse into the future of dining, where automation and robotics combine to deliver convenience and quality in record time.

US Vending Machine Goes Viral for Duplicating Keys in Minutes

A viral video is captivating social media users, showcasing a unique vending machine in the US that can duplicate keys within minutes. Shared by Tanvir Shaikh on Instagram, the video demonstrates an alternative to the traditional and often time-consuming process of visiting a locksmith. In the video, Tanvir walks up to a vending machine resembling an ATM and taps the screen to begin the key duplication process. The machine offers several options, including standard keys, vehicle keys, access cards, and key fobs. Tanvir selects the standard option for a basic key copy, inserts his original key into a scanning slot, and chooses his preferred key

type—brass in this case. After selecting the number of copies—two in this case—he proceeds to the payment section. Within minutes, the machine dispenses three keys instead of two, surprising Tanvir with a free extra key. This fast, automated process has drawn attention for its convenience and efficiency compared to traditional locksmith services, where customers often face longer waiting times. Tanvir's Instagram reel has sparked interest, highlighting how technology is transforming everyday services like key duplication, making it quicker, easier, and more accessible.





PM Modi Praises Athletes' Success at Special Olympics Winter Games

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed immense pride and joy in the achievements of Indian athletes at the Special Olympics World Winter Games held in Turin, Italy. In a post on social media, the Prime Minister praised the athletes for bringing honour to the nation by securing 33 medals, including 8 gold, 18 silver, and 7 bronze, in various sports like alpine skiing, snowboarding, floorball, snowshoeing, short track speed skating, and cross-country skiing. The Indian contingent, comprising 30 athletes and 19 support staff, returned home with an inspiring collection of medals from the historic 2025 edition of the games. PM Modi met with the athletes in Parliament, congratulating them personally for their remarkable accomplishments. Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya also retweeted PM Modi's message, acknowledging the athletes as "Param-Mitra" (Best Friends). A welcome ceremony was organized at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium, attended by Raksha Khadse, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports, and Mallika Nadda, President of Special Olympics Bharat. Athlete Bharti, who won two gold medals, was also present on stage to celebrate the moment. To honor their success, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports announced increased cash prizes for the athletes. Gold medallists will receive Rs. 20 lakhs, while silver and bronze winners will be awarded Rs. 14 lakhs and Rs. 8 lakhs, respectively.



S8UL to Represent India at Esports World Cup 2025

S8UL has been selected as a Club Partner for the Esports World Cup 2025 (EWC), making history as the first Indian team to earn this honor. Chosen among 40 elite esports organizations globally, S8UL's dominance in games like BGMI, Pokemon UNITE, VALORANT, and Call of Duty: Mobile has earned global recognition. This achievement highlights S8UL's impact on Indian esports and its growing international presence, including expansion into Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Europe. Co-Founder Animesh 'Thug' Agarwal expressed pride in the selection, emphasizing the significance for Indian esports. The Esports World Cup 2025 will feature top-tier games and a massive prize pool, with S8UL aiming to showcase India's gaming talent on the global stage. The tournament will take place in Riyadh later this year.



India Defeats Italy 64-22 in Kabaddi World Cup Opener

India began their Kabaddi World Cup 2025 campaign with a commanding 64-22 victory over Italy in their Group B match. The defending champions dominated the match, securing two points and topping their group. Scotland, in the other Group B clash, defeated Wales 63-43 to take second place in the group. India's next match will be against Scotland on Tuesday. The tournament, hosted across four cities in England's West Midlands, features both men's and women's competitions. India is defending their titles in both categories. In the men's event, India is placed in Group B alongside Italy, Scotland, Wales, and Hong Kong, while the women's team competes in Group D with Wales and Poland. The top teams from each group will advance to the quarterfinals starting on March 21.

Harvinder Singh Applauds Khelo India Para Games for Elevating Para Sports



2024 Paralympics gold medallist Harvinder Singh expressed his excitement for the upcoming Khelo India Para Games (KIPG 2025), set to begin on March 20. The 34-year-old archer praised the competition's international standards, which he believes have raised the bar for para athletes in India. Harvinder, who won gold at the inaugural KIPG 2023, highlighted how the event motivates athletes to perform at their best by selecting the top 16 performers at the national level. He also commended the tournament's high-quality organization, comparing it to international events. With over 1200 athletes expected to compete across six disciplines, KIPG 2025 will be held at three venues in New Delhi, including Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium and Indira Gandhi Stadium. Harvinder emphasized that the growing support for para sports is fostering a more inclusive society in India.



Andhra Pradesh Super Cup Announced

The Andhra Pradesh Football Association (APFA) has announced the APFA Super Cup - War of the Zones tournament, set to take place from March 20-27, 2025. This exciting football competition will bring together top talent from across the state, with 8 zones participating in 57 matches, all vying for the coveted prize. The tournament will showcase regional teams and crown the best football team in Andhra Pradesh.

- Kolleru (Krishna, NTR, Eluru)**
- Nallamala (Prakasam, Palnadu, Guntur, Bapatla)**
- Coromandel (Tirupati, Chittoor, Nellore)**
- Penna (Kadapa, Annamayya, Sri Sathya Sai)**
- Tungabhadra (Kurnool, Nandyala, Anantapuram)**

The competition comes with a ₹5,00,000 prize pool, further motivating teams to give their best on the field. In preparation for the Super Cup, the Kolleru team held a coaching camp at International Delhi Public School in Tadepalligudem. The camp focused on fitness, strategy, and skills development. The school principal, N Uma Srinivas, graced the closing ceremony, unveiling the team's jersey and congratulating the athletes. This tournament aims to strengthen football culture in Andhra Pradesh.

The eight zones competing in the tournament are:

- Vamsadhara (Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Manyam)**
- Visakha (Visakhapatnam, Anakapalli, ASR)**
- Godavari (East Godavari, West Godavari, Konaseema)**

Hockey India Promises Bigger HIL After Team Owners Express Concerns

Team owners of the Hockey India League (HIL) have raised concerns about the first edition of the league, particularly regarding the sponsorship earnings and operational costs. Despite the league's positive reception, the owners were dissatisfied with the sponsorship revenue, which fell far short of expectations. Hockey India had anticipated Rs 90 crore in sponsorships but only earned around Rs 13 crore. During a recent meeting in Bhubaneswar, owners highlighted the losses incurred, especially those who owned both men's and women's teams, citing an operational cost of over Rs 20 crore. Hockey India has responded by promising a bigger and better HIL in its next edition, with plans to distribute 60% of the Rs 13 crore sponsorship earnings among the team owners. Additionally, a new commercial head will be hired to fo-

cus on boosting revenue for the next season. The league also plans to address concerns related to broadcast quality, players' purse, and marketing strategies to improve the competition's overall appeal and financial sustainability.



PV Sindhu to Lead Indian Challenge at Swiss Open 2025



Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu will lead India's charge at the Swiss Open 2025, a BWF Super 300 tournament, set to begin on Tuesday at St Jakobshalle in Basel, Switzerland. Sindhu, ranked 16th globally and the 2022 Swiss Open champion, will face compatriot and world number 28

Malvika Bansod in an exciting first-round women's singles match. The Indian contingent features a strong lineup in both singles and doubles categories. In men's singles, world number 15 Lakshya Sen will square off against 2016 Swiss Open winner HS Prannoy. Priyanshu Rajawat and Kiran George are also competing in the men's singles. In women's doubles, world number nine Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand will lead India's charge, alongside Priya Konjengbam-Shruti Mishra and Varshini Viswanath Sri-Arathi Sara Sunil. India will also have two mixed doubles pairs—Ashith Surya-Amrutha Pramuthesh and Sathish Karunakaran-Aadya Variyath—in the main draw. The tournament will see top seeds Shi Yu Qi (China) and Pornpawee Chochuwong (Thailand) in the men's and women's singles, respectively.

BCCI to Form Panel for Women's World Cup and Ban Tobacco, Crypto Sponsorships




The BCCI will form an organizing committee for the 2025 Women's ODI World Cup and decide on venues for the event during its Apex Council meeting in Kolkata on March 22, ahead of the IPL opener. The Women's World Cup, last hosted by India in 2013, will take place in October. The committee will also finalize the structure for the 2025-26 domestic season and decide on venues for India's series against West Indies and South Africa. Additionally, the BCCI will address a government directive to ban tobacco and crypto sponsorships, following the health ministry's order for the IPL starting March 22. This meeting will also approve changes in bank account signatories following new office-bearers' appointment.





Chiranjeevi's New Film Set in Village Backdrop

Megastar Chiranjeevi is all set to collaborate with director Anil Ravipudi for an upcoming film, which will commence production in the first week of June. The highlight of this project is its rural setting, marking Chiranjeevi's return to a village backdrop after several years. The film is slated for a Sankranti 2026 release. According to reports, actress Aditi Rao Hydari is being considered for the female lead, though an official announcement is awaited. The film promises entertainment with a mass appeal, with music composed by Bheems Ceciroleo and Ramana Gogula. Recently, the production team sought divine blessings at Simhadri Appanna Temple before beginning the scriptwork. Chiranjeevi has previously delivered hits like Indra, Alluda Majaka, Apadbandhavudu, and Khaidi in a village backdrop, and fans are eagerly awaiting his return to a similar setting.



Tamannaah Shares Party Pics Amid Breakup Rumors

Actress Tamannaah Bhatia, who continues to enjoy immense popularity, recently shared a cryptic message on social media that caught fans' attention. She stated, "Don't wait for miracles in life, create your own," hinting at a self-empowered outlook. Tamannaah also posted pictures from a party with friends, including Manish Malhotra, Rasha Thadani, and Pragya Kapoor. These posts have sparked speculation among netizens that she might be trying to move on from her rumored breakup with actor Vijay Varma after three years of dating. Known for her bold choices, Tamannaah recently stunned audiences with her daring performance in Lust Stories 2. While she remains silent on the breakup rumors, her latest posts have fueled curiosity about her personal life. Fans continue to support her, praising her confidence and self-growth.


"All We Imagine As Light, Shahana Goswami Win Big at Asian Film Awards 2025"

Payal Kapadia's All We Imagine As Light and actress Shahana Goswami won top honors at the 18th Asian Film Awards held at the Xiqu Centre, Hong Kong. The acclaimed India-French co-production won Best Film, triumphing over strong contenders like Black Dog (China), Exhuma (South Korea), Teki Cometh (Japan), and Twilight of the Warriors: Walled In (Hong Kong). Shahana Goswami won Best Actress for her powerful role in Santosh, a film about a widowed housewife inheriting her late husband's job as a police constable and becoming involved in a murder investigation. Meanwhile, Santosh director Sandhya Suri was honored with Best New Director. Kapadia's All We Imagine As Light made history last year as the first Indian film to win the Grand Prix Award at Cannes. The Asian Film Awards 2025 further cemented its global recognition.



Amitabh Bachchan Praises Abhishek's Performance in Sarkar

Amitabh Bachchan recently reflected on Sarkar (2005) and lauded Abhishek Bachchan's performance, stating that he was "nowhere in the film" as his son owned the screen. In his blog, Big B shared that he revisited the film after years and was amazed by its quality, direction, and Abhishek's restrained yet powerful acting. He emphasized that his admiration came not as a father but as a true evaluator of cinema, calling Abhishek's performance "simply stunning." Directed by Ram Gopal Varma, Sarkar is a political crime thriller inspired by The Godfather, starring Amitabh, Abhishek, Kay Kay Menon, and Katrina Kaif. Amitabh also praised Abhishek's latest film Be Happy, directed by Remo D'Souza, reaffirming his appreciation for his son's evolving craft.



Mrunal Thakur Stuns in Desi Look, Gears Up for Dacoit

Bollywood actress Mrunal Thakur recently showcased her classic charm with a desi twist in a lavender chikan-kari lehenga, paired with diamond jewelry. The actress shared the elegant look on Instagram, keeping her make-up minimal. Apart from her fashion moments, Mrunal is currently busy filming Dacoit, a pan-India drama where she stars opposite Adivi Sesh. The film, directed by Shaneil Deo and produced by Supriya Yarlagadda, also features Anurag Kashyap in a pivotal role. Dacoit tells the story of a convict seeking revenge on his ex-girlfriend. Mrunal also has Son of Sardaar 2 lined up alongside Ajay Devgn, continuing the 2012 hit franchise. With an exciting lineup and her impeccable style, Mrunal continues to captivate fans both on and off the screen.

