



My Heart is Filled with Gratitude

Tollywood Actor Megastar Chiranjeevi was honored at a special event in the UK Parliament, attended by several MPs, ministers, and diplomats. The event recognized his remarkable contributions to cinema and philanthropy. On this occasion, Bridge India Group presented him with the Lifetime Achievement Award in appreciation of his illustrious career and humanitarian efforts. Expressing his gratitude, Chiranjeevi took to social media, stating, "My heart is filled with gratitude to receive this honor in the presence of so many esteemed personalities. The kind words spoken about me brought immense joy." He dedicated the award to his fans, film fraternity, well-wishers, and family, especially those who became his "blood brothers and sisters" through his blood donation campaigns. He emphasized that this recognition inspires him to continue his work with even greater enthusiasm.



'Renaming Ramanagara as Bengaluru South is a State Decision': DK Shivakumar

State government firm on renaming Ramanagara

DK Shivakumar says renaming is a state subject

Slams Kumaraswamy for opposing the move



decision, as renaming districts falls under state jurisdiction. Shivakumar, who represents Kanakapura in the Assembly—a constituency within Ramanagara district—had initiated the renaming process in July 2024. He submitted a formal memorandum to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, requesting that Ramanagara be renamed Bengaluru South

district. The state cabinet approved the proposal in the same month. Speaking to reporters in New Delhi, Shivakumar reiterated that renaming districts is a state subject. He stated that although the Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy had approached the Union Home Minister and facilitated the rejection letter, the Karnataka

Law Department has ruled in favor of the renaming. "There is no need for us to approach the Centre again. We will get it done through the state government itself," said the DyCM. Shivakumar also criticized HD Kumaraswamy and BJP leaders, who had opposed the renaming from the outset. He accused Kumaraswamy of engaging in 'hate politics' and claimed that the former CM was against Ramanagara's growth. "The Union Minister is deliberately opposing the renaming, as he does not want to see Ramanagara develop," alleged Shivakumar. Despite opposition from the BJP and Kumaraswamy, the Karnataka government remains determined to rename the district, emphasizing that the decision falls within its constitutional powers.



Karnataka Minister Assures Maintenance of Pilgrim Complexes in Tirumala

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy assured that pilgrim amenity complexes in Tirumala will undergo proper maintenance following concerns raised by JDS MLC Saravana about their poor upkeep. Saravana highlighted that despite the presence of over 50 staff members, the complexes lacked maintenance, with doors in rooms being dysfunctional, forcing visitors to use chairs to keep them shut. He also pointed out that except for a few reception staff, no workers were visible. Responding to the concerns, Reddy announced that after May 2025, tenders will be issued for the maintenance of Hampi Block (110 rooms), Aihole Block (130 rooms), and 36 VVIP rooms at Tirumala. Additionally, a 500-capacity hall will be included in the maintenance plan, with an aim to upgrade facilities to 4-star >> **PAGE 2**



Kumaraswamy Hits Back at Shivakumar Over Land Encroachment Allegations

Kumaraswamy responds sharply to Shivakumar's allegations

Says accusations will backfire like 'spitting at the sky'

Political tensions escalate between JDS and Congress leaders

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy has strongly reacted to Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar's allegations of land encroachment, stating that attempts to malign his image will ultimately backfire. Without taking names, Kumaraswamy remarked, "If you spit at the sky, it will fall on >> **PAGE 2**

30 Maoists Killed, Policeman Dies in Chhattisgarh Encounters

- Two major encounters in Bijapur and Kanker
- 26 Maoists killed in Bijapur, 4 in Kanker
- Amit Shah declares India will be Maoist-free by March 2026

TPN Correspondent | Chhattisgarh
At least 30 Maoists were killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur and Kanker districts, while a police jawan lost his life in the exchange of fire. These operations mark a major success for security forces in their ongoing fight against left-wing extremism. The encounter in Bijapur began around 7 AM near the border with Dantewada when a joint team of security personnel conducted an anti-Naxalite operation in Gangaloor police station limits. The State Task Force and District Reserve Guard engaged in intense crossfire with Maoists, resulting in the elimination of 26 insurgents. Security forces recovered firearms and explosives from the site. A police jawan was martyred in the operation. In Kanker, a joint team of the Border Security Force and District Reserve Guard killed four Maoists near Koroskodo village. Both encounters come as part of heightened anti-Maoist operations across Chhattisgarh. Union Home Minister Amit Shah hailed these encounters as a significant achievement



in the fight against extremism. He reiterated the government's commitment to eliminating Maoist insurgency, stating, "The country will be Maoist-free before March 31 next year. The Modi government is implementing a zero-tolerance policy against Maoists who refuse to surrender despite multiple opportunities." Last month, security forces eliminated 31 Maoists in Bijapur's Indravati National Park area, where a fierce encounter resulted in the deaths of two security personnel. In January, security forces killed senior Maoist leader Jayaram Reddy, also known as Chalapati, who carried a bounty of ₹1 crore. More than 200 Maoists were neutralized in Chhattisgarh in 2024, with 217 from the Bastar region. Additionally, over 800 Maoists were arrested, and 802 surrendered during the year.

BJP Leaders Urge Governor to Review Greater Bengaluru Authority Act

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Senior BJP leaders, including state president BY Vijayendra, Assembly opposition leader R Ashoka, and Council opposition leader Chalavadi Narayanswamy, have urged Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot to conduct a constitutional review of the Greater Bengaluru Authority Act and assess its compliance with the 74th Constitutional Amendment. The Bill, which has been passed in both the Assembly and Council, seeks to restructure BBMP by dividing it into



seven municipal corporations. The BJP, however, has raised strong objections, arguing that the move will complicate governance and create administrative hurdles.

- Bill proposes splitting BBMP into seven municipal corporations
- BJP seeks Governor's constitutional review of the Act
- Concerns over administrative inefficiencies and governance hurdles

In a memorandum submitted to the Governor, BJP leaders stated that his intervention is crucial to protecting the democratic urban governance structure, preserving Bengaluru's cultural identity, and ensuring efficient city administration. They emphasized that the 74th Constitutional Amendment was designed to strengthen local self-governance and promote decentralization of power. However, they believe that splitting BBMP would reverse these objectives and weaken citizen participation. The BJP highlighted the failures of similar models in Delhi and Kolkata, where multiple municipal bodies led to inefficiencies, governance challenges, and ultimately a return to a unified system. >> **PAGE 2**

Karnataka HC Questions Irregularities in AEE Recruitment



- Court warns state over possible CBI probe into AEE selection irregularities
- Government, KPSC, and candidates asked to submit their versions
- Questions raised on issuing appointment letters despite warnings

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
The Karnataka High Court has raised serious concerns over alleged irregularities in the recruitment of 24 Assistant Executive Engineers (AEE) and hinted at the possibility of handing over the investigation to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). A division bench comprising Justice Krishna S. Dixit and Justice Ramachandra D. Huddar made these observations while hearing petitions filed by around 10 selected candidates. The court has asked the state government, Karnataka State Public Service Commission (KPSC), and aspiring candidates to present their versions before deciding on a potential CBI inquiry. The court questioned why appointment letters were issued on June 25, 2024, despite KPSC's ear-

lier communication on February 22, 2024, and a reminder on May 18, 2024, advising the government to hold the selection list. It also sought the government's response on why no criminal complaint had been filed despite prima facie evidence of fraud, including the manipulation of OMR sheets by certain candidates. While acknowledging the government's recent legislative efforts to reform KPSC and strengthen public recruitment, the bench noted that records indicate possible misconduct by officials involved in the recruitment process. The advocate general has been directed to seek a response from the government, and the court is expected to make further observations after reviewing the submissions from all stakeholders.

Karnataka Power Consumers to Pay 36 Paise Per Unit Surcharge from April 1st



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
In Karnataka State Power Consumers to Pay 36 Paise Per Unit Surcharge Starting From April 1st, 2025, electricity consumers in Karnataka will be charged an additional 36 paise per unit as surcharge in their bills to cover the pension and gratuity (P&G) contributions of government employees for the financial year 2025-26. The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) issued an order, allowing Energy Supply Companies (ESCOs) to recover the government's share of P&G contributions from consumers. This surcharge will be revised for 2026-27 and 2027-28, with consumers paying 35 paise and 34 paise per unit, respectively. A consumer using 250 units with a 5kW fixed charge, who currently pays ₹2,207.75 per month, will now pay ₹2,305.85, including fuel adjustment charges. However, for Gruha Jyothi scheme beneficiaries, the additional financial burden will be covered by the government through subsidy payments to ESCOMs. MG Prabhakar, advisor to the FKCCI energy committee, noted that the 36 paise surcharge will also attract a 9% electricity tax, further increasing the burden on

consumers. Additionally, over the next three years, consumers will continue to pay pending arrears and additional P&G contributions alongside their regular power consumption charges. KERC Chairman P Ravi Kumar clarified that P&G charges will now be a permanent part of electricity bills, separate from any upcoming power tariff revisions. The surcharge implementation follows a Karnataka High Court ruling, which dismissed a petition by FKCCI and directed KERC to include the charges in consumer tariffs. The decision traces back to a 2006 tripartite agreement between the employees' union, the state government, and KPTCL & ESCOMs, where each party agreed to contribute one-third of the P&G expenses. However, on January 1, 2022, the government mandated that its one-third share be collected from consumers. In 2023, the government amended the Karnataka Electricity Reforms Rules (2002), after which KPTCL reported dues of ₹4,659.34 crore. KERC has now ordered the collection of ₹2,812.83 crore for 2025-26, ₹2,845.75 crore for 2026-27, and ₹2,860.97 crore for 2027-28 from consumers.

8,800 Cases Booked for Parking at BMTC Bus Stops - Karnataka HM

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Home Minister Dr. G Parameshwara informed the Karnataka Assembly that 8,811 cases were booked in 2024 against private vehicles and non-BMTC buses for parking at BMTC bus stops, obstructing public transport and causing traffic congestion. Responding to an unstarred question by Rajajinagar MLA Suresh Kumar S, Parameshwara acknowledged that unauthorized parking at bus stops was a major traffic issue, leading to inconvenience for commuters. He stated that

the traffic police, along with BMTC's Sarathi patrolling vans, were taking strict action against violators. Providing statistics, he revealed that



8,870 cases were booked in 2022, 5,499 cases in 2023, and 8,811 cases in 2024, while 943 cases have been registered so far in 2025. To improve traffic management, BMTC drivers are being trained on road safety and proper parking at the Traffic Management Centre. The minister stated that 1,850 drivers were trained in 2023, 9,619 in 2024, and 377 in 2025 so far. Additionally, the government is taking steps to construct bus bays at key locations to ease congestion and prevent unauthorized parking, he added.

Essential Narcotic Drugs Regulated by Centre, Not State NDPS Rules: Karnataka Health Dept

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
The Karnataka Health Department has clarified that Essential Narcotic Drugs (ENDs) notified by the Central Government and used by Registered Medical Institutions (RMIs) in the state are regulated solely by Central NDPS Rules and not Karnataka's NDPS Rules. In a memorandum issued on Tuesday, Principal Secretary Harsh Gupta addressed the misinterpretation of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and emphasized that possession, transport, sale, purchase, and use of ENDs in RMIs are governed by the Centre's regulations only. Gupta stated that despite the 2014 amendment to the NDPS Act, which authorized the Central Government to notify certain narcotics as essential for medical and scientific use, hospitals and medical institutions in Karnataka are still being asked to comply with the state's

NDPS Rules. Under the 2015 notification, drugs such as Methyl Morphine (Codeine), Ethyl Morphine, Dionine, Fentanyl, Hydrocodone, Methadone, Morphine and its salts, Oxycodone, and Dihydroxy Codeinone were classified as Essential Narcotic Drugs. Their manufacture, sale, possession, transportation, and inter-state trade are strictly regulated under Central NDPS Rules. "It has come to my notice that hospitals seeking to stock Morphine and Fentanyl—both designated as Essential Narcotic Drugs—are still being asked to follow Karnataka NDPS Rules," wrote Gupta, reiterating that such drugs should not be subjected to state regulations. However, other narcotics manufactured in Karnataka, which are not classified as Essential Narcotic Drugs, will continue to be governed under the state's NDPS Rules, he clarified.



Karnataka to Introduce Land Beat System to Prevent Encroachments



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda announced in the Legislative Council that the government will introduce a land beat system within a year to track and safeguard government lands using geo-fencing technology. This system aims to curb illegal encroachments and ensure real-time monitoring of land records. Responding to JDS MLC Saravana's query on government land encroachment, Byre Gowda admitted that some individuals, in collusion with government officials, have been creating fake land documents to grab public property. "These officials fail to respond to court notices, allowing cases to drag on for over a decade. They only react when contempt of court proceedings are initiated," he said. The minister stressed that such malpractices will not be tolerated, and the govern-

ment is taking legal steps to fight encroachment cases effectively. He acknowledged that, so far, only those encroachments that did not pose major hurdles have been cleared, while several illegal land allotments by sub-divisional officers, tahsildars, and special district officers require legal intervention for cancellation. Byre Gowda also revealed that 272 complaints related to land encroachments were received in Bengaluru over the last three years, with 77 from Yelahanka taluk alone. Of these, 132 acres of encroachments have been cleared, and the government plans to conduct regular clearance drives on Saturdays and Sundays to expedite recovery efforts. To strengthen land monitoring mechanisms, the upcoming land beat system will enable authorities to track encroachments in real-time and prevent unauthorized land occupation. The system, once implemented, will provide better oversight and faster response to illegal land grabs. The minister reiterated that strict action will be taken against those involved in encroachments, and the government remains committed to protecting public land and ensuring transparency in land management.

1st Page continuation...

BJP Leaders Urge Governor to Review Greater Bengaluru Authority Act

They argued that the Karnataka government's decision to adopt this model would hinder Bengaluru's development rather than improving urban administration. According to the BJP, the proposed Act will result in the formation of seven to eight additional committees, leading to more bureaucratic layers and delays in decision-making.

Instead of streamlining governance, they claim the new structure will slow down development and create administrative chaos. BJP leaders have urged the Governor to thoroughly examine the Act's implications before granting assent, cautioning that it could negatively impact the city's governance and long-term progress.

Kumaraswamy Hits Back at Shivakumar Over Land Encroachment Allegations

your face," in a scathing counterattack. The controversy erupted after Shivakumar accused Kumaraswamy of encroaching on government land, asserting that the clearance of such properties was being carried out as per court orders. He further criticized the Union Minister, stating that "hate politics is in Kumaraswamy's DNA." Kumaraswamy, not one to hold back, took to social media to respond. He

wrote, "You disgraceful person, you have once again thrown poison at me out of frustration. Don't you have any common sense?" He also used the phrase "The pumpkin thief is angry," implying that those making allegations are themselves guilty of wrongdoing. Shivakumar's remarks followed reports of alleged land encroachments linked to Kumaraswamy, with offi-

Karnataka Minister Assures Maintenance of Pilgrim Complexes in Tirumala

standards. He further stated that pilgrims can book rooms online, with 40% of the rooms reserved for Karnataka residents. Accepting Saravana's suggestions, Reddy agreed to introduce uniforms, ID cards, and biometric attendance for staff to ensure proper workforce accountability. Replying to MLC DT Srinivas, who stressed the importance of developing temples with additional grants, Reddy said that the government is exploring ways to generate revenue from properties adjacent to muzrai temples. He revealed plans to set up shops near temples to earn rental income and assured that

discussions will be held with the tourism minister regarding temple tourism initiatives. Addressing BJP MLC CT Ravi's concerns over the possible illegal allotment of Inam Dattatreya Peeta land in Chikkamagaluru, Reddy assured an investigation by the department's principal secretary. He disclosed that the Peeta originally held 1,861.31 acres before the Tenancy Act, of which 104.39 acres were allotted to private individuals. If irregularities are found, steps will be taken to transfer the land back to Dattatreya Peeta.

cials reportedly taking action under judicial directives. However, Kumaraswamy has dismissed these claims, calling them politically motivated and an attempt to divert public attention. He accused Shivakumar of using baseless allegations as a political tool and maintained that such tactics would not work against him.

Two Honey-Trap Attempts on Karnataka Minister

- Deputy CM DK Shivakumar seeks police complaint
- Minister Satish Jarkiholi demands an investigation
- Former BJP minister accuses Congress of honey-trap tactics



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

A major controversy has erupted in Karnataka politics following the revelation that there were two failed honey-trap attempts targeting a senior minister in the Congress government. Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi confirmed the incidents on Thursday, stating that the minister in question had narrowly escaped the traps. “I have asked the minister to file a complaint

so that the police can investigate the matter,” Jarkiholi said, emphasizing the growing concern over honey-trap operations in the state. He revealed that such schemes have been active in Karnataka for the last 20 years, affecting politicians from all parties, including BJP, JD(S), and Congress, as well as government officials. Jarkiholi further added that a minister from the previous BJP government had also been a target of similar honey-trap

attempts. He stressed the urgent need for a thorough probe and stated that he had already discussed the issue with Home Minister G Parameshwara. He also intends to bring it to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah’s attention. Reacting to these developments, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar called for a formal police complaint to be filed, assuring that an investigation would be conducted, regardless of the persons involved. Meanwhile, former BJP minister V

Sunil Kumar accused the Congress government of running a “honey-trap factory”, raising the issue in the Karnataka Assembly. He criticized the government, questioning its role in political conspiracies. “We are politicians living respectable lives in society. But such reports of honey-trapping make public life unbearable. Shouldn’t we be allowed to live with dignity?” he asked, calling for an independent probe into the issue.

BJP Raises Ranya Rao Smuggling Case in Karnataka Assembly



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The Ranya Rao gold smuggling case sparked heated debate in the Karnataka Assembly on Wednesday, with the BJP questioning intelligence failures and alleging political conspiracies within the ruling Congress party. BJP MLA Sunil Kumar raised concerns over the state’s intelligence lapses, questioning why constable Basavaraju was stationed at Kempegowda International Airport for an

extended period without rotation. He also criticized the failure to monitor Ranya Rao’s movements, which led to the smuggling case. During the discussion, Kumar also linked the issue to the alleged honeytrap attempt on a Congress minister, suggesting that Congress leaders were using such tactics to target their own rivals. “To silence political opponents, the ruling party has resorted to honey trapping, which is highly unfortunate,” he remarked.

- BJP questions intelligence lapses in gold smuggling case
- Congress accused of using honey traps against rivals
- Kharge challenges BJP to reveal ministerial involvement

Responding to BJP’s allegations, Congress leaders Priyank Kharge and Dinesh Gundu Rao pointed to Customs authorities’ failure in preventing the smuggling operation. However, Sunil Kumar insisted that the state’s intelligence agencies had also failed in their duty. Meanwhile, Kharge challenged senior BJP leader Basanagouda Patil Yatnal to name the ministers allegedly involved in the smuggling case. “He should not make vague allegations without providing evidence,” Kharge asserted. Adding to the controversy,

Leader of Opposition R Ashoka mocked the Congress, suggesting that internal rivalries were fueling the scandal. “Congress leaders themselves have turned informants in the Ranya Rao case to trap their own ministers. Some MLAs sitting in the back benches might be hoping for a cabinet reshuffle, expecting 2-3 ministers to be removed,” he quipped. With allegations and counterclaims intensifying, the gold smuggling case and honey-trap issue have added fresh political tensions between the ruling Congress and the opposition BJP in Karnataka.



JDS MLA’s Strange Demand: Free Liquor for Men in Karnataka

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

A bizarre proposal by JDS MLA Krishnappa in the Karnataka Assembly has sparked intense debate. Citing the government’s Rs. 2,000 financial aid, free electricity, and bus travel for women funded by liquor revenue, he demanded that men should also be given two bottles of liquor free per week. During the Assembly session, Krishnappa pointed out that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has increased the excise revenue target from Rs. 36,500 crore to Rs. 40,000 crore, which will likely lead to higher liquor taxes. He argued that since liquor revenue funds welfare schemes

for women, men should also benefit. His remarks drew strong protests from women MLAs, who condemned the proposal. Congress leader and Energy Minister K.J. George sarcastically responded, “Win the elections, form the government, and implement it yourself,” while stressing that the government aims to reduce alcohol consumption, not encourage it. The controversial proposal has gone viral on social media, with netizens mocking the idea. Many are now speculating whether political parties will start promising free liquor in future elections to attract male voters.

MB Patil Denies Knowledge of Honey-Trap Case Mentioned by Rajanna



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Industries Minister MB Patil clarified that he has no knowledge about the honey-trap case mentioned by MLA Rajanna. Speaking to the media after the assembly session on Thursday, Patil stated that he does not comment on matters he is unaware of. When asked about the issue, he responded, “Don’t ask me anything about it. I don’t know anything, so I won’t talk about it. If I had any information, I would have spoken in detail.”

Patil also suggested that if Rajanna claimed he was being targeted, he should know who was behind it and why. He added that Rajanna would have provided all relevant details if he had any concrete evidence regarding the case. The honey-trap issue has sparked discussions in political circles, with allegations surfacing about attempts to entrap political leaders. However, MB Patil’s statement distances him from the controversy, leaving further clarification to those directly involved.

BJP MLC C T Ravi Hints at Internal Sabotage in 2023 Polls



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

BJP MLC C T Ravi hinted that internal sabotage within his party led to his defeat in the 2023 Assembly elections. His remarks came during a debate on the 2025-26 budget in the Legislative Council, where JD(S) member S L Bhojgowda made an unexpected reference to Home Minister G Parameshwara. While discussing the harmful effects of plastic and advocating the use of natural flowers, Bhojgowda turned to Parameshwara and remarked, “When you become the Chief Minister, I request you to accept only natural flower gar-

lands and bouquets.” Responding to this, C T Ravi recalled his own political experience, stating, “Parameshwara has already faced internal sabotage for expressing his ambition to become CM. I have experienced the same, or else I would have been in the Assembly on Thursday.” His comments have sparked speculation about rifts within the BJP and possible internal factors contributing to his electoral loss. The issue of party infighting has been a subject of debate since the 2023 polls, and Ravi’s latest remarks have reignited discussions within political circles.

Renukacharya Accuses BJP MLA Yatnal of Divisive Politics

Yatnal Will Never Become CM of Karnataka

TPN Correspondent | Chitradurga-Davanagere

Former minister M P Renukacharya on Wednesday declared that Vijayapura MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal will never become Chief Minister of Karnataka, calling his ambitions a mere daydream. Speaking to the media, he accused Yatnal of damaging the BJP’s image through divisive politics. Renukacharya alleged that Yatnal is working with the Congress to create rifts within the Veerashaiva-Lingayat community by playing on caste and sub-caste differences. He

claimed that this is benefiting the Congress and weakening BJP’s prospects in Karnataka. To counter this, a large Veerashaiva-Lingayat convention will be held in Davanagere in May, aimed at reuniting the community and securing OBC status. Former minister S A Ravindranath is overseeing the event, which will pass a resolution against the socio-economic survey report by the Backward Classes Commission and demand central government action. Renukacharya also emphasized that BJP needs to strengthen

the leadership of B S Yediyurappa, who built the party from the ground up in Karnataka. He dismissed any notion of defying BJP’s central leadership, stating that the convention will help consolidate BJP’s support ahead of the 2028 elections. His team has already toured 17 districts to gather support for the convention, with final dates set to be announced soon in Bengaluru.



Burnt Body of Woman Found at Yeshwantpur Railway Station

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

A shocking incident came to light on Wednesday when the burnt body of a woman was discovered on Platform 1 of Yeshwantpur railway station. The authorities are yet to establish the identity of the deceased, but initial assessments suggest that the woman was in her mid-30s.

The gruesome discovery was made by local commuters, who immediately alerted the railway police. A case has been registered, and an investigation has been launched to determine the circumstances surrounding the death.

According to a senior police officer, preliminary findings

indicate that the woman was murdered before her body was set on fire. “Based on our initial probe, it appears that this was a case of homicide. The assailant may have attempted to destroy evidence by burning the body. We are analyzing CCTV footage from the station and surrounding areas to identify any suspects,” the officer stated.

The police are also working to establish the victim’s identity and are seeking assistance from the public. “We urge anyone who might have seen anything suspicious at the railway station or has information about a missing woman matching the description to come forward,” an official added. Forensic experts

have been called in to examine the remains and gather crucial evidence. Authorities are also checking missing persons’ reports to link any recent disappearances to the case.

The incident has sparked concerns over safety at railway stations, with commuters demanding increased surveillance and security measures. Meanwhile, investigators continue to explore possible motives behind the crime, including personal enmity or other criminal intentions.

As the probe progresses, police officials remain hopeful that evidence from the crime scene will lead to the identification of the perpetrator and ensure justice for the victim.



Karnataka PG Owner Assaults Student Over Negative Google Review

TPN Correspondent | Mangaluru

The 18-year-old engineering student was allegedly assaulted by a group of five individuals, including the owner of a boys’ PG (paying guest) accommodation, after posting a negative review online, police said on Thursday.

The incident took place on March 17 around 10:30 pm under the jurisdiction of the Kadri police station.

The victim, identified as Vikas, is a native of Kalaburagi and had been staying at the PG for six months before re-

locating. Dissatisfied with the living conditions, he posted a one-star Google review, citing issues such as poor hygiene, unclean toilets, and the presence of insects in the food.

Following the review, PG owner Santosh allegedly threatened Vikas and demanded that he delete the post. When he refused, Santosh, along with four associates, allegedly assaulted him and forced him to remove the review.

A case has been registered against the PG owner and his accomplices, and further investigation is underway.



Bengaluru Man Sets Family Home on Fire Over Money Dispute

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

A 22-year-old man was arrested for allegedly setting his family home ablaze in Avalahalli, on Bengaluru’s north-eastern outskirts, following a financial dispute with his father. The incident took place around 1:30 am on Tuesday when four family members—including a gram panchayat member, his wife, son, and daughter—were asleep inside the house. The family narrowly escaped after waking up to intense heat and flames, managing to run outside in time. While they did not suffer burn

injuries, they experienced minor respiratory issues due to smoke inhalation.

According to police reports, Ranjith, the accused and son of the gram panchayat member, poured petrol on the walls of the house before setting it on fire. Investigators confirmed that the act stemmed from an ongoing dispute with his father, who had refused to give him money a week earlier.

Authorities are conducting further inquiries to determine Ranjith’s exact motives and whether he was under the influence of alcohol or drugs at the time of the incident.

Bengaluru Man Buys Rare ‘Wolfdog’ for ₹50 Crore

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

A Bengaluru-based dog enthusiast, S Satish, has made headlines by purchasing a rare ‘wolfdog’ named Cadabomb Okami for a staggering ₹50 crore (\$5.7 million). The dog, reportedly a crossbreed between a wolf and a Caucasian Shepherd, is believed to be the first of its kind.

Satish, 51, is well-known in the dog breeding community and owns around 150 expensive breeds in Bengaluru. Speaking about his latest acquisition, he said, “He is an extremely rare breed and looks exactly like a wolf. This breed has never been sold in the world before.”

Born in the United States, the eight-month-old wolfdog weighs approximately 75 kg and stands 30 inches tall. Satish, who is also the President of the Indian Dog Breeders Association, stated that he bought the pup due to his passion for unique breeds and his desire to introduce rare dogs to India.

The Caucasian Shepherd, one of the parent breeds of the wolfdog, is known for its strength, intelligence, and protective instincts. These dogs are often used as guardians and require experienced handling.

Satish’s collection of rare dogs has gained widespread attention, and he reportedly



earns money by showcasing them to curious crowds. His passion for exclusive breeds continues to make him a notable figure in India’s dog breeding scene.

KERC Directs BESCO to Block Power Supply to Illegal Constructions



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) has instructed state-owned electricity supply com-

panies, including BESCO and MESCOM, to withhold power connections to buildings that violate approved construction plans.

This directive is crucial, as

many builders, especially in Bengaluru, have managed to obtain essential services such as electricity, water, and sewerage connections through various means, despite violating regulations.

In a circular dated March 13, KERC cited a Supreme Court ruling from December 17, 2024 (Civil Appeal No. 14605 of 2024), which mandates that authorities must ensure builders submit completion and occupancy certificates before granting power, water, or sewerage connections. Additionally, builders must display the approved plan throughout the construction process.

The move aims to curb unauthorized constructions, which have long been a concern for residents. Many ille-

gal buildings continue to rise despite public complaints, with authorities often ignoring the violations.

The urgency of stricter enforcement became evident after the Babusapalya building collapse in November 2024, which resulted in the deaths of nine workers.

Following the tragedy, the BBMP revised its rules to discourage illegal constructions, but violations persist, with builders constructing up to five floors on 20x30 sqft plots and eight floors on 30x40 sqft plots.

The KERC’s directive is seen as a relief for residents who have been fighting against unauthorized buildings and demanding stricter action from authorities.

Corporate Worker Regrets Moving from Noida to Bengaluru Despite Salary Hike

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

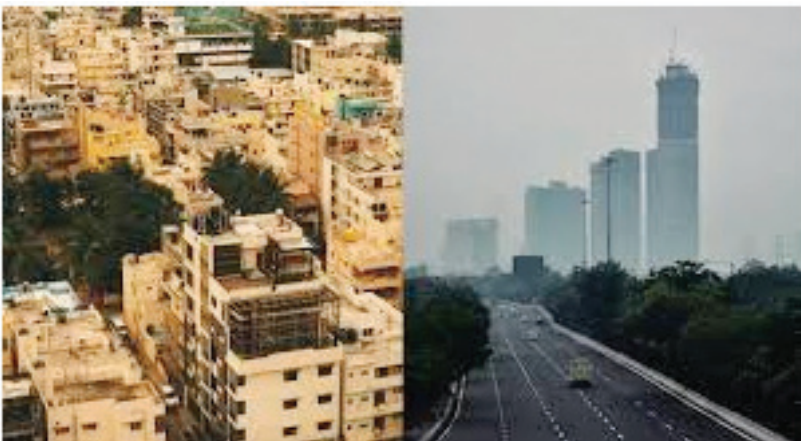
A corporate worker’s viral post on Reddit has sparked debate after he shared his regret over moving from Noida to Bengaluru for a ₹30,000 salary hike. Citing traffic congestion, bad roads, poor infrastructure, and a cultural divide, he expressed disappointment with the shift.

The worker had spent over a year in Noida, enjoying the city’s infrastructure and diversity, before deciding to move to Bengaluru for better job opportunities. However, the reality did not match his expectations.

In his post, he described Bengaluru as having “bad roads, the worst traffic, poor water quality, and less private space per individual.” He also criticized the city’s cleanliness, saying it felt “dirty” compared to Noida.

Another major issue he highlighted was the “north vs south” cultural divide, which he claimed to experience daily.

Titled “Moved to Bangalore from Noida and I regret it,” his post quickly gained traction online, with many users debating the pros and cons of both cities. Some defended Bengaluru’s IT sector dominance and pleasant



climate, while others agreed that infrastructure and traffic issues were major drawbacks.

The discussion reflects an

ongoing debate about India’s urban infrastructure, job opportunities, and quality of life in different metro cities.

Kerala ASHA Workers' Strike



TPN Correspondent | Thiruvananthapuram
Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) in Kerala have escalated their ongoing protest by launching an indefinite

hunger strike in front of the government Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram. The strike, which began on Thursday, marks the latest phase in their 38-day agitation for fair remuneration, a movement that has gained national attention.

The protest is being organized under the banner of the Kerala ASHA Health Workers' Association. The decision to resort to a hunger strike was taken after two rounds of discussions with National Health Mission (NHM) authorities and the State Health Minister failed to yield a satisfactory resolution to their demands. On Monday, March 17, ASHA workers intensified their demonstration by blocking the road outside the Secretariat. Their persistent protests highlight the urgency of their demand for improved wages and better working conditions. Despite their crucial role in the healthcare system, ASHA workers in Kerala have been voicing concerns about inadequate pay and lack of job security. They argue that their remuneration does not reflect the essential services they provide, including maternal and child healthcare, disease prevention, and community health education. The hunger strike is expected to put additional pressure on the state government to address their grievances. With nationwide solidarity and growing public support, ASHA workers remain determined to continue their struggle until their demands are met. The government has yet to issue a formal response to this latest escalation. However, the protest is drawing widespread attention, with various labor unions and social organizations extending their support to the ASHA workers.



Bengaluru Metro Plans Cargo Transport to Boost Revenue

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
In an effort to enhance non-fare revenue, Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRL) is considering the introduction of cargo transport services during non-peak hours. This initiative comes in response to a recent metro fare hike that has increased commuting costs for passengers. By leveraging existing infrastructure, BMRL aims to generate additional income while optimizing metro operations. Inspired by a similar initiative implemented by Delhi Metro, BMRL plans to collaborate with logistics and e-commerce companies to assess the feasibility of using metro trains for cargo transportation. The plan involves utilizing metro services outside rush hours to transport goods efficiently across the city. If successfully executed, this move could help reduce traffic congestion by decreasing the reliance on road-based delivery vehicles. In addition to cargo transport, BMRL is exploring several other non-fare revenue models. One of these initiatives includes offering semi-naming and co-branding rights for select metro stations, allowing businesses to integrate their brand names with station names. Furthermore, advertising rights inside metro stations and on train-wrapping advertisements are being considered as potential revenue sources. These measures are expected to provide financial stability while enhancing the commercial appeal of metro infrastructure. By adopting these revenue-generating strategies, BMRL aims to reduce its dependence on passenger fares and ensure long-term financial sustainability. Utilizing metro trains for cargo transport could also contribute to an environmentally friendly and cost-effective logistics solution. The success of this proposal will depend on discussions with logistics firms, regulatory approvals, and necessary infrastructure modifications. BMRL is expected to finalize its decision after engaging with key stakeholders and conducting feasibility studies. If implemented, Bengaluru could become the second metro system in India, after Delhi, to introduce cargo transport services within its network.

lect metro stations, allowing businesses to integrate their brand names with station names. Furthermore, advertising rights inside metro stations and on train-wrapping advertisements are being considered as potential revenue sources. These measures are expected to provide financial stability while enhancing the commercial appeal of metro infrastructure. By adopting these revenue-generating strategies, BMRL aims to reduce its dependence on passenger fares and ensure long-term financial sustainability. Utilizing metro trains for cargo transport could also contribute to an environmentally friendly and cost-effective logistics solution. The success of this proposal will depend on discussions with logistics firms, regulatory approvals, and necessary infrastructure modifications. BMRL is expected to finalize its decision after engaging with key stakeholders and conducting feasibility studies. If implemented, Bengaluru could become the second metro system in India, after Delhi, to introduce cargo transport services within its network.

Karnataka Bandh on March 22

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
Pro-Kannada organizations have called for a 12-hour Karnataka Bandh on March 22, from 6 am to 6 pm, to protest against the Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill and the alleged assault on a North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) bus conductor, Mahadev Hukkeri. The conductor was reportedly attacked by a group of miscreants for not speaking Marathi, sparking widespread outrage among Kannada activists. Will Cabs and Public Transport Be Affected? Cab drivers associated with the Ola and Uber Drivers' and Owners' Association have announced that they will not operate during the bandh, extending their full support to the protest. Additionally, many auto-rickshaws are also expected to remain off the roads. The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has not yet confirmed whether buses will run, leaving commuters uncertain about public transportation availability. Schools across Karnataka are adopting a 'wait and watch' approach. Some institutions may shift to online classes, while others conducting exams for lower classes have decided to proceed with their schedules to avoid disrupting students. While many businesses, including cinemas and restaurants, have expressed support for the bandh, they are likely to remain open. However, the final decision will depend on the situation on the day of the protest. Kannada Okkoota leader Vatal Nagaraj has urged all drivers to refrain from operating their vehicles on the bandh day, emphasizing that participation is a matter of self-esteem and respect for the state's drivers. The bandh is expected to have a significant impact on transportation and daily activities, with authorities closely monitoring the situation to maintain law and order.

support to the protest. Additionally, many auto-rickshaws are also expected to remain off the roads. The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has not yet confirmed whether buses will run, leaving commuters uncertain about public transportation availability. Schools across Karnataka are adopting a 'wait and watch' approach. Some institutions may shift to online classes, while others conducting exams for lower classes have decided to proceed with their schedules to avoid disrupting students. While many businesses, including cinemas and restaurants, have expressed support for the bandh, they are likely to remain open. However, the final decision will depend on the situation on the day of the protest. Kannada Okkoota leader Vatal Nagaraj has urged all drivers to refrain from operating their vehicles on the bandh day, emphasizing that participation is a matter of self-esteem and respect for the state's drivers. The bandh is expected to have a significant impact on transportation and daily activities, with authorities closely monitoring the situation to maintain law and order.



the situation on the day of the protest. Kannada Okkoota leader Vatal Nagaraj has urged all drivers to refrain from operating their vehicles on the bandh day, emphasizing that participation is a matter of self-esteem and respect for the state's drivers. The bandh is expected to have a significant impact on transportation and daily activities, with authorities closely monitoring the situation to maintain law and order.

team and respect for the state's drivers. The bandh is expected to have a significant impact on transportation and daily activities, with authorities closely monitoring the situation to maintain law and order.

Kerala ASHA Workers Begin Indefinite Hunger Strike

TPN Correspondent | Thiruvananthapuram
Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) in Kerala have intensified their protest for fair wages by launching an indefinite hunger strike in front of the Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram. The demonstration, organized under the banner of the Kerala ASHA Health Workers' Association, follows 38 days of continuous agitation demanding better remuneration and recognition of their services. The protest comes after two rounds of failed negotiations with National Health Mission (NHM) officials and the Kerala Health Minister. ASHA workers have been advocating for higher wages, improved working conditions, and job security, as they continue to play a critical role in community healthcare. Their grievances include the lack of fixed salaries, irregular payments, and insufficient incentives despite their significant contributions to the public health system. On March 17, ASHA workers blocked the road outside the Secretariat, intensifying their protest. Their indefinite hunger strike, which began on March 20, aims to draw urgent attention to their demands. The movement has gained nationwide attention, with various labor unions and activists voicing support for their cause. The Kerala government has so far maintained that it is reviewing their demands, but ASHA workers insist that without immediate action, their protests will continue. They have vowed to remain on hunger strike until their grievances are addressed.

- Indefinite hunger strike started on March 20, 2025.
- 38 days of agitation demanding fair wages.
- Failed negotiations with NHM and the state government.
- Nationwide attention and growing labor support.



Karnataka Electricity Tariff Hike from April 1; BJP Calls It 'Anti-People'

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru
The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) has approved an electricity tariff hike, effective from April 1, 2025. As per the new order, energy supply companies (ESCOMs) have been permitted to recover the government's share of pension and gratuity (P&G) contributions from consumers through a surcharge. As a result, electricity users will have to pay an additional 36 paise per unit. The P&G surcharge will continue throughout the control period, covering FY 2025-26 to FY 2027-28. The tariff revision will see a slight decrease in subsequent years, with consumers paying 35 paise per unit in FY 2026-27 and 34 paise per unit in FY 2027-28. The KERC order, dated March 18, states that this levy will remain in effect unless the government decides otherwise. The decision has sparked political controversy, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) strongly opposing the hike. Karnataka BJP president B Y Vijayendra criticized the move, labeling it as an "anti-people" policy by the Congress-led government. He accused the ruling party of implementing guarantee schemes on one hand while imposing financial burdens on citizens through price hikes. He further alleged that the government is misleading people by offering benefits while quietly increasing expenses in essential services like electricity. In response, Karnataka Minister Sharan Prakash Patil defended the tariff hike, assuring that it would not impact the common people. Speaking to TV9, he clarified that the state government's Gruha Jyothi scheme, which provides 200 units of free electricity to households, remains unaffected. The electricity tariff hike has intensified political debates in the state, with the opposition accusing the government of financial mismanagement and the ruling party maintaining that the surcharge is necessary to support pension and gratuity obligations.

Vijayendra criticized the move, labeling it as an "anti-people" policy by the Congress-led government. He accused the ruling party of implementing guarantee schemes on one hand while imposing financial burdens on citizens through price hikes. He further alleged that the government is misleading people by offering benefits while quietly increasing expenses in essential services like electricity. In response, Karnataka Minister Sharan Prakash Patil defended the tariff hike, assuring that it would not impact the common people. Speaking to TV9, he clarified that the state government's Gruha Jyothi scheme, which provides 200 units of free electricity to households, remains unaffected. The electricity tariff hike has intensified political debates in the state, with the opposition accusing the government of financial mismanagement and the ruling party maintaining that the surcharge is necessary to support pension and gratuity obligations.

KARATAM RAMBABU, A SPARROW LOVER



The humble sparrow, a tiny bird that once thrived in every village and city, is now struggling to survive. Once a common sight in our backyards, sparrows are gradually disappearing due to increasing environmental challenges such as cell tower radiation, pollution, excessive pesticide use, and the indiscriminate cutting of trees. It is heart-breaking to acknowledge that our own village sparrow has now joined the list of endangered species. However, amidst this crisis, there are individuals who are striving to protect and revive the sparrow population. In our region, one such compassionate and dedicated individual is Sri Karatam Rambabu Garu. Much like environmentalist Mohammed Dilawar, who has been working tirelessly for the conservation of sparrows in India, Sri Karatam Rambabu Garu is leading a noble effort to save these little birds. His love for nature and wildlife is as deep as his love for the people he serves.

Understanding the dire need for sparrow conservation, Sri Karatam Rambabu Garu has taken significant steps to ensure their survival. In his household complexes, he ties rice husks into bundles and keeps them as food for the sparrows. Aware of the harsh summer conditions, he also arranges for water sources to quench the thirst of these little birds. His generosity extends beyond his home—whenever friends or acquaintances show interest in helping sparrows, he readily provides them with rice husks to encourage more people to take up this cause. His brother, Sri Karatam Uma, actively assists him in this mission, proving that conservation is best achieved when done together. As we observe World Sparrow Day on March 20, let us draw inspiration from Sri Rambabu Garu's unwavering commitment to environmental protection. It is a call for all of us to take action in our own small ways—placing bird feeders, setting up water bowls, planting native



Karatam Rambabu

trees, and spreading awareness about sparrow conservation. These small efforts, when combined, can make a big difference in reviving the sparrow population and ensuring a balanced ecosystem. The chirping of sparrows in the morning is a melody that signals the start of a new day. Let us make sure that this sound continues to be a part of our lives and that future generations do not miss out on the joy of having these little birds around. Sri Karatam Rambabu Garu has set an example for us all—now, it is our turn to follow his path and protect our feathered friends.

- By Chintala Nani

Revanth Reddy's Outburst: A Threat to Free Speech



Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's recent remarks in the state assembly, where he threatened to have critics "stripped and paraded," are deeply troubling. These words, reminiscent of a feudal mindset, not only violate democratic principles but also highlight the growing intolerance of political leaders toward dissent. Such statements, especially from a chief minister, set a dangerous precedent, normalizing the use of violent rhetoric against opponents.

The controversy began with the arrest of journalists Revathi Pogadadanda and Tanvi Yadav, who allegedly post-

ed an abusive video targeting Reddy and his family. While defamation is a legitimate concern, the state has legal avenues to address it. Resorting to threats and punitive actions, instead of allowing the judiciary to decide, reeks of authoritarianism. The very essence of democracy is the ability to tolerate criticism and respond within the framework of law, not through intimidation.

Reddy's comments raise a larger question: Should public figures have unchecked power to suppress dissent? His call to distinguish "government-approved journalists" from in-

dependent ones is an alarming sign of media control. Freedom of the press is a cornerstone of democracy, and journalists—whether mainstream or digital—play a vital role in holding power to account. If politicians start dictating who qualifies as a journalist, it will effectively turn the press into a state-controlled entity, undermining its credibility and independence.

The backlash from the opposition, particularly the BJP and BRS, is expected, but their own track records on press freedom aren't spotless either. Political hypocrisy aside, the larger issue remains—an increasing trend of using state machinery to suppress voices of dissent. The arrest of journalists on serious charges like criminal conspiracy and promoting hatred, rather than pursuing defamation suits, signals an intent to instill fear.

This incident is a stark reminder that political power, when unchecked, can erode civil liberties. Telangana's government must recognize that a leader's strength lies in their ability to handle criticism, not in silencing it. The Congress party, which frequently accuses the BJP of stifling dissent, must introspect. If it fails to rein in such authoritarian tendencies within its own ranks, it risks losing the moral high ground.

Revanth Reddy must clarify whether his comments were a moment of frustration or a reflection of his governance approach. Either way, such rhetoric has no place in a democracy. The law must remain the only recourse for grievances, not threats of public humiliation.

India-New Zealand Relations: A Strategic Shift in the Indo-Pacific



New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon's visit to India in March 2025 marks a pivotal moment in bilateral relations. Historically, New Zealand has maintained a cautious foreign policy, balancing economic dependence on China with regional security concerns. However, Luxon's trip signals a shift—one that prioritizes deeper engagement with India in trade, maritime security, and regional stability within the evolving Indo-Pacific order.

Economic Diversification: The Long-Awaited FTA

A key highlight of the visit was the revival of talks on a long-delayed Free Trade Agreement (FTA), initially proposed in 2009 but stalled due to geopolitical considerations. The agreement, if finalized, could significantly boost trade in agriculture, pharmaceuticals, critical minerals, and tourism, with projections suggesting a tenfold increase in trade over the next decade. New Zealand's economic ties have been heavily dependent on China, particularly in dairy and agricultural exports. However, shifting global supply chains and geopolitical uncertainties have underscored the risks of over-reliance on a single market. Strengthening trade with India presents a strategic alternative, providing New Zealand with access to a large and expanding consumer base, while also supporting India's ambitions to integrate into global supply networks.

Maritime Security and Indo-Pacific Cooperation

Beyond trade, Luxon's visit underscores growing security cooperation between India and New Zealand. A key takeaway was New Zealand's commitment to a "free, open, and rules-based" Indo-Pacific—aligning closely with India's Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) vision. Both nations recognize that security is not just about military alliances but also about tackling non-traditional threats like illegal fishing, maritime disasters, and climate change. New Zealand's participation in India-led initiatives such as the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) reinforces this commitment. IPOI, for instance, provides a platform for collaboration on maritime resource management, environmental sustainability, and capacity-building for smaller island nations. Given rising sea levels and extreme weather events affecting the Pacific, India and New Zealand can play a crucial role in developing climate adaptation strategies and strengthening regional resilience.

Strategic Realignment in the Indo-Pacific

While New Zealand remains outside formal security groupings like the Quad, its increasing cooperation with India allows for greater alignment with Quad-led initiatives on humanitarian assistance, cybersecurity, and maritime security. This reflects a broader shift toward a multipolar Indo-Pacific, where regional middle powers like India and New Zealand play an active role in shaping security dynamics beyond US-China competition.

Conclusion

Luxon's visit has injected fresh momentum into India-New Zealand ties, transforming them from a primarily trade-focused engagement into a more comprehensive strategic partnership. As both nations navigate an evolving Indo-Pacific, their strengthened collaboration holds the promise of fostering regional stability and resilience. The challenge now lies in sustaining this momentum and translating diplomatic goodwill into concrete outcomes across trade, security, and multilateral cooperation.

JD(U) After Nitish: Implosion or Survival?

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is facing the most crucial political transition of his career. As he eyes a fifth term, the question of succession looms large over the Janata Dal (United) [JD(U)]. Without a clear successor, the party risks either disintegration or a forced merger with the BJP. Nitish has always been the undisputed leader of JD(U), sidelining potential rivals within the party. His earlier attempts to groom successors, like Prashant Kishor and RCP Singh, ended in failure. His close aides—Lallan Singh, Ashok Chaudhary, and Sanjay Jha—lack the charisma to lead. This leaves a critical leadership vacuum, making succession a defining issue for the party's survival. The buzz around his son Nishant entering politics has intensified. Though Nishant has largely stayed away from public life, his recent appearances at political events suggest a possible entry. However, Nitish has long opposed dynastic politics, and endorsing Nishant would be a reversal of his stance. If he does name his son as his successor, senior party leaders could rebel, potentially defecting to the BJP or RJD. On the other hand, without a clear transition plan, JD(U) risks internal strife. A leadership tussle between senior figures could push the party into chaos, giving the BJP an opening to orchestrate a merger. History shows that political transitions are smoother when a party is in power, as seen with Akhilesh Yadav and Tejashwi Yadav. If Nishant has to take over, now is the right time. For JD(U) to survive post-Nitish, it must act decisively. Either Nishant takes charge under Nitish's guidance, or the party risks being a rudderless ship headed toward collapse. The choice is between controlled succession or political irrelevance.



Curfew Lifted, Partially Relaxed in Nagpur After Three Days of Violence

Curfew was lifted in some parts of Nagpur on Thursday, while restrictions were partially eased in others, three days after violent clashes erupted in the city. The unrest began on Monday night when mobs went on a rampage in central Nagpur following rumors that a 'chadar' with holy inscriptions had been burned during protests led by Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Ba-jrang Dal. The demonstration was held to demand the removal of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's tomb located in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district. The violent protests led to curfew being imposed in multiple police station jurisdictions, including Kotwali, Ganeshpath, Tehsil, Lakadganj, Pachpaoli, Shanti Nagar, Sakkardara, Nandanvan, Imambada, Yashodhara Nagar, and Kapil Nagar. The clashes caused widespread panic among residents, disrupting daily life and raising security concerns across the city. To restore normalcy, law enforcement deployed additional forces in sensitive areas, and strict restrictions were implemented to prevent



further escalation. Considering public convenience and an improvement in law and order, Commissioner of Police Ravinder Singal announced the lifting of curfew in Nandanvan and Kapil Nagar police station areas from 2 pm on Thursday. Additionally, authorities decided to partially relax curfew in five other areas—Lakadganj, Pach-

paoli, Shanti Nagar, Sakkardara, and Imambada—from 2 pm to 4 pm. This temporary relaxation allowed residents to step out and purchase essential items while maintaining security measures. Despite the easing of restrictions, police and security forces continue to monitor the situation closely. Authorities have urged citizens to maintain peace and

refrain from spreading misinformation that could incite further unrest. The administration is expected to take further decisions based on the evolving situation and security assessments. Meanwhile, appeals for calm and communal harmony have been made by both government officials and local leaders to prevent any further disturbances.

Air India Dismisses Lisa Ray's "No Empathy" Allegation as "Unfounded"

Air India has refuted allegations by actor and author Lisa Ray, who claimed the airline showed "no empathy" when she requested a medical waiver for her ailing 92-year-old father. Calling the claims "unfounded," the Tata Group-owned airline clarified the situation in a detailed statement. Lisa Ray had alleged on X (formerly Twitter) that Air India refused to accept a medical waiver after she had to cancel her father's travel due to his deteriorating health. She said she had submitted a doctor's letter but was still denied the waiver. "Here we go again, Air India. My father is 92, unwell, and I have



to cancel travel due to his ailing condition. Submitted doctor's letter and the waiver was denied? How is that possible? Where is the empathy from an airline that claims to care about passengers?" she posted.

Air India responded publicly, followed by an official statement explaining its stance. "While we fully empathise with the passenger, we wish to clarify that the claim that Air India did not display empathy is unfounded. The passenger herself mentioned that she was booked to fly with two others, excluding her father, whose medical documents were submitted," the airline said. The airline further stated that Lisa Ray initially contacted her travel agent instead of Air India. Once the issue was brought to Air India's attention, the airline reached out and offered a free date change or a one-

year validity for future travel. However, Lisa Ray declined these options and insisted on a full refund. Air India urged the media to "refrain from maligning the airline's reputation without corroborating facts," adding that misleading reports undermine its commitment to customer service and empathy. Lisa Ray, a cancer survivor and advocate for patient rights, has been vocal about healthcare issues. Her memoir, Close to the Bone (2019), details her battle with multiple myeloma and her advocacy for healthcare awareness.

Delhi Airport's Terminal 1



Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) has announced that Terminal 1 (T1) of the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) will be fully operational from April 15. As a result, all flights currently operating from Terminal 2 (T2) will be shifted to T1. Currently, IndiGo and Akasa Air operate from T2, handling around 270-280 air traffic movements and over 46,000 passengers daily. The temporary closure of T2 is part of a planned refurbishment project, expect-

ed to last four to six months, with completion anticipated in the September quarter. DIAL stated that the expansion and modernization of T1 were carried out under the Phase 3A expansion project. The newly upgraded terminal was dedicated to the nation in March last year. The revamped T1 now features 100 check-in counters, including 36 Self Baggage Drop (SBD) kiosks and 108 Common Usage Self-Service (CUSS) kiosks. Security checks will be stream-

lined with 20 Automated Tray Retrieval Systems (ATRS). Additionally, baggage reclaim facilities have been enhanced with 10 carousels, and baggage handling capacity has increased from 3,240 to 6,000 bags per hour. The terminal area has expanded significantly from 55,740 sq m to 2,06,950 sq m, integrating arrival and departure areas to improve passenger convenience. With these upgrades, T1 can now accommodate 40 million passengers annually,

while T3 handles 45 million. T2, which will undergo refurbishment, has an annual capacity of 15 million passengers. DIAL has informed airlines of the transition and advised them to prepare accordingly. IGIA, India's busiest airport, operates three terminals—T1, T2, and T3—with T1 and T2 currently serving domestic flights. The modernization of T1 aims to enhance passenger experience and operational efficiency at one of the country's busiest aviation hubs.



Mamata Banerjee Accuses Rivals of Tarnishing Bengal's Image

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has alleged that political opponents are engaged in an online campaign to malign the state ahead of her official visit to the UK next week. While addressing a gathering, she stated that she does not object to criticism, acknowledging that it is a part of democracy. However, she expressed strong disapproval of any attempts to defame Bengal on international platforms. "You can insult me, but don't try to tarnish the image of Bengal abroad," she asserted. Ms. Banerjee accused certain groups of spreading misinformation through WhatsApp and email. Without naming any specific party, she claimed that these individuals had drafted false narratives about Bengal and encouraged people to send them to universities in the UK. "We do not humiliate them, but it is unfortunate that some anti-social elements (Ganashatru) are indulging in such dirty tricks," she said. The Chief Minister is set to leave for the UK next week, where she will engage in multiple official events. She is scheduled to deliver a lecture at Oxford University and participate in a programme at the Indian High Commission on March 24. Additionally, she will attend a G2G (Government-to-Government) programme on March 26 and another in Oxford on March 27. Ms. Banerjee highlighted Bengal's strong ties with the UK, recalling their participation in the Bengal Global Business Summit. In response to her remarks, the BJP criticized the Chief Minister, accusing her of shifting blame instead of addressing crucial issues. BJP MLA Shankar Ghosh stated that while Bengal was once celebrated as the cultural capital of India, it has now gained notoriety for rising crime rates. "If you check the pending cases in Calcutta High Court, the highest number of rape cases are registered there. Kolkata has now turned into the 'rapist center' of India under her rule," he alleged. The BJP maintained that its criticism of the government is valid and necessary for accountability, rejecting claims of an organized campaign to malign the state. As political tensions escalate, the Chief Minister's visit to the UK remains a topic of heated debate in West Bengal's political landscape.



UP Professor Arrested for Raping and Blackmailing Students

Uttar Pradesh police have arrested Rajnish Kumar, a 50-year-old Geography professor accused of sexually abusing his students and blackmailing them with videos of his assaults. Kumar, who served as the Chief Proctor at Seth Phool Chand Bagla PG College in Hathras, had been on the run for 72 hours before being captured. The scandal came to light earlier this week when police received a USB drive containing 59 videos of Kumar sexually assaulting students. The professor allegedly recorded these acts and used the footage to blackmail victims into further abuse. Disturbingly, police sources revealed that Kumar did not recall the number of students he had abused over the years. During interrogation, Kumar admitted that he began recording his crimes accidentally when a webcam unintentionally captured a molestation. This incident, which occurred in 2009, allegedly inspired him to continue recording and blackmailing students. Investigators also discovered that he accepted bribes from students and parents in exchange for higher grades and job placements, which he used to demand sexual favors. According to Superintendent of Police Chiranjeev Nath Sinha, Kumar installed special software on his computer to secretly record these assaults. Over 65 videos have been recovered, some of which were uploaded to pornographic websites. Kumar, who was married in 1996, was appointed as a teacher at Bagla College in 2001 and promoted to Chief Proctor last year. His reign of abuse allegedly began in 2008, leaving behind a shocking trail of exploitation and trauma. Police are now investigating whether more victims are yet to come forward.

Trump, Zelenskyy agree; US-Ukraine to continue working together to bring about end to war

Discuss Path to Ceasefire and Peace Amid Ongoing Conflict

TPN Correspondent | Wahington

US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy held a productive phone conversation on Thursday, agreeing to continue working together toward ending the war in Ukraine. According to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and National Security Advisor Mike Waltz, both leaders expressed optimism about achieving lasting peace under Trump's leadership.

During the call, Zelenskyy thanked Trump for his previous support, especially the delivery of Javelin missiles, and for his ongoing efforts to bring about peace. Trump updated Zelenskyy on his recent conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin, focusing on the situation in Kursk. Both leaders agreed to share information closely, as battlefield dynamics continued to evolve.

A significant part of the conversation was dedicated to Ukraine's defense needs, with Zelenskyy requesting additional air defense systems, particularly the Patriot missile system, to protect civilians. Trump assured Zelenskyy that he would work to find available systems, particularly from Europe, to assist in this matter.

The two leaders also discussed a



partial ceasefire, focusing on energy infrastructure. They agreed to technical discussions in Saudi Arabia regarding the expansion of the ceasefire to include the Black Sea as part of efforts toward a full ceasefire. This agreement was seen as a crucial first step in bringing the war to an end and ensuring security for Ukraine.

Trump also discussed Ukraine's energy needs, offering US expertise in running nuclear power plants and securing American involvement in the country's electrical supply infrastructure. Zelenskyy expressed gratitude for Trump's humanitarian

efforts, particularly for pushing forward the exchange of prisoners of war.

Additionally, the two leaders spoke about the missing children from Ukraine, some of whom were reportedly abducted during the conflict. Trump expressed his willingness to work with both sides to ensure their safe return.

The call concluded with both presidents instructing their teams to quickly address technical issues related to the ceasefire and work towards achieving lasting peace.

Elon Musk's X Sues Indian Government Over Alleged Censorship and IT Act Violations

TPN Correspondent | Jakarta

Social media platform 'X' (formerly Twitter), owned by Elon Musk, has filed a lawsuit against the Government of India in the Karnataka High Court, challenging what it claims is unlawful content regulation and arbitrary censorship. The lawsuit specifically targets the government's interpretation of Section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology (IT) Act, arguing that it violates Supreme Court rulings and undermines online free expression.

'X' asserts that the Indian government is using Section 79(3)(b) to create a parallel content-blocking mechanism that bypasses the structured legal process defined in Section 69A of the IT Act. According to 'X,' this approach contradicts the 2015 Supreme Court ruling in the Shreya Singhal case, which established that content can only be blocked through a judicial



process or a legally defined route, like Section 69A.

Section 79(3)(b) requires online platforms to remove illegal content if directed by a court order or government notification. If a platform fails to comply within 36 hours, it risks losing its safe harbor protection and could be held accountable under the Indian Penal Code. However, 'X' con-

tests this interpretation, arguing that the provision does not grant the government independent authority to block content, and that it is being misused to impose arbitrary censorship without following due process.

Under Section 69A, the government can block digital content deemed a threat to national security, public order, or sovereignty, but only through a regulated review process. 'X' argues that the government is bypassing these safeguards by using Section 79(3)(b) as a shortcut, allowing content removal without necessary scrutiny. Additionally, 'X' opposes the government's Sahyog portal, created by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) to streamline content takedown requests. 'X' argues that the portal acts as a censorship tool that pressures platforms to remove content without legal review, further undermining judicial oversight.

Israeli Army Bans Traffic on Gaza's Main Artery Amid Renewed Ground Operations

TPN Correspondent | Jerusalem

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) on Thursday imposed a ban on traffic along the main north-to-south artery of Gaza, known as Salaheddin Road. This move came a day after the IDF announced the resumption of ground operations in Gaza, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict.

IDF spokesman Avichay Adraee stated on X that the military had begun targeted ground operations in central and southern Gaza to expand the security zone between the northern and southern parts of the Gaza Strip. As part of the operation, movement along Salaheddin Road is prohibited for safety reasons.

Instead, travelers from northern Gaza to southern areas are being rerouted to the Al-Rashid coastal road. The Israeli army did not clarify whether this restriction also applies to movement from the south to the north, leaving some uncertainty about the full scope of the traffic ban.

The closure of Salaheddin Road fol-



lows an earlier action on Wednesday, when Israeli forces shut down Netzarim Junction, located just south of Gaza City. Tanks were reportedly deployed at the junction after the withdrawal of American special security forces, who had been stationed there since February as part of a ceasefire agreement brokered earlier this year.

The ceasefire, which expired earlier this month, has been a point of contention, with Israel rejecting negotiations for the second phase of the agreement. Instead, Israel demand-

ed the return of all hostages, further stalling progress toward a lasting ceasefire. In response to the deadlock, Israel resumed its air campaign in Gaza on Tuesday, which drew widespread international condemnation.

On Wednesday, the IDF confirmed it was also resuming ground operations in Gaza, heightening the tensions in the region once again. The ongoing conflict continues to have devastating humanitarian consequences, with both sides suffering heavy losses.



Sri Lanka to Hold Local Council Elections on May 6

TPN Correspondent | Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's Election Commission announced on Thursday that the country's local council elections will take place on May 6, 2025. The election is set to be a significant political event, with voters across the island heading to the polls to elect councillors for 340 local councils.

This marks the first electoral challenge for the current government, led by Anura Kumara Disسانayake, since it secured victories in the presidential and parliamentary elections in the last quarter of 2024. The local council elections are expected to provide a snapshot of the government's popularity at the grassroots level and its ability to maintain support among the public.

The Election Commission set the date after reviewing and accepting nominations from various political parties and independent groups. Over 17 million eligible voters will participate in the elections, making it a crucial test of political dynamics in the country.

The elections will see councillors elected to local councils throughout Sri Lanka, covering a wide range of regions and communities. These councils play a significant role in local governance, as they handle important issues such as infrastructure, education, and public health services at the municipal level.

The May 6 election will also serve as a reflection of the political climate in Sri Lanka following the economic turmoil and protests that have defined the past few years. Voters will likely use this election to voice their opinions on the current government's performance and policies.

As the date for the election approaches, political campaigns are expected to intensify, with various parties seeking to rally support and secure key local council positions. The outcome of these elections could shape the future of the current administration and influence the political landscape leading up to future national elections.

Netanyahu Accuses "Leftist Deep State" of Weaponizing Justice System, Sparks Controversy



TPN Correspondent | Tel Aviv

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has stirred controversy after accusing the "leftist Deep State" of weaponizing the justice system against him. In a post shared on his official X (formerly Twitter) account, Netanyahu said, "In America and in Israel, when a strong right-wing leader wins an election, the leftist Deep State weaponizes the justice system to thwart the people's will. They won't win in either place! We stand strong together." However, the post was deleted within an hour, and Netanyahu reposted the same message from his personal account.

Netanyahu's remarks came amid ongoing investigations into alleged corruption involving his aides. Reports from The Times of Israel revealed that two suspects were detained in connection with an investigation into whether Qatar funneled money to Netanyahu's team. One suspect was released under unspecified conditions, while the other remained under interrogation.

The controversy surrounding Netanyahu has been further fueled by his controversial plans to overhaul the judicial system, which include increasing political control over the judiciary and firing top officials, including Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar. These moves have sparked significant anti-government protests in Jerusalem, with Netanyahu's critics accusing him of undermining the rule of law.

President Isaac Herzog responded by expressing his full confidence in Israel's judicial system. "Israel's strong and independent judicial system is an asset to our democracy, and the president of Israel is very proud of it," Herzog wrote on X. Opposition leader Yair Lapid, head of the Yesh Atid party, strongly criticized Netanyahu's statements, accusing him of losing touch with reality. "He's gone off the rails," Lapid's party posted, calling Netanyahu's rhetoric "dangerous conspiracies" that undermine the rule of law.

Markets Rally Strong; Nifty Surpasses 23,000, Sensex Soars 899 Points



Domestic stock markets closed flat for the fourth consecutive session. They closed with huge gains on Thursday. The benchmark indices, which started flat, gained on the back of the US Fed meeting details, Taiwan's central bank keeping interest rates unchanged, and positive signals from Asian markets. Despite the expiry of derivatives, the bullish momentum continued and investors continued the buy-on-dips method, reaching daily highs. Nifty gained 258 points and Sensex 899 points. Nifty not only broke the key resistance level of 23,000 but also closed above that level, adding to the positivity.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 75,449 in the previous session, opened at 75,917 on Thursday. It touched an intraday low of 75,684. It reached an intraday high of 76,456. It finally closed at 76,348 with a gain of 899 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,036, reached a low of 22,973 and a high of 23,216. It rose by 258 points in total and closed at 23,165. The Nifty Bank rose by 291 points and settled at 49,993.

In the Nifty50, 44 companies gained and 4 lost. Bharti Airtel,

Titan, Eicher Motors, Bajaj Auto, Britannia were the top gainers. IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance, Trent, Shriram Finance lost the most. Today, auto, oil, infra, FMCG, media, metal, health-care, metal, IT, realty, PSE, and pharma stocks were the winners. PSU banks, private banks, commodities, energy and manufacturing stocks were underperforming.

Market breadth turned in favor of buyers on NSE today. Out of 2978 stocks traded, 1755 gained and 1147 lost. 35 stocks hit 52-week highs. 58 stocks hit 52-week lows. 184 stocks crossed the upper circuit and 55 stocks crossed the lower circuit.

Rupee settled at 86.36 against dollar. Pradeep Phosphates Company started production at ammonia and urea plants. CLSA has given a hold rating to Voltas with a target price of Rs. 1375. Jefferies has maintained a buy rating for Interglobe Aviation with a target price of Rs. 5700. 21 lakh shares changed hands in Tata Steel. India VIX fell 4% to

12.71. Nomura has given a neutral rating to DLF with a target price of Rs 700. Diamond Power Infra has received an order worth Rs 175 crore. It is learnt that Air India has given orders worth hundreds of crores to Boeing and Airbus. 22 lakh shares changed hands in NTPC. 10 lakh shares changed hands in ITC. Taiwan keeps interest rates unchanged at 2%. Dhana Lakshmi Bank board approves Rs 150 crore raising. Axis Capital has given a buy rating to Mahanagar Gas with a target price of Rs 1580.

1. Aditya Birla Capital (ABCAPITAL)



The company reported strong growth in its asset management business, with AUM rising 14% YoY. Its lending arm, Aditya Birla Finance, saw a steady rise in loan disbursements, indicating strong credit demand. Market sentiment remains positive due to expectations of strong Q4 earnings and increasing retail participation in financial services.

2. Jindal Saw



The company secured a ₹800 crore export order for supplying large-diameter pipes to the Middle East. Rising steel prices and strong demand from infrastructure projects boosted investor confidence. Analysts expect the stock to remain bullish in the near term, with a target

price of ₹350.

3. Tata Communications

The company secured a strategic partnership with a global cloud provider to enhance its data center services. Revenue from international business grew 9.2% YoY, driven by increased demand for enterprise solutions. Long-term outlook remains positive with expansion in 5G and AI-driven connectivity solutions.



4. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) Crude oil prices softened, leading to better refining margins for BPCL. The company announced plans to expand its fuel retail network and invest in renewable energy projects. HSBC reiterated a BUY rating with a target price of ₹320, citing strong fundamentals and government support for the sector.



5. Eicher Motors

Royal Enfield sales showed a 5% YoY growth, with strong demand for premium models. The company is set to launch an electric motorcycle by early 2025, which could be a game-changer in the segment. Jefferies maintained a BUY rating with a price target of ₹5,500, citing strong brand positioning and international expansion.



RBI appoints Indranil Bhattacharyya as executive director

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced on Thursday, March 20, 2025, the appointment of Indranil Bhattacharyya as its new Executive Director (ED). Effective from March 19, Bhattacharyya will oversee the Department of Economic and Policy Research, as stated in the RBI's official announcement.

Prior to his promotion, Bhattacharyya served as an Adviser in the Monetary Policy Department of the RBI. With nearly three decades of experience, he has a well-established career spanning various key areas, including monetary policy, fiscal policy, banking, and international economic relations. Bhattacharyya has held positions in several critical RBI departments such as the Department of Economic and Policy Research and the International Department.

Notably, Bhattacharyya's career also includes a five-year tenure at the Qatar Central Bank in Doha, where he worked as an economic expert in the technical office of the Governor from 2009 to 2014. This international experience further strengthens his broad expertise in economic and financial matters.

Bhattacharyya holds a postgraduate degree in economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and his research interests focus on monetary theory and policy, financial markets, market microstructure, and fiscal policy. These areas of expertise align with his responsibilities at the RBI, particularly in the areas of policy research and economic strategy.

His appointment comes at a time when the RBI continues to play a crucial role in shaping India's monetary policy and economic direction. Bhattacharyya's wealth of experience in both domestic and international finance will be instrumental in supporting the RBI's ongoing efforts to enhance the Indian economy's stability and growth.

As he steps into his new role, Bhattacharyya is expected to bring valuable insights and leadership to the RBI, particularly in its research and policy-making initiatives.



Chip giant Infineon looks to double India headcount by 2030, focus on R&D

Infineon Technologies Plans to Double India Workforce to 5,000 by 2030



German semiconductor giant Infineon Technologies is set to double its workforce in India, aiming to employ 5,000 people by 2030. The company plans to focus primarily on expanding its research and development (R&D) operations, with no immediate intentions to commit to manufacturing in India, according to a top official.

Andreas Urschitz, Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) and management board member at Infineon, revealed that the company currently has 2,500 employees in India, all working on R&D projects. Infineon, which employs over 58,000 people globally, primarily in the APAC region, sees India as a key hub for its growth in the future.

The company is a leading player in providing semiconductors, particularly for the automobile industry, and aims to strengthen its technological capabilities by significantly increasing its Indian workforce. With the growing demand for automotive chips and other semiconductor solutions, Infineon's expansion of R&D operations in India will help it meet global market needs.

While Infineon is investing heavily in R&D in India, it has not yet announced plans for setting up manufacturing units in the country. The focus remains on bolstering its research presence, in line with India's growing role in the global semiconductor ecosystem.

Indian Stock Market Soars on Strong IT Rally and Fed's Rate Cut Projections

Indian stock markets surged on Thursday, March 20, 2025, propelled by a rally in IT stocks and positive momentum from U.S. equities, following the Federal Reserve's decision to maintain its rate cut projections for this year.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 478.13 points to reach 75,927.18 in early trading, while the NSE Nifty gained 149.1 points, climbing to 23,056.70. The rally was largely driven by strong performances from leading IT stocks, including Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, and HCL Tech, as well as other significant gainers like Bharti Airtel, Zomato, and Mahindra & Mahindra. However, some stocks, including Bajaj Finance, UltraTech Cement, Adani Ports, and Tata Steel, faced declines.

Vikas Jain, Head of Research at Reliance Securities, noted that the domestic market is likely to continue its positive trajectory due to strong global momentum, especially following the U.S. Federal Reserve's announcement of planned interest rate cuts this year.

While Asian markets displayed mixed performance—Seoul traded positively, while Shanghai and Hong Kong were lower—the U.S. markets saw a significant surge on



March 19, 2025, indicating a broader global market recovery.

The Federal Reserve's decision to hold rates steady and its projection of two interest rate cuts this year, alongside an expected growth rate of 1.7% and an inflation forecast of 2.8% for 2025, aligned with expectations. V.K. Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, highlighted two key trends in the Indian market: strong domestic consumption themes and growing interest in underperforming sectors such as defense and

shipping.

Global oil prices also saw a slight increase, with Brent crude climbing 0.54% to \$71.16 per barrel. In terms of investor activity, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) sold equities worth ₹1,096.50 crore on March 19, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought equities worth ₹2,140.76 crore.

Overall, market sentiment remains positive as the anticipation of further rate cuts from the Fed continues to boost global equities.

Bengaluru Cab Driver's 'No Romance' Warning Note Leaves Internet in Splits



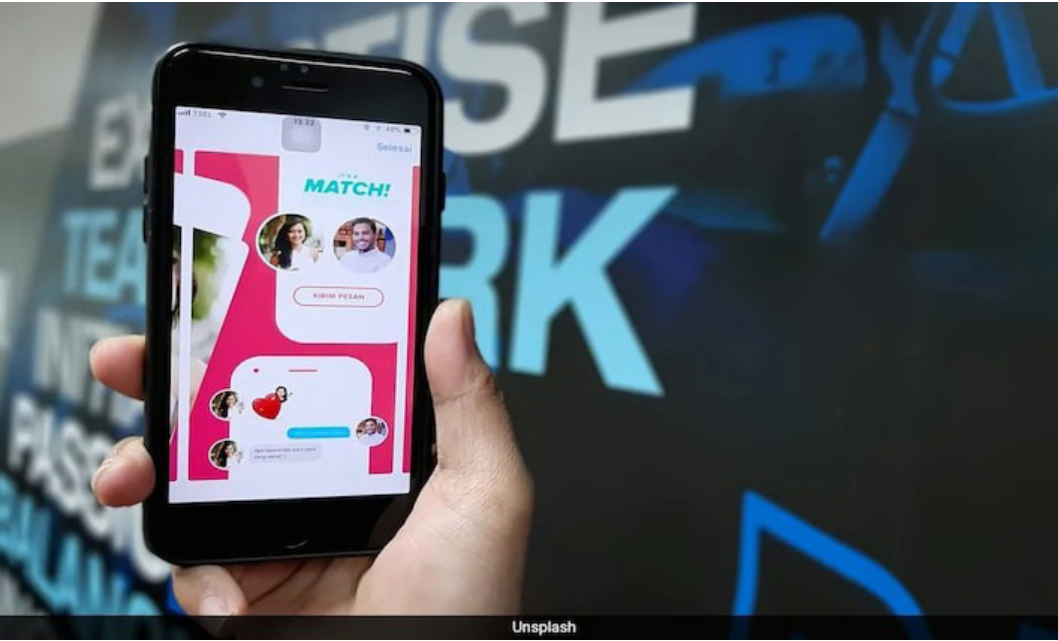
Bengaluru, often referred to as India's startup capital, is known for its unique urban culture and viral internet moments. One such instance has caught social media's attention—a Bengaluru cab driver's warning note advising passengers to “keep distance” has left the internet in splits. A Reddit user recently shared a picture of the note displayed inside a cab, which read: “Warning!! No romance. This is a cab, not your private place or OYO, so please keep distance and stay calm.” The candid and humorous message has since gone viral, sparking a flurry of reactions from netizens. Social media users found the driver's

straightforwardness amusing, with many speculating about the experiences that led him to put up such a notice. “Mr. Driver has seen stuff, and he doesn't want to witness it again,” joked one user. Another user supported the driver's stance, saying, “In a closed environment like a car, public display of affection is uncomfortable for the driver. He has every right not to be a part of it.” Many users sympathized with the driver's plight, acknowledging that some couples take things too far inside cabs. “I've heard stories of couples making out or engaging in inappropriate activities in cabs. It must be uncomfortable for the driver. People should at least wait un-

til they get home or check into a hotel,” commented one user. Another user humorously remarked, “Drivers in Bengaluru have seen things that would make you rethink any romantic plans in a cab. It's a whole different level of urban life!” The post has sparked discussions on boundaries and etiquette inside shared transport. While most users found humor in the situation, others pointed out the need for basic respect towards cab drivers. The incident has now become another addition to the long list of “Peak Bengaluru” moments, proving yet again that the city never fails to entertain the internet.

London Tops UK Cities Where Women Suspect Partners of Cheating on Tinder

A new analysis has revealed that London has the highest number of women checking Tinder to see if their partners are being unfaithful. According to a report by CheatEye.ai, 27.4% of all Tinder-related searches in London are focused on uncovering a partner's infidelity, with 62.4% of these searches being conducted by women. Beyond London, cities like Manchester and Birmingham also ranked high in suspicion-driven Tinder searches. In Manchester, 8.8% of searches were related to infidelity concerns, while Birmingham recorded 8.3%. Notably, in Birmingham, a significant 69% of these searches were carried out by women investigating their male partners. Glasgow also appeared on the list, with 4.7% of Tinder searches linked to concerns about infidelity. Similar to other cities, 62.1% of these searches were conducted by women. Why Suspicion is Rising? Infidelity expert Samantha Hayes attributes the rising trend to the widespread use of dating apps in major cities. “In



cities like London, the dating scene is more dynamic, which naturally leads to heightened suspicion and scrutiny of partners' activities,” she explained. Hayes also noted that young adults aged 18 to 24 are particularly anxious about their partners' faithfulness, given the accessibility

of dating apps. With trust issues on the rise, the report suggests that Tinder is increasingly being used not just for dating, but also for relationship surveillance, particularly by women in major UK cities.

Company Orders Employees to Always Answer Boss's Calls, Even on Silent Mode—Internet Reacts

A company's controversial new policy requiring employees to always answer calls from their managers—even when their phones are on silent or in Focus Mode—has sparked outrage and humor online. A viral Reddit post exposing the policy has led to a heated debate on work-life balance and employee rights. Enforcing 24/7 Availability The company's instructions mandated that employees add their managers to the ‘Emergency Bypass’ feature on iPhones, ensuring that calls and messages from leadership would come through even when devices were on silent. Additional directives included enabling VIP alerts on Apple Watches and adding managers to the ‘Allowed Callers’ list under Focus Mode. While the company claimed that these measures were essential for handling urgent matters efficiently, one justifi-

cation in the email particularly angered employees: “Since the company pays for your phone service, calls from leadership must always come through, even in Focus Mode.” This statement implied that the employer had the right to dictate how employees used their phones, even outside of work hours. Backlash on Social Media Reddit users were quick to criticize the policy, pointing out the lack of work-life balance and potential overreach by the company. Many sarcastically suggested ways for employees to turn the policy against their bosses. One user proposed calling managers at 3:00 a.m. to ask, “Would you still hire me if I were a worm?” Another commented, “If the job requires 24/7 availability, they better pay for that time.” Others highlighted the importance of compensation for



being on call. “If the company provides the phone, fine. But it stays off after work hours.” A more empathetic user said, “I'd take an emergency call from a colleague in trouble, but anything from my boss? Ignored.” The Debate Over Work-Life Boundaries The viral post reignited discussions about boundaries in the modern workplace, particularly in an era where digital connectivity often leads to unrealistic work expectations.

With many companies promoting flexible work environments, the expectation that employees must be available at all times raises concerns about mental well-being, burnout, and fair compensation. While some argue that emergency contact is necessary for business operations, the overwhelming response online suggests that employees are pushing back against policies that erode personal time and privacy.

Bengaluru Man Buys World's Most Expensive Wolfdog for ₹50 Crore



A Bengaluru man has made headlines after purchasing one of the world's rarest and most expensive dogs—a unique wolfdog named Cadaboms Okami—for a staggering ₹50 crore (\$5.7 million). A Rare and Exotic Breed The buyer, S Satish, president of the Indian Dog Breeders Association, is known for owning expensive and rare breeds. Cadaboms Okami is a cross between a wolf and a Caucasian Shepherd, making it the first of its kind in India. The New York Post reports that the dog was originally bred in the United States before arriving in India. “I spent ₹50 crore on this pup because I love dogs and want to introduce unique breeds to India,” Mr. Satish told The Sun. At just eight months old, Okami weighs over 5 kilograms and has a special diet of 3 kg of raw meat every day. According to the American Kennel Club, the wolfdog is a guardian breed known for its intelligence and protective instincts.

A Profitable Investment Apart from his passion for rare dogs, Mr. Satish also earns a fortune from them. He reportedly charges between \$2,800 (₹2.3 lakh) for a 30-minute appearance to \$11,700 (₹9.7 lakh) for five hours at events where people pay to see his exotic pets. “People love to take selfies and pictures with my dogs. They attract more attention than movie stars,” he said. Luxury Care for Elite Pets This isn't his first high-profile purchase. Last year, he bought a rare Chow Chow for ₹27 crore (\$3.25 million). His elite pets live in a seven-acre farm where each dog has a 20ft by 20ft kennel. “There is enough space for them to walk and run, and six caretakers look after them,” Mr. Satish said, adding that air conditioning isn't required due to Bengaluru's cool climate. His latest purchase has once again captured the attention of dog lovers and luxury pet enthusiasts worldwide.



The International Day of Happiness is observed on March 20 every year, promoting the importance of happiness in personal and global well-being. Established by the United Nations General Assembly on July 12, 2012, this day recognizes happiness as a fundamental human goal. Origin and Background The initiative was led by Bhutan, a country that has prioritized Gross National Happiness over Gross Domestic Product since the 1970s. The first International Day of Happiness was celebrated in 2013, with participation from the United Nations' 193 member states. In 2015, the UN introduced 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to combat poverty, inequality, and environmental challenges, reinforcing the link between well-being and sustainable development. Significance in 2025 With ongoing global crises in

Ukraine, Gaza, Yemen, and elsewhere, prioritizing happiness has become more challenging. The day serves as a reminder that small acts of kindness and compassion can make a difference in building a better world. Modern life often leads to stress, anxiety, and material-driven pursuits, overshadowing emotional well-being. This day encourages individuals to focus on meaningful relationships and positive actions. Theme for 2025 The theme for International Day of Happiness 2025 is “Caring and Sharing”, emphasizing the role of kindness and generosity in strengthening communities and enhancing well-being. Studies show that giving and receiving kindness significantly boost happiness, reinforcing the idea that compassion is essential for a fulfilling life.

Cricket Board Announces ₹58 Crore Reward for Champions Trophy Winners



The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a ₹58 crore cash reward for Team India after their triumphant ICC Champions Trophy 2025 victory. The prize recognizes the contributions of players, coaching staff, and selectors. Under Rohit Sharma's leadership, India dominated the tournament, securing wins over Bangladesh, Pakistan, and New Zealand before defeating Australia in the semi-final. BCCI president Roger Binny stated, "Winning back-to-back ICC titles is special. This cash reward acknowledges the hard work put in by the team and support staff." He also highlighted India's success in the ICC U19 Women's World Cup 2025, emphasizing the country's strong cricketing foundation.

Indian Para Swimming Team Set for 2025 Para Swimming World Series in Barcelona

A 27-member Indian contingent, including 19 para swimmers and eight officials, will compete at the 2025 Para Swimming World Series in Barcelona from March 20 to 23. Led by Paralympian and Arjuna Awardee Sharath M Gayakwad, the team features experienced athletes like Niranjana Mukundan, Shridhar N Malagi, and Tejas Nandakumar, along with emerging talents like Vaishnavi Jagtap and visually impaired swimmer Himanshu Nandal. Coach Gayakwad expressed confidence in the team's preparations, calling it one of India's most promising contingents. Rising swimmers Afrid Attar, Ali Imam, and Chaitanya Kulkarni add depth to the squad. With rigorous training and high aspirations, India aims to make a strong mark on the global para-swimming stage, reinforcing its commitment to excellence and inclusivity in sports.



India Submits Bid to Host 2030 Commonwealth Games in Gujarat



India has officially submitted its bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games in Gujarat, a top sports ministry source confirmed. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) sent the 'Expression of Interest' before the March 31 deadline. Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya had earlier expressed India's interest in hosting the Games, marking the country's bid to bring the prestigious event back since the 2010 Delhi edition. Additionally, India is also eyeing the 2036 Olympics as part of its long-term sports ambitions.

Chhetri Scores on Return as India Beat Maldives 3-0

Sunil Chhetri marked his international comeback in style, scoring in India's commanding 3-0 win over Maldives in a football friendly on Wednesday. The victory ended India's 12-match winless streak since November 2023. Rahul Bheke opened the scoring in the 35th minute, followed by Liston Colaco's strike in the 66th. Chhetri, re-

turning after retiring in May last year, sealed the win with a glancing header in the 77th minute, netting his 95th international goal. Despite an earlier save by the Maldives goalkeeper in the 47th minute, the 40-year-old captain made his presence felt before being substituted in the 82nd minute.



Mandaviya Inaugurates 2nd Khelo India Para Games 2025

Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya declared the 2nd Khelo India Para Games 2025 open at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall, Indira Gandhi Stadium, New Delhi. Over 1,300 para-athletes will compete in six sports disciplines over eight days. A unique torch rally, joined by Paralympians Simran Sharma, Praveen Kumar, and Nitesh Kumar, marked the inauguration. Mandaviya lauded Khelo India's role in nurturing talent, emphasizing India's success at the Paris Paralympics 2024. Union Minister Virendra Kumar praised the platform for providing para-athletes with opportunities to excel. The event witnessed participation from top officials, athletes, and coaches from across India.



Swiss Open: PV Sindhu Exits Early, Srikanth Advances to Pre-Quarterfinals



PV Sindhu suffered another early exit at the Swiss Open, losing 21-17, 21-19 to Denmark's Julie Jakobsen in the first round. This marks Sindhu's third consecutive first-round defeat in 2024 after similar setbacks at the Indonesia Masters and All England Open. In men's singles, Kidambi Srikanth edged out HS Prannoy 23-21, 23-21 in a tightly contested match to reach the pre-quarter-

finals, where he faces world No. 6 Li Shifeng. Qualifier Sankar Subramanian also progressed, defeating Magnus Johannesen 21-5, 21-16. In women's singles, Anupama Upadhyaya and Isharani Baruah secured wins, while Malvika Bansod and others were eliminated. In mixed doubles, India's pair of Sathish Karunakaran and Aadya Variyath advanced, while two other pairs suffered defeats.



Rahul Bose on Chameli Pay Gap: “I Was the Starlet, She Was the Star”

Actor Rahul Bose revealed that he was paid only a fraction of what Kareena Kapoor Khan earned for the 2004 film Chameli. Speaking at Mardon Wali Baat, a national conference on gender-based violence, Bose admitted the pay gap was justified as Kareena had a stronger box-office appeal. “Men have also been starlets, and I am a shining example of that. Kareena was the star; she brings more people to theatres even today. It’s completely logical,” he said. Bose, who has also produced films, added that the industry is commercially driven, not biased. Rahul Bose is known for Mr. and Mrs. Iyer and Dil Dhadakne Do, while Kareena’s recent films Crew and Singham Again were box-office hits.



Dhanashree Verma Stars in Song on Toxic Relationships Amid Divorce Proceedings

Amid her divorce from cricketer Yuzvendra Chahal, Dhanashree Verma stars in Dekha Ji Dekha Maine, a song that delves into toxic relationships. Featuring Ishwak Singh, the music video presents a raw portrayal of love and emotional turmoil. Set in Jaipur’s outskirts, the song is composed by Jaani with Jyoti Nooran’s powerful vocals. Dhanashree called it an “emotionally charged performance”, while

Jaani highlighted its intense theme. Directed by Dhruwal Patel and Jigar Mulani, the song is now streaming on T-Series’ YouTube channel. Meanwhile, reports suggest Chahal has agreed to pay ₹4.75 crore in alimony. The Bombay High Court has expedited their mutual consent divorce, instructing the Bandra family court to finalize it by March 20, ahead of Chahal’s IPL commitments.



L2: Empuraan Trailer – Mohanlal’s Swag Takes Over

The much-awaited trailer of L2: Empuraan, the sequel to Lucifer, is finally out, and Mohanlal’s signature style dominates the high-octane visuals. Directed by Prithviraj Sukumaran, the film features Tovino Thomas, Sachin Khedekar, Manju Warrier, and Indrajith Sukumaran in key roles. The trailer showcases intense political drama, with Tovino’s Jathin Ramdas leading a party

amidst conspiracies. Manju Warrier’s character challenges blood ties, while Mohanlal’s Stephen Nedumpally emerges as the mysterious savior of Kerala. Explosive action sequences, gunfights, and combat scenes fill the gripping trailer, ending with Mohanlal declaring, “Lucifer.” Bankrolled by Antony Perumbavoor, Gokulam Gopalan, and Subaskaran, L2: Empuraan re-

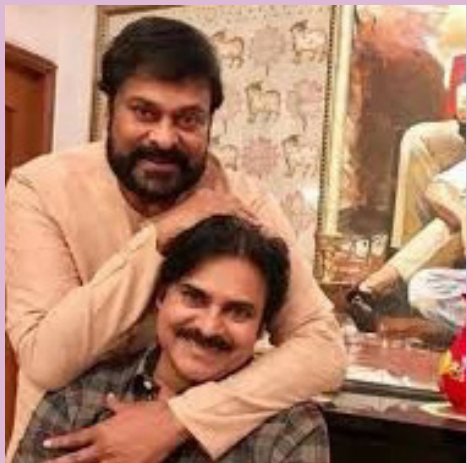
leases in multiple languages on March 27, 2025.



“Proud to Be His Brother”: Pawan Kalyan on Chiranjeevi’s Lifetime Achievement

Megastar Chiranjeevi was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award by Bridge India at the UK Parliament for his contributions to cinema and society. Reacting to this, his younger brother Pawan Kalyan expressed pride, calling it a moment of immense honor. Taking to X (Twitter), Pawan wrote, “From being a middle-class excise constable’s son to becoming a Megastar, my brother has entertained audiences for over four decades. I will always be proud to be his younger brother.” He hailed Chiranjeevi as his guiding force, highlighting his social service through the Chiranjeevi Charitable Trust. Recalling Chiranjeevi’s recent Padma Vibhushan honor, he stated

that the Lifetime Achievement Award further elevated his legacy. Pawan congratulated Chiranjeevi and thanked Stockport MP Navendu Mishra for hosting the event.



Janhvi Kapoor Visits Ram Charan’s Home, Shares Special Moment With Upasana



Bollywood actress Janhvi Kapoor, currently in Hyderabad for RC16, took a break from her shoot to visit Ram Charan’s residence in Jubilee Hills. She spent quality time with his wife, Upasana Konidela, making the visit extra special. Upasana surprised Janhvi

with Athamma’s Kitchen, a collection of recipes curated by Ram Charan’s mother, Surekha Konidela. A picture of their heartfelt moment is now viral, and the brand’s official Instagram handle teased more surprises ahead, fueling speculation about Janhvi’s possible collabora-

tion. Meanwhile, the RC16 team will soon head to Delhi for an important shoot at Jama Masjid. Directed by Buchi Babu Sana and featuring music by AR Rahman, the film is produced by Vriddhi Cinemas with Mythri Movie Makers and Sukumar Writings.

Rakul Preet Singh Spreads Positivity on International Day of Happiness

Actress Rakul Preet Singh celebrated the International Day of Happiness by sharing an inspiring message on Instagram. Posting radiant photos, she emphasized that “Happiness is a choice, not a destination. Let’s choose it together today and every day!” The pictures, seemingly from a beach vacation, captured Rakul’s joyous moments in a serene setting. Actress Rasika Dugal also marked the occasion, sharing her thoughts on finding happiness in small things. The International Day of Happiness, observed on March 20, was established by the UN to promote global well-being. Meanwhile, Rakul recently completed the Patiala schedule for De De Pyaar De 2, where she reprises her role as Aisha alongside Ajay Devgn and R. Madhavan.

