

### Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD

t°

H 33° C

L 25° C

VIJAYAWADA

t°

H 35° C

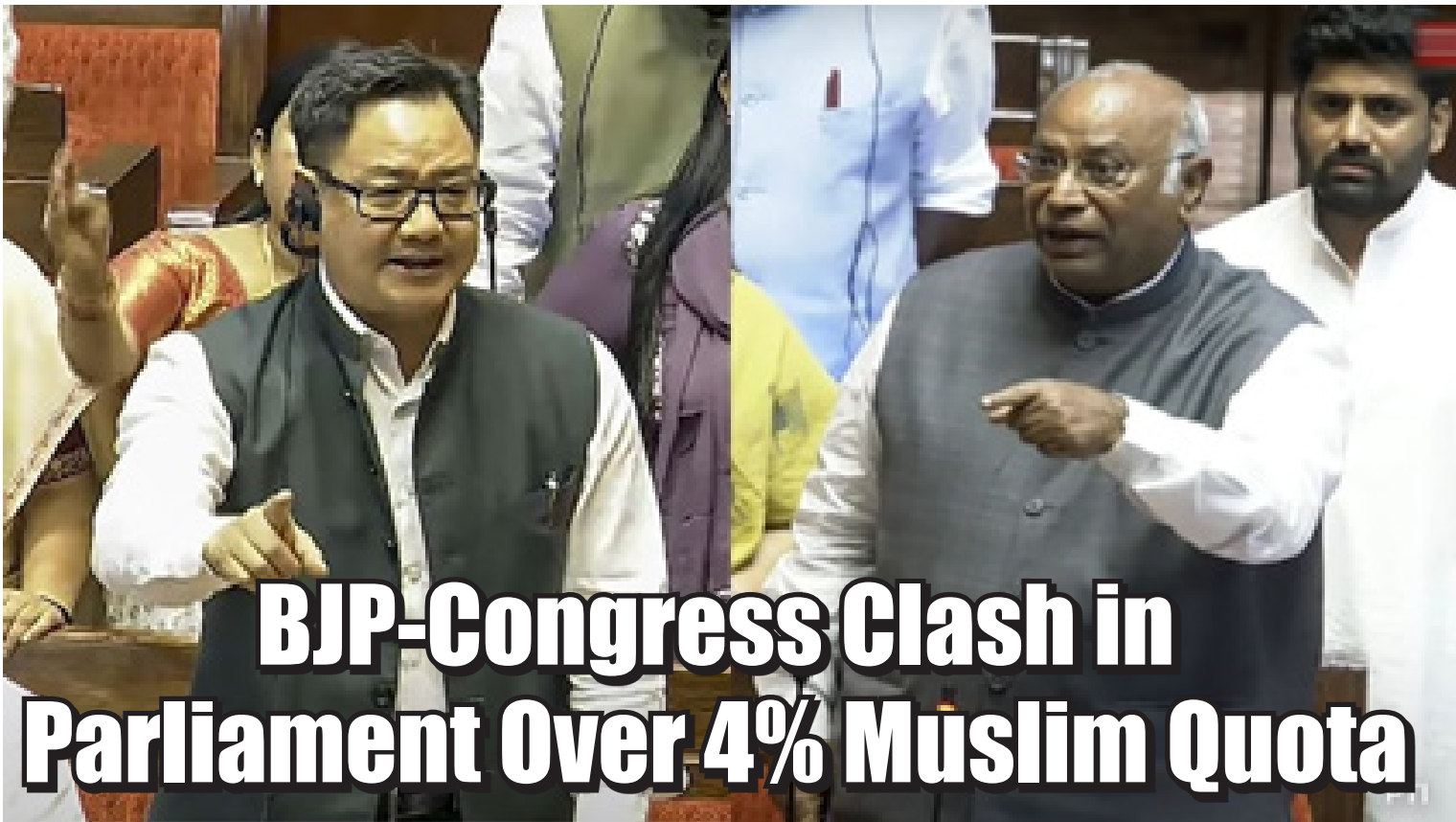
L 26° C

TIRUPATHI

t°

H 36° C

L 26° C



**BJP accuses Congress of pushing for a Muslim quota in Karnataka.**

**Kiren Rijiju claims Congress leaders are willing to amend the Constitution.**

**Congress govt in Karnataka gave 4% Quota for Muslims in Public contracts.**

**Kharge denies allegations, calls them baseless.**

**Rajya Sabha adjourned amid heated arguments over the issue.**

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A major political storm erupted in Parliament on Monday as the BJP accused the Congress government in Karnataka of granting Muslim reservations and seeking to amend the Constitution to support it. The allegations, raised by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, led to a fierce exchange in the

Rajya Sabha, with Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge strongly rejecting the claims. Rijiju alleged that a senior Congress leader in Karnataka, holding a constitutional position, had expressed willingness to amend the Constitution to provide reservations for Muslims. “When a constitutional authority makes such statements, it cannot be ignored. These people claim to respect Babasaheb Ambedkar but talk about changing his Constitution,” Rijiju remarked, directly confronting Kharge for an explanation. BJP escalates attack, cites Karnataka policies Leader of the House JP Nadda further intensified the attack, arguing that the Constitution explicitly prohibits religion-based reservations. He pointed out that the Karnataka Congress government had implemented a 4% minority quota in public contracts, which he claimed was an attempt to introduce religious-based reservations through indirect means. Nadda also cited alleged remarks made by Karnataka’s Deputy Chief Minister, claiming that he had publicly stated the Constitution could be amended to

facilitate Muslim reservations. Calling it an attack on the foundational principles of the country, he demanded the Congress immediately withdraw such policies and clarify its stance. Kharge denies charges, defends Congress Rejecting the BJP’s allegations, Kharge asserted that Congress has never intended to alter the Constitution. “No one can change Ambedkar’s Constitution. This is just a baseless accusation. Our ‘Bharat Jodo Yatra’ was to protect the Constitution, not weaken it,” he countered. Despite his response, Rijiju remained firm, stating, “The statements made by Congress leaders in Karnataka are on record. If necessary, I am ready to verify them.” He also referred to historical events, claiming that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had rejected a similar proposal from the Muslim League during the Constituent Assembly debates. As tempers flared, Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar urged the ruling party to provide concrete evidence before making allegations. However, the uproar continued, ultimately forcing the adjournment of the House’s proceedings.

## BMC Razes Habitat Studio after Kamra’s jibe at Eknath Shinde



- BMC demolishes Habitat studio citing ‘violations’ after Kamra’s remarks.**
- Comedian faces backlash for mocking Deputy CM Eknath Shinde.**
- CM Fadnavis demands an apology for ‘low-level comedy’.**
- Police register a case against 40 Shiv Sena workers for vandalism.**

**TPN Correspondent | Mumbai**  
The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) launched a demolition drive at The Habitat studio in Khar, where stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra recently performed, after his controversial remarks against Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. The move comes after Kamra’s jibe referring to Shinde as a ‘gaddar’ (traitor) in a parody of the song Bholi Si Surat, leading to severe criticism from Shiv Sena leaders and BJP.

**Political satire or deliberate provocation?**  
Kamra, known for his frequent political potshots under the guise of comedy, sparked outrage when he remarked,

## Delhi HC Withdraws Judge Yashwant Varma From Active Duty

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Justice Yashwant Varma of the Delhi High Court has been removed from active duty following the discovery of burnt cash at his residence on Holi. The decision, announced by Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya on Monday morning, comes amid an ongoing Supreme Court investigation into the matter. A three-member committee, comprising the chief justices of the Punjab and Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Karnataka High Courts, has been set up to probe the allegations. Justice Varma has denied any connection to the money, asserting that neither he nor his family members were responsible for storing cash in the outhouse. He also described the incident as a “conspiracy” against him. The controversy erupted last week when the Supreme Court Collegium decided to transfer Justice Varma back to the Allahabad High Court. The decision drew criticism from political leaders and legal experts, who demanded a thorough



## Trump’s ‘Liberation Day’ Tariff Plan to Target Imports Worth Trillions



**Trump to announce new tariffs on April 2.**

**Reciprocal tariffs to be imposed on countries with trade barriers.**

**The policy aims to boost domestic investment.**

**What’s in it for India?**

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

US President Donald Trump is set to unveil a sweeping tariff plan on April 2, dubbed “Liberation Day,” targeting imports worth trillions of dollars. The move is expected to escalate global trade tensions as the administration focuses on “reciprocal tariffs” to counter trade barriers imposed by other nations, including key US allies. Trump, emphasizing economic nationalism, stated that the US has been “ripped off by every country in the world, friend and

foe,” and pledged that the new tariffs would generate “tens of billions” in revenue. While hinting at some flexibility, he maintained that the primary goal is to ensure fair trade through reciprocal measures.

### Targeted Tariffs and Economic Impact

Unlike previous blanket tariff hikes, the upcoming measures will be more selective, focusing on trade blocs or nations that Trump deems as engaging in unfair practices. The plan excludes a few countries but does not involve separate sector-specific tariffs as previously suggested. During his first two months in office, Trump raised tariffs on nearly \$800 billion in imports from China, Mexico, and Canada, triggering stock market volatility and fears of a recession. Despite criticism, his administration remains committed

## Dy CM DKS Responds to BJP on 4% Quota Row

**DK Shivakumar dismisses BJP’s allegations**

**Says Constitution will not be changed**

**Karnataka’s 4% minority quota sparks controversy**



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday refuted allegations that he proposed changes to the Constitution to extend reservation to Muslims, accusing the BJP of deliberately distorting his statement. He warned that he would take legal action against those misquoting him. The controversy erupted after Shivakumar’s remarks in a television interview were interpreted as advocating constitutional amendments to provide a 4% quota for Muslims under Category 2B in government tenders and procurements. The issue led to an uproar in Parliament on March 24, with BJP leaders criticizing the Congress leader’s statement. “I have been in the Assembly for 36 years and have basic common sense. I only referred to instanc-

es where the Constitution had been amended to comply with court orders. I never said we are going to change the Constitution for this issue. The BJP has distorted my statement for political gain,” Shivakumar clarified to reporters in Bengaluru. When asked whether the media had misquoted him, he defended journalists, stating, “No, this is not the media’s fault. The BJP has twisted my words and dragged my name into unnecessary controversy.” Shivakumar alleged that the BJP was diverting attention from its failures by raking up non-issues. “This is a political conspiracy against me and the Congress,” he asserted. The controversy follows the



# CM Siddaramaiah Holds Meeting on Milk Price Hike, Insists on Farmer Benefits

- Government insists any price hike must benefit farmers
- Milk unions directed to reduce administrative costs
- Transparency and cost-cutting measures emphasized

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah convened a crucial meeting with the President of the Karnataka Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited (KMF) and the heads of district milk federations to discuss the proposed increase in milk prices. The meeting focused on balancing farmers' demands with financial discipline within the unions. After listening to the federation's concerns, the Chief Minister issued strict instructions, stating that while the government is open to price revisions, the increased amount must be fully transferred to farmers. He emphasized that milk unions should focus on reducing unnecessary expenses rather than passing additional



costs to consumers. Siddaramaiah noted that many unions are facing financial losses due to excessive administrative expenditures, particularly unnecessary contractual appointments. He directed all unions to cut administrative costs by 2.5% within the next three months and to further bring expenses below 2% within the following quarter. Acknowledging that Karnataka's milk prices are lower than in other

states, the Chief Minister said that increasing prices could lead to higher production. However, he reiterated that the government's primary concern is ensuring that any financial benefit from the price hike goes directly to farmers. The government's firm stance aims to promote transparency, financial efficiency, and sustainability in the dairy sector while safeguarding the interests of milk producers.

# Crimes Against Children Surge in Karnataka, Over 10 POCSO Cases Reported Daily

- 8,233 child crime cases registered in 2024, up from 7,854 in 2023
- Over 26% of cases ended in acquittal, highlighting poor conviction rates
- Child marriages and labour cases continue to be reported



**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
Crimes against children have risen sharply in Karnataka, with an alarming average of 10 Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) cases reported daily in the first two months of 2025. According to police data, 8,233 cases of crimes against children were recorded in 2024, up from 7,854 in 2023. Among them, POCSO cases alone surged to 4,003, a 38.89% increase in four years from 2,882 cases in 2021. The disturbing trend continues in 2025, with 348 cases in January and 264 in February. Despite this surge, the conviction rate remains worryingly low. Between 2021 and 2024, out of 13,990 registered cases, only 353 resulted in convictions, while 3,662 cases ended in acquittal and 202 were classified as false cases. Beyond POCSO cases, child marriage and child labour remain pressing issues. In just the first two months of 2025, 23 child marriages and 16 child labour cases were

reported. Data from the State Crime Records Bureau indicates that in 2024 alone, police registered 105 child labour cases, 142 cases under the Juvenile Justice Act, and 152 under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act. Additionally, 3,766 cases of child kidnapping and abduction were reported. Child rights activist Vasudev Sharma noted that while increasing reports suggest greater awareness, the justice system's failure to punish offenders remains a challenge. "Most cases of child sexual abuse involve someone known to the victim," he said. Senior advocate Rajalaxmi Ankalagi emphasized the need for mandatory psychological counseling for victims. "The trauma inflicted on children leaves deep scars. Many cases go unreported due to stigma and police apathy," she added.

# Kumaraswamy to Clarify JDS Stand on 4% Quota in Government Contracts

- JDS in dilemma over supporting Muslim quota or aligning with BJP
- Kumaraswamy to announce party's stand in New Delhi on Monday
- JDS to demand quota extension for backward classes



**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
The Janata Dal (Secular) finds itself in a tricky situation over the Karnataka government's decision to provide a 4% reservation for Muslims in government contracts under the 2B category. While its alliance partner, the BJP, is strongly opposing the move, JDS is yet to clarify its position. The Congress government passed the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements (Amendment) Bill, 2025, on Friday, leading to sharp reactions from BJP leaders, who accused the government of appeasement politics. Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries and former Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy, who also serves as the JDS state president, is expected to clear his party's stand in New Delhi

on Monday. Party sources suggest that JDS is likely to extend support to the BJP's opposition against the quota. JDS Legislature Party leader CB Suresh Babu stated that the party would take a final decision after consultations with Kumaraswamy and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda. "It was Deve Gowda who ensured a 4% quota for Muslims under 2B for education and employment. However, the community has distanced itself from our party in elections. We will discuss and decide our stand on the latest quota bill after deliberations," he said. Additionally, JDS is expected to demand an extension of the quota to other backward classes, including the Madivala and Uppara communities. Meanwhile, BJP has strongly opposed the bill, calling it unconstitutional. A delegation led by BJP opposition leader R Ashoka met Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot to submit a complaint. JDS leader Suresh Babu was also part of the delegation, raising speculation about the party's possible stance against the bill.

# SC Appoints Retired Judge to Mediate Anegundi Brindavana Dispute

SC appoints Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul as mediator

**TPN Correspondent | Kalaburagi**  
The Supreme Court has intervened in a longstanding dispute between Uttaradi Mutt and Raghavendra Swamy Mutt over the rights to perform puja and aradhana at one of the Brindavanas at Nava Brindavana, near Anegundi in Koppal district. In an order dated March 19, the apex court referred the matter for mediation under former SC judge Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul. A division bench comprising Justices MM Sundresh and Rajesh Bindal directed both parties to maintain the status quo until the mediation process is completed. The decision follows an earlier Karnataka High Court (Dharwad Bench) ruling that temporarily restricted Raghavendra Swamy Mutt, Mantralayam, from performing puja at the disputed Brindavana. The issue arose when Mantralayam Mutt claimed that one of the Brindavanas at Nava Brindavana belongs to Shri Jayateertha Swamiji, whereas Uttaradi Mutt asserts that it is the Brindavana of Shri Raghuvarya Teertharu. Uttaradi Mutt's general power of attorney holder, Shri Vidyadishacharya, stated



that their mutt possesses sufficient evidence proving the rightful identity of the Brindavana and welcomed the Supreme Court's direction for mediation. He further clarified that the Brindavana of Shri Jayateertharu is located at Malkhed in Kalaburagi district, countering Mantralayam Mutt's claims. The matter has been ongoing for four years, with legal battles across multiple courts. With the Supreme Court's directive, both parties are now expected to resolve the dispute through mediation, bringing a potential end to the controversy surrounding the revered site.

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# Trump's 'Liberation Day' Tariff Plan to Target Imports Worth Trillions

to implementing a broader tariff framework. **'Dirty 15' Nations**

The White House aims for immediate implementation of the tariffs to maximize impact. Under the proposal, only countries without tariffs on the US and those maintaining a trade surplus with America will be exempt. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent hinted that around 15% of trading partners—dubbed the "dirty 15"—will face the highest tariffs due to their alleged unfair trade practices. These nations include the European Union, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, Canada, India, and China.

## What's in It for India?

India, being one of the countries Trump has criticized for trade imbalances, could face higher tariffs on key exports to the US. Sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, and IT services may see increased costs, potentially impacting Indian businesses reliant on the American market.

However, India may also benefit if Trump offers preferential terms for countries willing to renegotiate trade agreements on his terms.

## Tariffs as a Investment Tool

Trump sees tariffs as a strategic measure to drive foreign investments into the US and offset tax cuts being considered by Republicans. His administration argues that the tariffs could generate trillions of dollars over a decade, which could be used to lower domestic tax rates. While White House economic advisers claim the policy will boost American competitiveness, economists remain skeptical about its long-term impact, warning of potential inflation and economic slowdown. With the April 2 deadline approaching, global markets and trade partners are bracing for a potential shift in US trade policy, as Trump's tariff strategy sets the stage for renewed economic hostilities.

# BMC Razes Habitat Studio after Kamra's jibe at Eknath Shinde

"Meri nazar se tum dekho to gaddar nazar wo aaye. Haaye," in reference to Shinde's 2022 rebellion against Uddhav Thackeray, which led to the Shiv Sena split. The comment has reignited debates on whether Kamra is a comedian or a political provocateur. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis strongly condemned Kamra's remarks, stating that freedom of expression does not extend to disrespecting public leaders through 'low-level comedy'. "The people of Maharashtra have already decided who the real 'gaddar' is in the 2024 elections," Fadnavis said. **BMC crackdown and Shiv Sena backlash**

Shortly after the controversy erupted, BMC officials arrived at The Habitat studio, with police carrying hammers, citing 'unspecified violations'. The timing of the demolition has raised suspicions, with critics arguing it was a retaliatory action against Kamra's comments. Meanwhile, around 40 Shiv Sena workers, including Yuva Sena leader Rahul Kanak, have been booked for allegedly vandalizing the venue. The Habitat studio, in an Instagram post, expressed shock over the attacks, stating, "We are targeted every time, almost like a proxy for the performer."

## Kamra denies political funding

Facing mounting pressure, Kamra,

who spoke to the police from Tamil Nadu, denied allegations of being paid by opposition parties to target Shinde. He even offered authorities access to his financial records to prove he received no external funding. However, the backlash against his brand of political comedy continues to grow, with many questioning whether his comedic license grants him immunity from consequences. Deputy CM Ajit Pawar weighed in on the matter, stating, "No one should go beyond the law. Free speech has its limits, and one must take responsibility for their words." Despite the backlash, Kamra has yet to issue an apology, while Shinde remains silent on the controversy.

# Delhi HC Withdraws Judge Yashwant Varma From Active Duty

investigation. The Supreme Court later clarified that his transfer was unrelated to the ongoing inquiry and assured that an internal probe would take place. In an unprecedented move, the Delhi High Court was instructed to submit a report, including photographs and videos of the scene. Some portions of the report were redacted to maintain confidentiality. Adding to the confusion, Delhi

Fire Services chief Atul Garg denied making a statement suggesting that no cash was found at the judge's residence. Clarifying his stance, he stated that he had not issued any such remarks and had already informed the media about the misattribution. As the investigation continues, the judiciary faces mounting pressure to ensure transparency and accountability in handling the case.

# Dy CM DKS Responds to BJP on 4% Quota Row

Karnataka government's recent approval of The Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which provides a 4% reservation in government tenders and procurement of goods and services up to ₹2 crore for communities under Category 2B, including Muslims.



# Karnataka Speaker U T Khader Warns MLAs Against Disruptions

- Speaker warns of strict action against unruly MLAs
- Defends decision to suspend legislators over Finance Bill ruckus
- Asserts independence in Assembly proceedings

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka

Karnataka Assembly Speaker U T Khader has warned that he will take “extreme steps,” including year-long suspensions, if MLAs continue to disrupt Assembly proceedings. Speaking to the media in Mangaluru on Monday, he defended his recent decision to suspend legislators and emphasized the importance of respecting constitutional posts.

“Suspension of MLAs should not be seen as punishment. They must reform and set an example through their conduct.

If they continue to insult the ‘chair’ and create disturbances, I will not hesitate to take stronger action,” Khader stated.

Referring to the chaos during the passing of the Finance Bill, he pointed out that past leniency had led to repeated misconduct.

“Had strict action been taken earlier, such incidents would not recur. Some MLAs assumed they would only face a day’s suspension as it was the last day of the budget session. My decision was made as per the Constitution,” he explained. Khader emphasized the



sanctity of the Speaker’s position. “The Speaker is the head of the House and holds a constitutional post. The ruckus caused by MLAs is a black mark on the state’s parliamentary democracy. People must understand that no one is above the Assembly,” he said.

Dismissing allegations of political interference, he clarified, “It was my decision to suspend the MLAs. The Chief Minister did not interfere.” He also reiterated the strength of the anti-defection law, stating,

“If I had been Speaker earlier, I wouldn’t have hesitated to probe into the matter. However, he criticized BJP MLAs for disrupting the session. “If the Finance Bill wasn’t passed, government employees wouldn’t receive salaries, and development works would halt,” he remarked.



## Suspension of BJP MLAs Undemocratic: Former CM Shettar

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The suspension of 18 BJP MLAs from the Karnataka Assembly has sparked a political controversy, with senior BJP leaders terming the move “undemocratic” and accusing the ruling Congress of silencing opposition voices.

Belagavi MP and former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar criticized the decision, stating that BJP MLAs were peacefully protesting against the state government’s handling of the 4% quota for minorities in government contracts and the ongoing honey-trap controversy. He maintained that the protest was directed at government policies and not against the Speaker.

“When the government failed to respond properly, our MLAs staged a peaceful protest, which was not undemocratic. Let me reiterate, there was no protest against the Speaker’s

post. This suspension is unjust. I urge the Speaker to withdraw the order and call upon Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take the initiative in revoking it,” Shettar stated.

Haveri MP and former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai went a step further, accusing the Congress government of suppressing democracy in Karnataka.

“There is no democracy in Karnataka—only anarchy. Ministers in the government are being honey-trapped, and allegations are being raised against the government itself. When we questioned this in the Assembly, our MLAs were thrown out. This is a blatant attempt to silence the opposition,” Bommai alleged.

However, Karnataka Assembly Speaker U T Khader defended the suspension, stating that it was necessary to maintain order and uphold the dignity of the House.

# DK Shivakumar Distances Himself from Honeytrap Allegations

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has refused to comment on allegations that several ministers and MLAs in the state were targeted by a honeytrap network. Speaking to the media, he distanced himself from the controversy, stating that he had asked Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna to lodge a complaint if he had any concerns.

The controversy erupted after Rajanna claimed during a recent Assembly session that at least 48 MLAs, cutting across party lines, had been honey-trapped. He further alleged that the network was active nationwide and had even ensnared



Union ministers.

When asked about these claims, Shivakumar stated, “I can’t explain what he told me. I asked him to lodge a complaint.” He also dismissed speculation that Rajanna and Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi were heading to Delhi to discuss the matter with the party high command, emphasizing that meeting political

leaders was routine.

Refusing to answer further questions on the issue, Shivakumar said, “Don’t ask me about that.

I will not reply to anything concerning that issue.” When asked whether he was traveling to Delhi regarding the controversy, he denied needing to meet anyone over what he called “false news.”

Regarding whether the honeytrap allegations had embarrassed the Congress government, he responded, “Ask the chief minister about this.” His remarks indicate that the state leadership is treating the matter cautiously, leaving further action or clarification to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.



## BJP MLA Questions Karnataka Speaker’s Decision to Suspend 18 MLAs

Vedavyas Kamath urges Speaker to revoke suspensions

TPN Correspondent | Mangaluru

BJP MLA Vedavyas Kamath has strongly criticized Karnataka Assembly Speaker U T Khader for suspending 18 BJP legislators, calling it an undemocratic move that suppresses opposition voices. Kamath, who represents Mangalore City South, has urged the Speaker to withdraw the suspension order, alleging that it was issued under pressure from the ruling party and in violation of parliamentary norms.

In a letter to Khader, Kamath expressed deep regret over the decision, stating that it has tarnished the legacy of Karnataka’s Vidhana Soudha, which he described as a “temple of democracy.” He said the Speaker, despite holding the responsibility of ensuring smooth proceedings, has acted against democratic principles, setting a dangerous precedent.

Kamath argued that in a democratic system, opposition parties have the right and duty

to question government decisions and demand fair investigations. “If the government refuses to listen, protests in the Assembly are natural. However, by suppressing the right to protest, the Speaker has effectively silenced the voices of the people,” he stated.

He reminded Khader of past incidents in the Assembly when he was the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, questioning whether he had forgotten the chaos caused during that time. “The people of Karnataka remember who tried to snatch the Speaker’s microphone and who climbed onto the Speaker’s chair in the past. Despite this, the previous Speaker exercised restraint and did not impose such harsh penalties,” Kamath said.

He warned that the six-month suspension of BJP MLAs signals a decline in open political discourse and urged the Speaker to uphold the dignity of his position by reversing the decision.

# BJP’s Vijayendra Slams Congress Over Bandipur Night Traffic Ban

- BJP alleges Congress high command pressure on Karnataka
- Vijayendra warns against lifting the night traffic ban
- Cites Supreme Court and environmental concerns

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka

Karnataka BJP President B Y Vijayendra has strongly criticized the Congress high command, alleging that it is pressuring the state government to lift the night traffic ban through Bandipur. Reacting to a report in Deccan Herald, he warned that the BJP would not remain silent if the move goes forward.

In a post on X, Vijayendra accused the Congress of compromising Karnataka’s environmental interests to appease its national leadership. “The Congress’ loyalty to its Delhi high command has once again

come at Karnataka’s cost. Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre is now pushing to lift the night traffic ban through Bandipur, a move clearly scripted in 10 Janpath, Delhi,” he stated.

According to him, this pressure has intensified after Priyanka Gandhi’s election rally in Wayanad. He pointed out that Deputy CM DK Shivakumar had publicly admitted that she personally urged him and CM Siddaramaiah to reconsider the ban. “Is Karnataka being governed from Vidhana Soudha or 10 Janpath?” he questioned.

Vijayendra stressed that the night traffic ban is backed by multiple authorities, including the Supreme Court, Karnataka High Court, National Tiger Conservation Authority, and inter-state agreements between chief ministers.

He argued that the restric-



tion is essential to protect Bandipur’s fragile ecosystem, which is home to endangered species like tigers and elephants.

Criticizing the Congress, he said, “Despite all this, the ruling Congress is trying to dismantle the ban in a hasty Sunday meeting. This is a betrayal of Karnataka’s forests, its people, and future generations.”

The Bandipur night traffic

ban has been in place since 2009 to reduce accidents involving wildlife and prevent environmental degradation. Environmentalists and conservationists have consistently supported its continuation, citing its importance for protecting the region’s biodiversity. However, political debates over the ban’s impact on interstate connectivity and local businesses have continued.



# Basavaraj Horatti to Resign as Legislative Council Chairman

TPN Correspondent | Hubballi

Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti has announced his decision to resign from his post, expressing dissatisfaction with the recent Assembly proceedings. He revealed that he had initially submitted

his resignation on March 18, but it was not accepted due to technical reasons. Now, he plans to formally resign on April 1st.

Horatti stated that he was displeased with the way members conducted themselves in the legislature session, including violations of decorum such

as sloganeering and displaying banners. While he refrained from blaming any individual, he emphasized that such actions disrespect the Chair and disrupt House proceedings.

“There should not be any sloganeering or display of banners and placards by members as

per norms,” he asserted.

Horatti, a veteran legislator, was elected Chairman of the Council on December 21, 2022. He had previously held the position between February 9, 2021, and May 17, 2022, as well as from June 21, 2018, to December 12, 2018. With an extensive polit-

ical career, he has been elected as a Council member a record eight times since 1980.

His decision to step down comes at a time of heightened political tensions in Karnataka, raising questions about the state of legislative affairs and governance in the Council.



# BBMP Targets Property Tax Defaulters, Calls for Public Support

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**

Bengaluru's civic body, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), has revealed that 3.49 lakh property owners have defaulted on tax payments, owing a total of ₹390 crore. Meanwhile, nearly 17 lakh property owners have paid their dues on time, highlighting the disparity between compliant taxpayers and chronic defaulters.

According to BBMP officials, 1.73 lakh property owners have been identified as chronic defaulters, while another 1.76 lakh properties have yet to clear their tax dues for the 2024-25 financial year. Among the city's zones, Mahadevapu-

ra has the highest number of defaulters (81,481), followed by Bommanahalli (57,786) and RR Nagar (47,873), areas primarily located on the city's outskirts.

Despite repeated notices, SMS reminders, and direct calls, many defaulters continue to evade payments. The BBMP had previously introduced a one-time tax settlement scheme that allowed defaulters to clear dues without penalties and interest, but a significant number did not take advantage of this opportunity.

Speaking on the issue, BBMP Special Commissioner (Revenue) Munish Moudgil defended the civic body's firm stance against defaulters. "Supporting



these 10% chronic defaulters is unfair to the 90% honest taxpayers. The BBMP is clear and determined to collect property tax as per the law, and we urge

the public to morally support this drive," he stated.

With the financial year nearing its end, the BBMP has intensified its efforts to recover



pending dues. Officials stress that ensuring tax compliance is crucial for funding essential civic services such as road maintenance, waste management, and infrastructure development.

The BBMP has also warned that strict legal measures may be taken against persistent defaulters. Property owners who fail to pay their dues risk legal action, property attachment, and other penalties. Officials urge residents to cooperate and clear their pending taxes to avoid such consequences.

As Bengaluru continues to expand, property tax remains a vital source of revenue for the city's development. The BBMP hopes that by taking a firm stance against defaulters, it can encourage greater compliance and fairness in tax collection.



## Bengaluru Woman Steals Wheel Clamp, Flees After Police Action

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**

The Rajaji Nagar police in Bengaluru are searching for a woman who allegedly removed a wheel clamp placed on her car by traffic authorities and fled after misbehaving with an officer. The incident took place on March 18 when the woman was found using a defective silencer. In response, traffic police clamped her vehicle as part of their enforcement action.

Instead of complying with the penalty, the woman reportedly called a mechanic, replaced the clamped wheel,

and drove away. The police discovered the tampering during their routine checks and launched an investigation. The complaint, filed by traffic police officer Murali S.R., led to the registration of a case against the unidentified woman on March 23. She has been booked under charges of theft, criminal intimidation, and intentional insult. Authorities are now working to identify and apprehend her for interfering with police property and evading legal consequences. The incident has raised concerns about the growing defiance of traffic rules in the city.



## Coffee Santhe 2025 Wraps Up in Bengaluru, Celebrating Coffee Culture

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**

The seventh edition of Coffee Santhe 2025 concluded on Sunday in Bengaluru, bringing together coffee lovers, businesses, and industry experts for a three-day celebration of coffee culture. Organized by the Bengaluru-based Women's Coffee Alliance-India (WCAI), the India chapter of the International Women's Coffee Association (IWCA), the event was held at Freedom Park.

This year's Coffee Santhe featured 55 stalls, offering visitors a chance to explore a wide range of coffee-related products. From high-end brewing equipment and specialty coffee beans to artisanal accessories, the event showcased the latest trends and innovations in the coffee industry. Enthusiasts had the opportunity to engage with experts, sample different

coffee varieties, and learn more about the art of brewing. One of the highlights of the event was the series of competitions that tested the creativity and skills of coffee professionals. Participants demonstrated their expertise in brewing techniques, and winners were selected based on creativity, precision, and presentation.

The Women Stars Brewer Championship was won by Nahid Khan of Blue Tokai, while Nithin Bhishma took home the title for Robusta Brewing Skills Championship. Coffee Santhe 2025 successfully created a platform for coffee businesses and professionals to network and engage with the growing community of coffee enthusiasts in Bengaluru. The event not only celebrated India's rich coffee heritage but also promoted innovation and excellence in the industry.

# BMTC Deploys 5 Mobile Service Vans to Boost Bus Maintenance in Bengaluru

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**

The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) has introduced five newly-procured Mobile Service Vans (MSVs) to enhance bus maintenance and improve service efficiency across the city. The initiative, launched on March 24, 2025, is expected to reduce delays caused by mechanical issues and ensure uninterrupted public transport services.

BMTC operates a vast fleet of 6,835 buses, running an average of 5,875 trips per day, serving thousands of commuters. With such a large network, breakdowns and technical issues are inevitable. To address these challenges, BMTC has been using two mobile service vans at key locations—one along the Outer Ring Road in Marathahalli and another stationed at Kempegowda Bus Stand. These vans provide on-the-spot maintenance to minimize downtime for buses that develop mechanical faults during service.

With the addition of five more MSVs, BMTC aims to expand this rapid repair ser-

vice to more areas. The newly deployed vans will cover Shivajinagar, Yeshwantpur, Jayanagar, Banashankari, Silk Board, Nayandahalli Junction, and other nearby locations. These areas witness heavy bus traffic and frequent maintenance issues, making mobile service vans a crucial addition to BMTC's operations.

The mobile service vans are equipped with essential tools and spare parts, allowing technicians to carry out quick repairs on-site. This reduces the need for buses to return to depots for minor issues, thereby improving operational efficiency and ensuring a smoother travel experience for passengers. The initiative is expected to enhance the reliability of BMTC services, prevent service disruptions, and contribute to better public transportation in Bengaluru.

BMTC officials have emphasized that the launch of these vans is only the first phase of the initiative. Depending on its success, more mobile service vans could be introduced in the future to further strengthen maintenance support for



the city's public bus network. By ensuring timely repairs and minimizing breakdown-related delays, BMTC aims to provide a more dependable and efficient transportation system for Bengaluru's growing commuter population.

# Man Arrested for Trying to Run Over Police During Vehicle Check

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**

Bengaluru police have arrested a 33-year-old man for allegedly attempting to run over two police personnel who were conducting a routine night vehicle check. The suspect, identified as Mahadevaswamy M, also known as Ramachari, is a waste paper shop owner and a resident of KP Aghahara.

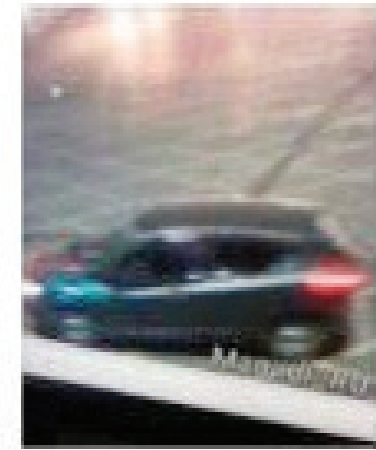
The incident took place on the night of March 3 and 4 along West of Chord Road in Rajajinagar. A police team, led by sub-inspector Manjunatha NV, along with constables Karthik UK and Dhareppa Tonne, had set up barricades to inspect vehicles during their night patrol. Around midnight, Mahadevaswamy approached the checkpoint in a Tata Altroz. Instead of stopping when signaled, he allegedly accelerated and attempted to run over the two constables.

The entire act was captured on a nearby CCTV camera. The suspect's car came to a stop about 200 meters ahead, prompting the officers to chase after him on their department-issued two-wheeler.



When they reached his vehicle and asked him to step out, Mahadevaswamy reportedly made a sharp turn, trying to hit them again. The car collided with the two-wheeler, knocking the officers down and causing them injuries. Before they could restrain him, the suspect managed to flee the scene.

Following the attack, the Magadi Road police registered a case against Mahadevaswamy. After reviewing CCTV footage and tracking the vehicle's registration, the police successfully identified and arrested him. He has been charged under multiple sections of the Indian



Penal Code, including attempt to murder, voluntarily causing hurt, and assault or use of criminal force against a public servant. The police also impounded the Tata Altroz as part of their investigation.

Law enforcement officials condemned the act, emphasizing the risks officers face while ensuring public safety. "This kind of behavior is completely unacceptable. Attacking police officers on duty is a serious offense, and strict legal action will be taken," said an officer from the investigation team.

The incident highlights the dangers police personnel en-



counter during night patrols. Authorities have urged citizens to cooperate with routine checks, which are conducted for public safety and crime prevention. They also warned that any attempt to evade or attack law enforcement officials will be met with strict legal consequences.

Mahadevaswamy remains in police custody as the investigation continues. The police are also looking into whether he has any prior criminal records. The injured officers are reportedly recovering from minor injuries sustained during the attack.



# “Kunal Kamra Stands Amid Controversy”

TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

Comedian Kunal Kamra has told the Mumbai police that he has no regrets over his “gaddar” (traitor) remark, which was perceived as a reference to Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. According to sources, Mr. Kamra stated that he would only apologise if directed by the courts, despite Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis demanding an apology.

Mr. Fadnavis, addressing the Assembly, argued that freedom of expression could not be extended to “low-level comedy” that disrespects the Deputy Chief Minister. Speaking from Tamil Nadu, Mr. Kamra also denied allegations that he was paid by the opposition to target Mr. Shinde, even offering to let the authorities examine his fi-

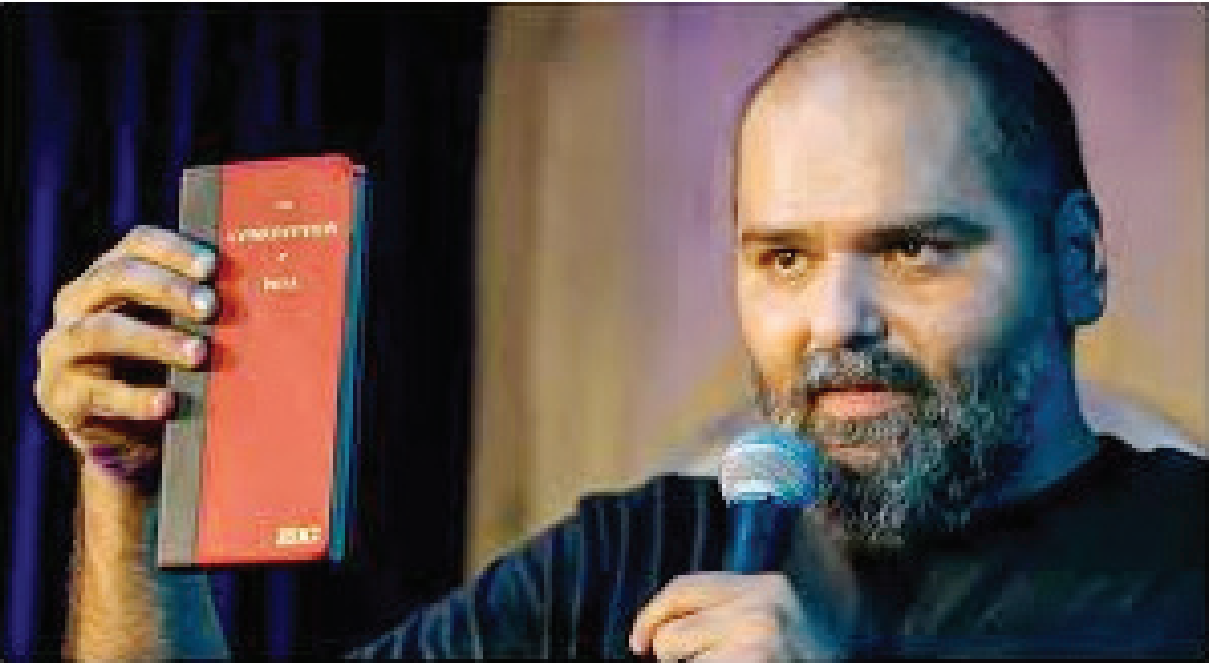
nances to verify this claim.

The controversy escalated after a Mumbai studio that hosted Kamra’s show was demolished by the city’s civic body, citing an unspecified violation. The demolition followed an attack on the studio by Shiv Sena workers loyal to Mr. Shinde. On Sunday night, the vandals stormed the Habitat Studio in Mumbai’s Khar area, damaging property and hurling chairs. Videos of the attack surfaced online, showing a mob running amok.

Later, protesters burned Mr. Kamra’s photograph outside a police station in Thane, a region considered Mr. Shinde’s political stronghold. Despite the vandalism, all 11 people arrested were granted bail within hours. The owners of Habitat Studio distanced themselves from Mr. Kamra’s comments,

stating that they could not be held responsible for statements made by performers. They later announced the temporary shutdown of the venue, citing concerns over safety and the ability to provide a platform for free expression.

The controversy stems from Kamra’s remark, which allegedly referred to Mr. Shinde’s 2022 rebellion against former Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, a move that led to the Shiv Sena split and the fall of the Thackeray-led government. Mr. Shinde subsequently aligned with the BJP to form the current Maharashtra government. Multiple police complaints have been filed against Kamra, including one by Maharashtra Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik. Meanwhile, opposition leaders, including Aaditya Thackeray, criticized



the response to Kamra’s remarks, calling Mr. Shinde an “insecure coward” and pointing out that the comedian had

not named anyone directly. Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi also condemned the government’s reaction, stating that

the vandalism indicated the joke had struck a nerve and raised concerns over growing intolerance.



## Karnataka’s Groundwater Recharge Drops, Extraction Rises

TPN Correspondent | Bangalore

A recent report by the Central Groundwater Board has revealed a concerning trend in Karnataka’s groundwater resources. The ‘National Compilation on Dynamic Groundwater Resources of India - 2024’ highlights a decline in annual groundwater recharge while extraction levels continue to rise.

Between 2023 and 2024, Karnataka’s annual groundwater recharge decreased from 18.93 billion cubic meters (bcm) to 18.74 bcm, and the annual ex-

tractable groundwater resources dropped from 17.08 bcm to 16.88 bcm. Despite this decline, groundwater extraction increased from 66.26% in 2023 to 68.44% in 2024. The highest levels of groundwater extraction were recorded in Kolar at 193.35% and Bengaluru Urban at 186.70%, indicating severe over-extraction in these regions.

The report states that the current annual groundwater extraction in Karnataka stands at 11.55 bcm, amounting to 68.44% of the total available groundwater. This growing de-

pendence on groundwater raises concerns about long-term sustainability, particularly in regions already experiencing depletion.

Officials have been instructed to monitor borewells closely and prevent contamination in areas where groundwater serves as the primary water source.

The findings emphasize the urgent need for conservation measures, stricter regulations, and alternative water management strategies to prevent further depletion of Karnataka’s groundwater reserves.

## Bengaluru Streets Covered in Mysterious White Foam After Rain

TPN Correspondent | Bangalore

After a heavy downpour on Saturday, Bengaluru’s streets were blanketed in an unusual white foam, resembling snow. While the rain provided relief from the city’s scorching heat, the appearance of foam in the NIMHANS Dairy Circle area left many puzzled. Videos and images of the bizarre sight quickly went viral on social media, sparking curiosity and speculation about its cause.

An Instagram user named Milan captured the strange phenomenon and shared a video with the caption: “Does anyone know what’s happening? Bangalore’s streets turned into a foam party after an unexpected summer rain!” The footage showed roads covered in thick foam, with water pooling along the edges. Trees lining the street formed an arch, and as vehicles passed, their tires left distinct trails, creating the illusion of a recent snowfall.

The post drew widespread attention, with several users attempting to explain the mysterious foam. Some linked it to soapnut tree flowers, which are known to produce foam-like substances when mixed with rainwater. One user commented, “It’s due to the soapnut tree. During the first rains,



these flowers create a foamy substance when they come in contact with water. Risky for two-wheelers as it’s slippery.” Another user explained, “This happens when soapnut fruits (Shikakai) fall from trees and interact with rainwater and vehicle movement. These soapnuts are actually used in shampoos and natural cleansers.”

Others reacted with humor, with one user jokingly stating, “Someone must have dropped Surf Excel while driving home.” Another quipped, “I thought this was the new ‘Manali Bangalore Yojna’ scheme where artificial snow is spread on roads!”

This is not the first time Bengaluru has witnessed such an occurrence. The city has previously experienced foam formation, particularly around

Bellandur Lake, where toxic froth has frequently surfaced. Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have attributed the frothing in Bellandur Lake to untreated sewage, detergents, and industrial waste mixing in the water. However, in this case, experts suggest the foam on the streets is likely a natural reaction caused by soapnut trees rather than pollution.

While the phenomenon may look picturesque, it poses a risk to motorists, especially two-wheeler riders, as the foamy layer can make roads slippery. Authorities have yet to issue an official statement regarding the occurrence, but residents remain fascinated by this rare and visually striking event.

# “Chennai Techie Accuses Wife, Police of Harassment”

TPN Correspondent | Chennai

Prasanna Sankar, a co-founder of the multi-billion dollar HR-tech startup Rippling, has accused his estranged wife, Dhivya, and the Chennai police of harassment amid a bitter divorce and custody battle over their nine-year-old son. In a series of posts on X, Sankar alleged that the police were attempting to extort ₹25 lakh from him while investigating a kidnapping complaint filed by his wife. He claimed that authorities were illegally tracking his phone, car, UPI transactions, and IP address despite no formal FIR against him. Fearing wrongful arrest, he said he was “on the run” with his son.

Sankar claimed that his wife had been having an affair, leading to their separation. He alleged that she was unhappy with the financial settlement during their divorce proceedings and, in response, filed false complaints against him, including allegations of

domestic violence, rape, and circulating her private videos. According to Sankar, the Singapore police investigated these claims and cleared him of all charges. He further accused Dhivya of “abducting” their son to the U.S., which forced him to file an international child abduction case. He stated that a U.S. court ruled in his favor, leading to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under which he had to pay his wife ₹9 crore and ₹4.3 lakh per month while sharing joint custody of their child.

According to Sankar, Dhivya later asked him to come to Chennai to continue their shared custody arrangement. However, conflicts escalated when she allegedly refused to comply with the MoU, particularly over depositing their



child’s passport in a shared locker. She then declared the agreement invalid and threatened to return to the U.S. to file for divorce again. This led Sankar to approach the courts, stating he would only share custody if the passport was secured. Instead of attending court, he claimed, Dhivya visited his hotel late at night and attempted to lure their son to the lobby. When he intervened,

she called the police and filed a kidnapping complaint against him.

As police arrived at his residence, Sankar fled with his son, fearing an unfair arrest. He alleged that despite providing proof of his child’s safety, the police continued to pursue him, even raiding his mother’s house. He also claimed that authorities detained his friend, Gokul, who had helped

him pick up his son, without a warrant. According to Sankar, Gokul was held without an FIR and was being pressured to force Sankar’s surrender. He further accused the police of seizing the phone of a caretaker he had paid ₹200 via UPI and raiding an Airbnb where he had stayed.

Sankar alleged that police and his wife were preparing a joint press conference to accuse him of multiple crimes. He stated that officers had asked his friend to sign a document discrediting his social media claims and that he was being blackmailed into deleting his posts. He further accused the police of demanding ₹25 lakh for Gokul’s release, claiming they were targeting him because of his financial success. However, a top police official in Chennai denied these allegations, calling them “baseless.”

Meanwhile, Dhivya countered Sankar’s claims, alleging that he forcibly took their son and never returned him. She

stated that both she and their son were U.S. citizens and had come to India recently, only for Sankar to separate them again. She reportedly called him a “sex predator,” accusing him of secretly recording women and claiming he was once arrested in Singapore for this but later released.

Additionally, she alleged that Sankar had transferred their matrimonial assets to his father to evade taxes, who then passed them to his brother in Thailand. She further claimed that he had coerced her into signing documents that prevented her from reporting tax crimes in the U.S.

The case has since escalated, with both parties making serious allegations against each other. While Sankar maintains that he is being unfairly targeted, his wife insists that he is guilty of wrongdoing. The legal battle continues, drawing widespread public attention to the complex and high-stakes dispute.



# Nehru's Obsession with RSS

Opted for selective secularism over fostering a sence of citizenship.

The stance of the Indian National Congress on Hinduism has been a subject of considerable debate and contention over the years. At the forefront of this discourse is Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, whose limited understanding of Hinduism significantly influenced the party's approach to the religion. Nehru's tendency to conflate Hinduism with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu nationalist organization, led to a broad and often unfounded disdain for Hinduism within the Congress framework. This conflation not only misrepresented the diverse and pluralistic nature of Hinduism but also painted it in a negative light, leaving lasting repercussions for the community. Nehru's policies, driven by a desire to project an image of secularism and liberalism to secure minority votes and gain international recognition, often came at the expense of Hindu interests. In his quest to be seen as a champion of minority rights, he inadvertently marginalized the Hindu community, making them scapegoats for various socio-political issues. This approach fostered an environment where Hindu identity was often viewed with suspicion, leading to a growing sense of alienation among Hindus. Moreover, Nehru's disconnection from Hindu practices further exemplified this ideological rift. His lack of participation in Hindu rituals and absence from temples were not merely personal choices; they symbolized a broader disconnect between the Congress

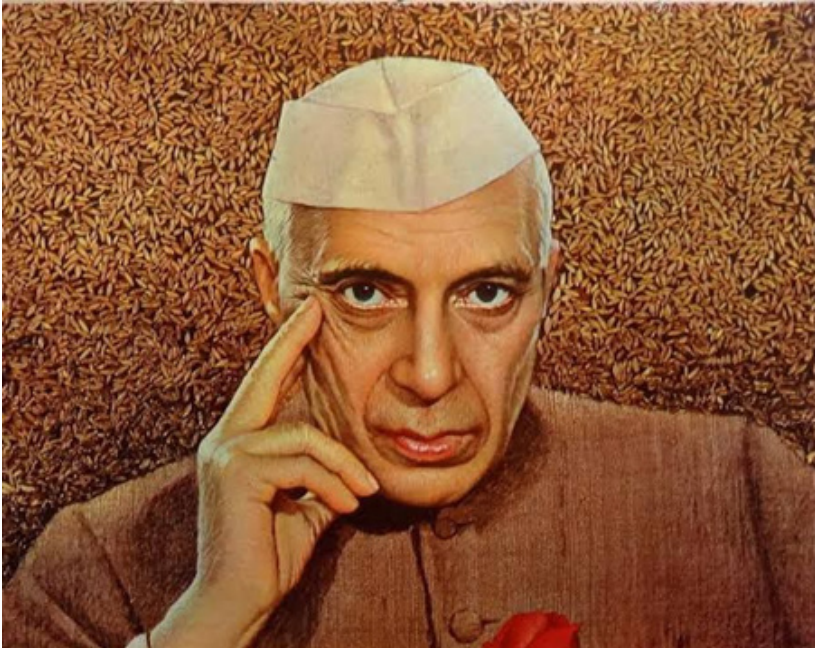
Failed in promoting the idea that all citizens should first identify with the nation-state.

Nehruvian secularism focused on managing religious diversity through shared sense of citizenship.

For instance, the continuation of separate personal laws for different religious communities, instead of implementing a Uniform Civil Code, is often cited as an example of this selective secularism.

In contrast, an approach centered on citizenship would have emphasized the responsibilities and rights of individuals irrespective of their religious affiliations, fostering a stronger national consciousness.

leadership and the cultural and religious sentiments of a signif-



Dr. Buragadda Srinadh

icant portion of the Indian populace. This detachment contributed to the perception that the Congress party was against the values and beliefs of ordinary Hindus. In his pursuit of minority votes, Nehru strategically positioned himself and the Congress party as oppositional to Hinduism,

perceiving it as a means to consolidate power and maintain a secular image. This political maneuvering laid the groundwork for an anti-Hindu sentiment within the party, which can be traced back to Nehru's era. Over the years, this sentiment has evolved into a significant ideological force within Congress, influencing its policies and rhetoric against Hinduism. As a result, the relationship between the Congress party and Hinduism has become increasingly fraught, shaped by a complex interplay of political strategy, historical grievances, and cultural identity. The legacy of Nehru's approach continues to resonate, shaping the party's stance on Hinduism and its engagement with the Hindu community in contemporary India. This ongoing tension reflects

broader societal dynamics and highlights the challenges of navigating religious identity in a diverse and pluralistic nation. Jawaharlal Nehru and the Indian National Congress shaped the political landscape of post-independence India. Their emphasis on terms like secularism and the promotion of a liberal society reflected a vision of a nation that embraced diversity and pluralism—primarily for their own electoral strategy. However, this strategy often overshadowed the fundamental principle of equality among all individuals as citizens. While secularism is undoubtedly important in a country as diverse as India, its prioritization sometimes came at the expense of a more robust discourse on citizenship and the responsibilities that accompany it. In contrast, many developed nations have historically placed a strong emphasis on citizenship and the rule of law as foundational elements of their democratic frameworks. These nations have built their political identities around the idea that citizenship entails not only rights but also responsibilities, and that the rule of law is essential for ensuring justice and equality for all individuals. This focus on citizenship has fostered a sense of belonging and accountability among citizens, reinforcing the idea that everyone, regardless of background, is entitled to equal treatment under the law. India, however, presents a unique case. The Congress Party, under Nehru's leadership,

initially prioritized secular propaganda as a means to unify a diverse population and mitigate communal tensions. While this approach was intended to retain power, it often led to the neglect of more foundational aspects of citizenship and responsibilities. The emphasis on secularism, while crucial for maintaining harmony in a multi-religious society, did not sufficiently address the need for a comprehensive understanding of what it means to be a citizen in a democratic state. This divergence in focus has had lasting implications for Indian society. The lack of a strong emphasis on citizenship and responsibilities in the early years of independence may have contributed to ongoing challenges related to social justice, inequality, and the protection of individual rights. In many ways, the initial prioritization of secularism over citizenship has created a complex landscape where issues of identity, belonging, and legal recognition remain contentious. As India continues to evolve as a democracy, the need for a balanced approach that integrates the principles of secularism with a robust understanding of citizenship and the rule of law becomes increasingly important. By fostering a culture that values both diversity and equality, India can work towards realizing the vision of a truly inclusive society—where all individuals are recognized as equal citizens, entitled to the full spectrum of rights, protections and responsibilities under the law.

## Battle for the ₹10 Beverage Market

### How FMCG Giants Are Reshaping India's Thirst Economy

#### THE POINT DECK

As summer temperatures rise, so does the competition among India's top beverage brands, all vying for dominance in the ₹10 price segment. With middle-class consumers seeking affordable and refreshing options, established players like Pepsi and Coca-Cola now find themselves facing an onslaught of competition from Ambani's Campa Cola, Amul's TRU, Parle Agro's Smoothh, and a range of new entrants.

#### Why the ₹10 Price Point Matters

In a price-sensitive market like India, the ₹10 segment holds a unique appeal. It offers affordability without compromising brand loyalty, making it an ideal entry point for companies looking to capture a wider consumer base. Historically, this price bracket has driven mass adoption across various FMCG categories, and beverages are no exception. Companies are increasingly leveraging it to push everything from carbonated drinks to dairy-based refreshments and energy boosters.

#### Reliance's Campa Cola Shakes Up the Market

Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) has aggressively expanded its footprint in the beverage industry with the revival of Campa Cola. The brand, once a household name in the 1970s and 80s, made a strong comeback last year, launching products at competitive pricing to disrupt the stronghold of Coca-Cola and Pepsi. Campa Cola has already claimed over 10% of the sparkling beverage market in select states, with expectations to cross ₹1,000 crore in revenue in FY25. In addition to Campa Cola, Reliance Consumer has been strategically expanding its beverage portfolio. In January 2025, the company launched Rasik Gluco Energy at ₹10, followed by Spinner, a sports drink co-created with legendary cricketer Muttiah Muralitharan. These new offerings



directly challenge traditional hydration and energy-boosting beverages, making Reliance a formidable force in the market.

#### Amul's Foray into Beverages

The Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), better known for its dairy dominance, has also jumped into the battle with its Amul TRU dairy-based fruit drinks. Priced at ₹10 for a 150 ml pack, TRU is Amul's attempt to capture a share of the growing flavored milk and fruit beverage segment. The brand has already seen success with its butter-milk, which, despite having higher-priced variants, finds maximum sales in the ₹10 pouch category.

#### Parle Agro's Smoothh Carves Its Own Niche

Parle Agro, the company behind the ever-popular Frooti, entered the dairy beverage space with Smoothh in 2021. The brand, backed by actor Varun Dhawan's endorsement, has quickly scaled up, reaching ₹685 crore in sales by 2023. Smoothh benefits from Parle Agro's massive distribution network of over two million outlets, ensuring easy accessibility across the country.

#### Who Will Quench India's Thirst?

According to ICRIER, India's beverages market—spanning carbonated soft drinks, bottled water, fruit-based drinks, and juices—was valued at ₹67,100 crore in 2019. This number is projected to skyrocket to ₹1.47 trillion by 2030, signaling a massive growth opportunity for companies willing to innovate and compete in the affordable beverage segment. The ₹10 beverage market is no longer just about soft drinks; it has transformed into a battleground of innovation, affordability, and brand loyalty. With an increasing shift toward value-for-money products, consumer preferences are shaping a market where both global giants and home-grown brands must fight to stay relevant. While Reliance's aggressive pricing strategy and distribution muscle make it a serious contender, brands like Amul, Parle Agro, and PepsiCo are not backing down. As the competition intensifies, one thing is certain: India's thirst for affordable, refreshing drinks is only getting stronger, and brands that can blend quality with affordability will emerge victorious.

## Rippling founder shares 'Heartbreaking' Legal Disputes with Wife

Prasanna Sankar, co-founder of the \$10-billion tech company Rippling, is embroiled in a highly publicized legal dispute with his wife, leading to a dramatic turn of events. Facing serious allegations including assault and rape, which he strongly denies, Prasanna claims he is fleeing Tamil Nadu to escape what he describes as police harassment and retaliation over a settlement dispute. The conflict arose from Prasanna's divorce proceedings with his wife, Dhivya. He alleges that after refusing to pay more than the agreed ₹9 crore settlement, she retaliated with fabricated accusations. The dispute intensified when Dhivya allegedly took their son to the United States without consent, leading Prasanna to file an international child abduction case. A US court reportedly ruled in his favor, ordering the child's return to India. Prasanna insists he has full custody rights under a Memorandum of Understanding and claims that his son was handed over to him voluntarily. However, he says his legal troubles escalated due to police pressure, forcing him into hiding. Prasanna has detailed his ordeal in a series of posts on Twitter (now X), alleging police intimidation and unlawful detentions. He accused Chennai police of picking up his friend Gokul from Bengaluru without a warrant and holding him in custody to force him into removing his social media posts. "If I do not remove my Twitter posts, he'd be in trouble," Prasanna wrote,

highlighting what he sees as an abuse of power. He also claimed to be moving between cities with his 9-year-old son, evading authorities while seeking legal relief. Despite the severe allegations, Prasanna remains defiant. "I built an empire from nothing. I can handle this even if a state is on the other side. I'm a survivor, not a victim," he declared. He plans to file a court petition on March 24, seeking protection from police harassment.



#### Social Media Reactions

Prasanna's revelations have sparked widespread debate online. Many users sympathized with his situation, expressing frustration over alleged misuse of legal provisions. "Read it once. Then twice. And somewhere between the words, I felt something break. A man. A husband. A father," wrote one user. Another remarked, "This breaks my heart! The sad state of justice in our country hits harder when things like these happen closer to the neighborhood and to someone who has a lot." As the legal battle unfolds, the case has ignited discussions about **custody rights, police actions, and the fairness of legal proceedings in domestic disputes.**



# Plea In Top Court Challenges 1991 Ruling On Immunity To Judges

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the 1991 judgment in the K Veeraswami case, which grants immunity to judges from criminal proceedings without prior approval from the Chief Justice of India (CJI). The plea also seeks a directive to the Delhi Police to register an FIR over the alleged discovery of semi-burnt cash at the residence of Delhi High Court judge Yashwant Varma.

The alleged cash discovery followed a fire at Justice Varma's official residence in Lutyens' Delhi at 11:35 pm on March 14, prompting the fire department to respond and extinguish the blaze.

In response to the controversy, CJI Sanjiv Khanna withdrew judicial work from Justice Varma and formed a three-member in-house committee to conduct an inquiry. The Delhi High Court Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya was also directed not to assign judicial duties to Justice Varma until further notice.

The petition, filed by advocate Mathews J Nedumpara and three others on March 23, argues that the immunity granted to judges violates the constitutional principle of equality before the law and undermines judicial accountability.

The plea challenges the 1991 Supreme Court ruling, which stated that "no criminal case shall be registered against a High



Court or Supreme Court judge without prior permission from the CJI." The petitioners contend that this decision was made "per incuriam" (in ignorance of law) and "sub silentio" (without explicit legal consideration).

The plea demands the recognition of a cognizable offence in the alleged cash recovery case, urging the Delhi Police to register an FIR. It also seeks a declaration that the in-house inquiry committee lacks jurisdiction to investigate the incident and calls for the prohibition of external interference in law enforcement duties related

to the case. Additionally, it advocates for the implementation of the Judicial Standards and Accountability Bill, 2010, which aimed to curb judicial corruption but lapsed.

The plea asserts that "equality before law is a fundamental principle of the Constitution" and that the judiciary should not be treated as a special class immune from penal laws. It also questions why, despite the alleged cash recovery, no FIR has been filed against Justice Varma so far.

The Supreme Court is expected to take up the matter for consideration soon.



## Sanitation Worker Finds Burnt Rs 500 Notes

Outside Justice Yashwant Varma's House

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

In a new twist to the 'cash at judge's home' controversy, a sanitation worker discovered burnt ₹500 currency notes while sweeping outside Justice Yashwant Varma's residence at 30, Tughlak Road in central Delhi on Sunday.

The incident caused a minor stir in the high-security area, which is close to the Tughlak Road police station. The sanitation worker, employed by the NDMC, clicked photos of the burnt notes and informed his seniors, who then alerted the police.

This discovery seemingly supports the police's claim that currency notes were burnt in a fire that broke out on Holi night (March 14) in an outhouse of Justice Varma's official residence. However, Justice Varma has strongly denied any presence of cash on his premises, calling the entire episode a conspiracy to malign him. The controversy has led to Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna ordering a probe and directing the Delhi High Court Chief Justice not to assign any judicial work to Justice Varma until the investigation is completed.

On Friday, Chief Justice Khanna constituted a three-member committee to probe the allegations against Justice Varma.

The committee has not been given a fixed deadline, and further action will be decided based on its findings once the report is submitted.

## "Elitists Hired As Paid Agents To Divert Attention"

- Shiv Sena MP On Kunal Kamra Row



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Shiv Sena MP Milind Deora on Monday slammed comedian Kunal Kamra, accusing him of being a "paid agent" used to divert public attention from critical issues like the Disha Salian case. His remarks come after Kamra mocked Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde in his show, leading to an angry backlash from Shiv Sena workers.

Deora alleged that political elites have hired classist elitists like Kamra to serve their interests. "I can say this clearly—those who are entitled monarchists in Indian politics have, in a way, hired classist elitist people to do their work, to protect them, and to distract from the Disha Salian case," he said, referring to the death of celebrity manager Disha Salian, which has been a subject of controversy. He also pointed out that Salian's father had filed a petition, suggesting that Kamra's act was a diversion tactic.

While acknowledging the role of comedy in democracy, Deora emphasized the difference between humor and elitism. He criticized Kamra for mocking a leader from a humble background, stating, "We take pride in the fact that the Deputy Chief Minister of India's second-largest state was once an auto-rickshaw driver. We take pride that the Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy was once a tea seller. But the language Kamra used exposes him as a paid agent."

Deora also took aim at Congress for defending Kamra's right to free speech, questioning their selective outrage. "What did the Chief Minister of Telangana say recently? He said journalists should be stripped and beaten publicly. Did Congress react to that? When Aditya Thackeray's father was CM, what did he do for Kangana Ranaut's safety when she was just a Bollywood actress, not an MP? They demolished Kangana's office. Such people have no right to speak about democracy and the Constitution." Earlier, Shiv Sena workers stormed Mumbai's Habitat Studio, where Kamra was performing, and vandalized the venue. The police later summoned them for questioning.

During his show, Kamra had taken a dig at Shinde, using a modified version of a song from 'Dil To Pagal Hai', saying, "Meri nazar se tum dekho toh, gaddar nazar wo aaye. Haaye." The remark, referring to Shinde's 2022 rebellion that led to the split of Shiv Sena, drew laughter from the audience and was later shared by Kamra on social media platform X.

## MPs' Salaries Hiked To Rs 1.24 Lakh Per Month; Allowances, Pensions Also Raised



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Union government has increased the salaries, allowances, and pensions of Members of Parliament (MPs), with the revised pay structure coming into effect from April 1, 2023. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs issued a gazette notification announcing the revision, marking

the first major salary hike since 2018.

According to the notification, the monthly salary of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs has been increased from ₹1 lakh to ₹1.24 lakh. The daily allowance provided to MPs during parliamentary sessions has also been revised, rising from ₹2,000 to ₹2,500. Additionally, the pension for former MPs has been raised from ₹25,000 to ₹31,000

per month. The additional pension for every year of service beyond five years has been increased from ₹2,000 to ₹2,500 per year.

The allowances covering constituency and office expenses are also set to rise. As per the 2018 revision, MPs received ₹70,000 per month as a constituency allowance and ₹60,000 per month as an office allowance. These figures will now see an upward revision, though exact details are yet to be disclosed.

Apart from salaries and pensions, MPs continue to enjoy several benefits, including 34 free domestic flights annually for themselves and their families, first-class train travel, and a mileage allowance for road travel. They are also entitled to 50,000 free electricity units and 4,000 kilolitres of water annually.

MPs receive rent-free housing in New Delhi for the duration of their tenure, with hostel rooms, apartments, or bungalows allocated based on seniority. Those opting out of official accommodation are eligible for a monthly housing allowance.

The latest revision comes amid the ongoing budget session of Parliament and is aimed at adjusting MPs' compensation in line with inflation and rising living costs.

## Hindi Was Compulsory 3rd Language During Congress Rule

TPN Correspondent | Tiruchirappalli

Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai on Sunday alleged that Hindi was a mandatory third language during the Congress-led UPA regime and credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for introducing flexibility in the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Speaking at a public meeting, he accused the ruling DMK of failing to make Tamil the compulsory medium of instruction despite governing the state for years.

Referring to NEP 2020, Annamalai stated, "For the first time, Modi changed the third language policy from mandatory Hindi to allowing students to choose any Indian language. Now, students can study Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, or even Hindi." Annamalai Targets DMK Over Education Policy

He further pointed out that countries like China, Germany, and Japan have made significant progress by providing education in their native languages. He claimed that while the DMK has been in power for decades, it never made Tamil



the compulsory medium of instruction. "It was Modi who ensured Tamil as the mandatory language of instruction from classes 1 to 5," he added.

Highlighting the BJP's ongoing campaign in support of NEP 2020, Annamalai revealed that 26 lakh signatures had been collected within 18 days. He also took a dig at the DMK's previous signature

campaigns, including their opposition to NEET, questioning their effectiveness. He further accused DMK leaders, including ministers, of making derogatory remarks about North Indians and dismissed Chief Minister Stalin's claim that his party would secure over 200 seats in the 2026 Tamil Nadu Assembly elections. "Stalin is living in an illusion," he remarked.



# Protests Erupt Across Turkey Over Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu's Arrest

Opposition calls arrest a bid to block 2028 presidential run.

- Dilek Kaya Imamoglu warns authorities of consequences.
- Imamoglu faces accusations of corruption and links to terrorism.
- Protests reflect frustration with Turkey’s democracy, economy, and public services.

TPN Correspondent | Istanbul

## Protests Escalate Following Mayor’s Arrest

Turkey is witnessing one of the most significant outbursts of public unrest in over a decade, triggered by the controversial arrest of Istanbul’s mayor, Ekrem Imamoglu. The protests, which began on Wednesday following his detention, have spread rapidly across the country, despite government-imposed bans on public gatherings. Imamoglu, a key figure in Turkey’s opposition movement, was arrested during a pre-dawn raid by hundreds of police officers, leading to widespread condemnation from his supporters and opposition parties.

In a passionate speech to the crowds gathered outside Istanbul’s City Hall, Imamoglu’s wife, Dilek Kaya Imamoglu, declared, “He will defeat you! You will lose!” She described the injustice faced by her husband as symbolic of the struggles many ordinary citizens face under the current government. Her words resonated deeply with the protesters, with many expressing that Imamoglu’s plight echoed their own frustrations with the state of democracy and governance in Turkey.

The opposition Republican People’s Party (CHP) has labeled Imamoglu’s arrest a “political coup,” arguing that the charges against him were fabricated to eliminate a strong challenger to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the upcoming 2028 elections. Imamoglu, who became the mayor of Istanbul in 2019 and was re-elected in 2024, is considered one of the most prominent figures capable of challenging Erdogan’s long-standing rule.



## Allegations and Charges Against Imamoglu

Imamoglu is facing serious charges including corruption, bribery, and links to terrorism due to his political dealings with a pro-Kurdish party. The Turkish authorities claim that he was involved in creating a criminal organization, rigging tenders, and accepting bribes. Despite the severe nature of these accusations, the court has refrained from formalizing charges related to terrorism, focusing instead on the financial crimes. His arrest and the subsequent legal battles have intensified political tensions, with his supporters accusing the government of using the judicial

system to undermine political opposition. As protests continue to grow, it is clear that Imamoglu’s arrest has become a focal point for broader societal concerns about the erosion of democratic rights, political freedoms, and the stability of Turkey’s economic and social systems under Erdogan’s rule. The ongoing unrest and Imamoglu’s rising popularity signal a challenging period ahead for the Turkish government as public dissatisfaction with the regime intensifies.

# Pakistan: Islamabad High Court restores biweekly meetings for Imran Khan in Adiala Jail

Allowed to meet family, lawyers, and friends biweekly, but visitors are prohibited



TPN Correspondent | Islamabad

In a significant ruling on Monday, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) restored biweekly meetings for former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who has been incarcerated in Adiala Jail since August 2023. However, the court imposed strict conditions, particularly prohibiting visitors from making political statements following their meetings with Khan.

According to the court’s order, Imran Khan will be allowed to meet his family and legal team on Tuesdays, while friends can visit him on Thursdays. Only those individuals authorized by his coordinator, lawyer Salman Akram Raja, will be permitted to meet the PTI leader.

During the hearing, IHC’s Acting Chief Justice Sarfaraz Dogar raised concerns over the use of jail meetings for political purposes. He specifically mentioned that visitors should “meet and leave” without engaging in any political discourse. Additionally, the court emphasized that speaking to the media after these meetings would be unnecessary and should be avoided. Visitors were instructed to sign an undertaking agreeing not to make any public statements related to the meetings.

The decision came after the jail authorities defended the consolidation of Khan’s meetings into a single day due to security concerns. They had previously cited the risks involved in allowing sep-

arate meetings on different days. However, the court rejected this argument, reaffirming a prior ruling that allowed biweekly meetings.

Imran Khan’s legal team, led by his lawyer Zaheer Abbas, argued that their client’s scheduled meetings were being arbitrarily denied. For instance, they claimed that a scheduled meeting on March 20 was not allowed despite repeated requests.

Justice Dogar also directed Imran Khan’s legal team to approach the trial court separately if they sought permission for his children to visit him. This decision comes as Khan continues to face multiple legal challenges, with his conviction in corruption cases transforming his status from under-trial to convicted prisoner, which has affected his privileges in prison.

The court’s ruling marks a minor relief for the PTI leader and his supporters. However, the prohibition on political statements during meetings indicates that the judiciary intends to prevent jail visits from being used as a platform for political messaging. Any violations of this new rule, particularly regarding media engagements, could result in further legal actions, according to reports from The Express Tribune.

This ruling has been interpreted as a balancing act, allowing Khan’s supporters to meet with him but curbing the political messaging that has surrounded his imprisonment.



# South Korean Court Dismisses PM Han Duck-soo's Impeachment Over Martial Law

Minister Choi Sang-mok assumed acting president role during the court’s review.

TPN Correspondent | Seoul

South Korea’s Constitutional Court ruled on Monday to strike down the impeachment of Prime Minister Han Duck-soo, reinstating him to his position as acting president. This decision followed Han’s brief tenure as acting president after the suspension of President Yoon Suk Yeol last year due to his declaration of martial law. Han had been impeached by lawmakers in December, just weeks after stepping into the leadership role in the wake of Yoon’s suspension.

The impeachment motion against Han was dismissed with a 7-1 vote by the court’s eight justices, with two justices voting to reject the motion entirely. The impeachment, which led to Han’s suspension, was primarily based on allegations of his role in the martial law incident, as well as his refusal to appoint three more justices to the Constitutional Court, a demand from the opposition-led parliament.

Han’s brief time as acting president began after President Yoon’s suspension on December 3, 2024, following his controversial declaration of martial law. The martial law, which lasted only six hours after a strong parliamentary vote to reject it, caused widespread political upheaval. It raised alarms both domestically and internationally, as allies like the United States expressed concern over Yoon’s ability to lead in the wake of the crisis. During the turmoil, Han was seen as a stabilizing figure with his extensive political experience, having served in various leadership roles for over three decades under five different presidents.

Despite his long career and reputation for bridging partisan divides, Han became embroiled in the political conflict when he was accused of not doing enough to oppose the martial law decision. This led the opposition-dominated parliament to impeach him in late December. During the impeachment hearings, Han denied any involvement in the martial law declaration and called for the impeachment to be dismissed.

In the meantime, Finance Minister Choi Sang-mok temporarily took over as acting president while the Constitutional Court deliberated on the cases of both President Yoon and Prime Minister Han. Han’s reinstatement marks the latest twist in the political crisis that has gripped South Korea since the martial law declaration and the subsequent suspensions of its top leaders.

# US Gold Card Scheme A Hit?

Trump’s ‘Gold Card’ Scheme Sees Promising Start with 1,000 Sold in a Single Day

TPN Correspondent | Washington DC

Donald Trump’s newly launched ‘Gold Card’ or ‘Golden Visa’ program, which offers permanent residency and optional citizenship in the United States for a hefty price of \$5 million per card, is reportedly off to a strong start. According to US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, the program has already gained significant traction, with 1,000 Gold Cards sold in a single day.

Speaking on the ‘All-In Podcast,’ Lutnick shared that the program would officially roll out in about two weeks, adding that tech mogul Elon Musk is currently working on the software needed for the initiative. Lutnick’s revelation about the rapid



sales of Gold Cards paints a picture of high demand for this exclusive opportunity to secure permanent residency in the US. The Gold Card grants individuals permanent residency in the United States without the obligation to pay global taxes, a key feature of the program. Lutnick explained that while the cardholders will not be forced to become US citizens, they will have the right to live in the country indefinitely. This arrangement is appealing to foreign nationals, particularly those from countries with high global tax rates, as the Gold Card holders will only be taxed on income earned within the US.

Lutnick elaborated on the potential benefits for wealthy individuals, citing an example where someone might purchase multiple Gold Cards for their family, ensuring access to the US in times of crisis or instability. “It’s a safety net,” Lutnick said, emphasizing the freedom and security the card offers. Research by the Trump Administration reportedly shows that around 37 million people worldwide could afford to buy the Gold Card. With the potential for large-scale sales, President Trump has expressed confidence in selling up to a million cards. The funds raised from this program will be used to address the US fiscal deficit and national debt. The Gold Card scheme has no annual cap on issuance, meaning it could generate substantial revenue. If the trend continues, with \$5 billion in sales just 24 hours into the program, it looks set to be a highly profitable venture for both investors and the US government.





# Bullish Surge in Indian Stock Markets with Six Consecutive Sessions of Gains



Domestic stock markets closed with huge gains on Monday. They surged for the sixth consecutive session. They jumped with doubled enthusiasm. Investors were overjoyed at the bullish moves. The reasons for this were positive signals from global markets, reinvestment by foreign institutional investors who had been selling for years, strengthening of the rupee against the dollar, and a surge in banking and finance stocks. With this, Nifty rose by 307 points and Sensex by 1078 points. Nifty reaching the crucial 200 DEMA is a positive development. If the momentum continues like this, the markets are sure to turn around.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 76,905 in the previous session, opened at 77,456 on Monday. It touched an intraday low of 77,179. It reached an intraday high of 78,107. It finally closed at 77,984 with a gain of 1078 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,515, reached a low of 23,433 and a high of 23,708. It rose by 307 points in total and closed at 23,658. The Nifty Bank rose by 1111 points and settled at 51,704.

In the Nifty50, 42 companies gained and 8 lost. PSU banks, private banks, banking, finance, PSE, realty, oil, infra, energy, IT, auto, pharma, and metal stocks were the top gainers. Kotak Bank, NTPC, SBI, Tech Mahindra, and Power Grid were the top gainers. Titan, IndusInd, Trent, M&M, Airtel lost the most.

Market breadth on NSE today completely shifted in favor of buyers. Out

of 3027 stocks traded, 1865 gained. 1082 lost. 53 stocks touched 52-week highs. 62 stocks touched 52-week lows. 202 stocks crossed the upper circuit and 74 stocks crossed the lower circuit.



Rupee strengthened by 34 paise to settle at 85.63 against dollar. Government appoints Rahul Bhawe as MD and CEO of IFCI. Motilal Oswal, Ramdev Agarwal and Motilal Oswal Foundation will sell 8 lakh shares of Motilal Oswal Financial Services for donation. 10 lakh shares of Bharat Electronics changed hands.

IREDA shares rose 10%. RBI imposed a penalty of Rs 36 lakh on IDBI Bank. Nifty Defense Index rose 8%. Shares of the respective companies surged. Manappuram Finance shares rose 22% in 8 sessions. IT approved raising Rs 12,000 crore through commercial borrowing. Geojit maintains buy rating on Suzlon Energy with a target price of Rs 71. Diamond Power gets an order worth Rs 215 crore.

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## 1. State Bank of India (SBI)

SBI is India's largest public sector bank with a dominant position in the banking industry. Over the past five years,



SBI has delivered CAGR (Compounded Annual Growth Rate) of 21% in stock price. As of recent reports, SBI's loan book has expanded significantly due to strong credit demand.

With the Indian economy growing, SBI is likely to benefit from rising loan demand, especially in retail, MSME, and corporate segments. SBI's focus on digital banking (e.g., YONO app) is improving operational efficiency and attracting younger customers. The bank has significantly reduced Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), making it financially stable for long-term investors. SBI has been rewarding investors with dividends, making it an attractive stock for passive income.

## 2. Bajaj Finserv



Bajaj Finserv is a financial powerhouse, with businesses in lending, insurance, and wealth management. Over the last 10 years, it has delivered a CAGR of 30% in stock price. Bajaj Finserv operates in NBFC (Bajaj Finance), insurance (Bajaj Allianz), and mutual funds, reducing business risks. India's rising middle class and digital finance adoption will benefit Bajaj Finserv's loan business. With increasing insurance penetration in India, Bajaj Finserv's insurance arm has huge long-term potential. The company has strong Return on Equity (ROE) of ~20% and Return on Assets (ROA) of ~5%.

## 3. SBI Life Insurance



SBI Life is one of India's largest private life insurance players. The stock has grown 15-18% CAGR over the past five years. India's insurance penetration is still low (~3%), giving SBI Life massive room for growth. Being a part of SBI, the company benefits from a strong distribution network with 22,000+ SBI branches selling policies. SBI Life enjoys high persistency ratios (customer retention), ensuring stable long-term

revenues. The company has high solvency margins, meaning it can handle future claims efficiently. SBI Life is expected to deliver 15-20% annual growth, with a target price of ₹2,200-₹2,500 over the next 5 years.

## 4. Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL)

Reliance is India's largest conglomerate,



with businesses in oil & gas, retail, telecom (Jio), and digital services. Over the last 5 years, it has delivered a CAGR of ~18%. With India's data consumption growing, Jio is set to dominate the 5G market. Reliance Retail is expanding aggressively and may overtake competitors like D-Mart in the long run. Reliance is investing in green energy (hydrogen, solar, battery storage), securing future revenue streams. Reliance has aggressively reduced debt, making its balance sheet stronger.

## 5. Power Finance Corporation (PFC)

PFC is India's leading lender to power and infrastructure projects. Over the last five years, the stock has delivered a CAGR of ~20%. With urbanization and industrialization, India's electricity demand is growing. PFC benefits from government policies favoring power sector reforms. The stock is an excellent option for long-term investors seeking passive income. PFC is funding solar and wind energy projects, securing long-term growth.



POWER FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED

## Unified Pension Scheme Notified for Govt Employees

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has officially notified the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for central and state government employees, marking a significant shift in the pension structure. This new scheme will come into effect from April 1, 2025, ensuring a structured and assured pension for eligible employees.

The UPS aims to provide a guaranteed pension of 50% of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months before retirement. This approach ensures stability in post-retirement earnings for government employees. The scheme was approved by the Union Cabinet led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 24, 2024, as an improvement over the existing National Pension Scheme (NPS), which is primarily linked to market returns.

### Eligibility Criteria

The scheme is applicable to central government employees who are currently under NPS as of April 1, 2025, allowing them the option to switch to UPS. Additionally, newly recruited employees on or after April 1, 2025, will be automatically enrolled under this scheme. Around 23 lakh central government employees are eligible to choose between NPS and UPS, depending on their preference for

pension security.

Employees can access the enrollment and claim forms online from April 1, 2025, through the official website of Protean CRA at <https://npscra.nsdl.co.in>. For those preferring an offline process, physical form submissions will also be accepted, as per the notification.

### Key Features of UPS

The Unified Pension Scheme ensures an assured pension of 50% of the average of the last 12 months' basic pay before superannuation. To qualify for the full pension benefits, an employee must complete a minimum of 25 years of service. Unlike the old pension system, UPS requires employees to contribute 10% of their basic salary and dearness allowance (DA), while the government will contribute 18.5% toward their pension fund. The final pension payout under this scheme will be partially influenced by market-linked investments, mainly in government securities.



## India Set to Become World's Consumption Capital: Report

India is poised to emerge as the world's consumption capital, outpacing major global economies, according to a new report by Angel One and Iconic Asset. The report highlights that consumption already accounts for 56 percent of the country's GDP and is growing at the fastest rate globally.

Over the next decade, India's consumption is expected to double by 2034, driven by factors such as the rising number of nuclear families and a workforce expansion that will further boost economic activity. Household growth in India is outpacing population growth, leading to increased spending, while the country is also set to lead global workforce expansion. The report underscores India's strong savings potential, noting that total savings between 1997 and 2023 amounted to \$12 trillion. This figure is projected to surge tenfold to \$103 trillion by 2047, unlocking new opportunities for higher spending and economic growth.

Additionally, recent tax cuts announced in the Union



## India's Flash PMI slips to 58.6 on slower service activity

India's HSBC Flash Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) dropped slightly to 58.6 in March 2025, down from 58.8 in February 2025, reflecting a slowdown in the service sector's activity. The Flash PMI is a key early indicator of economic health, capturing data from 80% to 90% of survey responses. A PMI value above 50 indicates growth in private sector activity, and In-

dia's PMI has remained above this level for over three years.

The service sector growth slowed, with the Flash PMI for services at 57.7 in March, compared to 59 in February. The slowdown in services could be attributed to higher prices relative to manufacturers and weaker growth in new business from abroad. In contrast,

the manufacturing sector saw an improvement, with the manufacturing Flash PMI rising to 57.6 in March 2025 from 56.3 in February. This marked the highest manufacturing output since July 2024, though manufacturers faced margin pressure as input prices rose, while factory gate prices increased at the weakest rate in a year.



# Tata Sierra Testing In Full Swing; Thar-Rival Launching By Year-End

Tata Motors is gearing up to reintroduce the iconic Sierra SUV, with its latest version undergoing rigorous testing. First unveiled at the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025, the 2025 Tata Sierra is expected to hit Indian roads by the end of this year, followed by its EV variant later. Recent spy shots suggest the test mule is in its final production-spec form, indicating that the much-anticipated SUV will soon be ready for launch.

**Design Updates**  
The 2025 Tata Sierra features a high-mounted bonnet, vertically split headlamps, a gloss-black grille with silver skid plates, and wide air dams with an ADAS sensor. Notably, it will sport flush door handles, a body-colored B-pillar, a blacked-out C-pillar, and roof rails. Unlike the original '90s model, which had a three-door layout, the new Sierra comes with a practical five-door setup.

**Features & Technology**  
While Tata Motors has yet to reveal the full feature list, the 2025 Sierra is expected to include a 10.25-inch digital instrument cluster, a 12.3-inch touch-screen infotainment system, a panoramic sunroof, a wireless charger, a powered tailgate, and multi-color ambient lighting. Other premium additions may include a high-end audio system, dual-zone climate control, and powered, ventilated front seats. For safety, the Sierra is expected to be



equipped with Level-2 ADAS features, including adaptive cruise control, lane-keep assist, automatic emergency braking, blind-spot monitoring, ABS with EBD, a 360-degree camera, electronic stability control, and a tire pressure monitoring system.

**Engine & Powertrain**  
The Sierra ICE variant is likely to come with two engine options:

- A 1.5-litre T-GDi turbo-petrol engine delivering 165 HP and 280 Nm of torque.
- A 2.0-litre Kryotec diesel engine producing 170 HP and 350 Nm of torque.

Both engines will be available with

manual and automatic transmission options.

**Launch, Price & Competition**  
Set to rival the Mahindra Thar and Maruti Suzuki Jimny, the Sierra will take a more premium and urban-focused approach. It will not use a body-on-frame chassis like its competitors but instead aim to be a refined alternative—akin to how the Land Rover Defender stands apart from the Jeep Wrangler and Mercedes-Benz G-Class. Expected to be priced from ₹13 lakh onwards, the Tata Sierra will launch by the end of 2025, offering a fresh take on India's growing lifestyle SUV segment.

# “Vast Underground City” Discovered Under Egyptian Pyramids, Claim Scientists



A controversial new study has claimed the discovery of a “vast underground city” beneath Egypt's iconic pyramids. Using advanced radar technology, researchers led by Filippo Biondi of the University of Strathclyde and Corrado Malanga of the University of Pisa

believe they have uncovered hidden structures beneath the Giza Plateau. The scientists, working on what they call the “Khafre Project,” assert that their radar scans detected eight vertical cylinder-shaped artefacts stretching over 2,100 feet beneath the py-

ramids. Additionally, they claim to have identified various unidentified structures at a depth of 4,000 feet. The team suggests that their findings may be linked to the legendary “Halls of Amenti,” a mythical chamber thought to contain ancient records beneath

the Great Sphinx and the pyramids. The study claims to have found five small, room-like structures inside one of the pyramids, challenging previous archaeological assumptions about burial sites. Experts Dismiss Findings as “Fake News”  
Leading Egyptologists have strongly denied these claims, calling them unverified and misleading. Zahi Hawass, Egypt's former Minister of Antiquities, dismissed the research, stating that the methods used were “neither scientifically approved nor validated.” He emphasized that decades of studies using advanced techniques like gravimetry and muon tomography have found no evidence of

such massive subterranean structures. Radar specialist Professor Lawrence Conyers also labeled the findings “a huge exaggeration,” arguing that no existing radar technology could produce images from thousands of feet underground. However, he did acknowledge that smaller ancient structures or ceremonial chambers might have been built under pyramids, similar to Mesoamerican traditions. Despite the bold claims, the findings have yet to undergo peer review or independent verification. Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities has not commented on whether further investigations will be conducted.

# Unique Temple in Kolkata Serves Noodles and Momos as Prasad: A Cultural Fusion

## Kolkata blends faith and food with its distinctive offering of Chinese cuisine as prasad.

India's cultural and religious diversity is one of its most unique features, and a temple in Kolkata beautifully embodies this fusion. While most temples across the country offer laddus or sweets as prasad, the Chinese Kali Temple in Kolkata stands out by serving noodles, momos, and other Chinese dishes as prasad. This temple is not just known for its religious significance and stunning architecture but also for its cultural blend that attracts people from various walks of life.

**The Story Behind the Chinese Kali Temple**  
The Chinese Kali Temple has an interesting and fascinating backstory that brings together both the Bengali and Chinese communities. According to local legend, many years ago, a young

boy fell gravely ill, and doctors could do nothing to save him. In desperation, his parents took him to a place where two black stones were revered as Maa Kali by the locals. After days of prayers, the boy miraculously recovered. In gratitude for this divine intervention, the boy's parents began worshipping Maa Kali at this sacred site. Over time, this sacred space became a temple, and both the Bengali and Chinese communities contributed to building the Chinese Kali Temple here.

**The Uniqueness of Noodles and Momos as Prasad**  
Noodles, a staple of Chinese cuisine, became a part of the temple's prasad offerings as a result of a significant historical event. During the Chinese



Civil War, many Chinese refugees migrated to Kolkata, bringing their culinary traditions with them. As part of their customs, they would offer special dishes to deities, and eventually, they began offering noodles to Maa Kali at this temple. Over time, noodles became a permanent offering, alongside momos and other Chinese delicacies, which are now considered divine

blessings by devotees. This fusion of Chinese cuisine with Indian temple rituals showcases the merging of two distinct cultures.

**A Must-Visit Destination in Kolkata**  
Located on Matheswartala Road in Kolkata's Tangra region, the Chinese Kali Temple is a must-visit for anyone seeking to explore the rich cultural fusion that Kolkata has to offer. Visitors can experience a profound spiritual journey while enjoying a unique offering of Chinese food as prasad. The temple, which remains open seven days a week, serves as a reminder of how diverse traditions can come together to form a harmonious whole.

To visit the temple, take the metro to

Rabindra Sadan Station and board a bus heading towards Science City or Topsia. The blend of spirituality and Chinese cuisine makes this temple a truly unique destination in Kolkata.

**Highlights:**

**Cultural Fusion:** Chinese and Bengali communities built the Chinese Kali Temple together.  
**Unique Prasad:** Noodles and momos are served as prasad in a fusion of Indian and Chinese traditions.  
**Historical Context:** Chinese refugees brought their culinary customs during the Chinese Civil War.  
**Spiritual Experience:** Devotees experience both cultural and spiritual enrichment at the temple.  
**Location:** Situated on Matheswartala Road in Kolkata's Tangra area, the

# Sick of bloating from caffeine?

## Here's how you can reduce it



Caffeine is a popular stimulant, but for some people, it can cause bloating and digestive discomfort. This occurs because caffeine increases stomach acid production, which may irritate the gut lining and lead to bloating. Additionally, many caffeinated drinks contain acids and compounds that promote gas production in the stomach.

If you experience bloating after consuming caffeine, simple dietary and lifestyle adjustments can help. Here are nine effective tips to reduce bloating caused by caffeine:

**Caffeine is a diuretic, meaning it increases urination and may lead to dehydration. Dehydration can cause water retention and bloating, so it's essential to drink plenty of water throughout the day, especially when consuming caffeinated beverages.**

**Limit Dairy-Based Caffeinated Drinks**  
If you experience bloating after drinking coffee or tea, lactose intolerance could be the culprit. Dairy-based creamers and milk may be hard to digest for some people. Try switching to plant-based milk options like almond, oat, or lactose-free alternatives. Sugar-free energy drinks and flavored coffee often contain artificial sweeteners like sorbitol, aspartame, and sucralose, which are known to cause bloating and digestive issues. Opt for natural sweeteners like honey, stevia, or cinnamon instead.

**Choose Low-Acid Coffee or Cold Brew**  
Coffee is naturally acidic, which can irritate the stomach and contribute to bloating. If you're sensitive to acidity, consider low-acid

coffee varieties or cold brew coffee, which has lower acidity and is gentler on digestion.

Carbonated sodas and energy drinks contain caffeine along with gas-producing carbonation, which can trap air in your digestive system and cause bloating. If this affects you, switch to non-carbonated options like black coffee, matcha, or herbal teas.

**Avoid Drinking Caffeine on an Empty Stomach**  
Having caffeine on an empty stomach can increase acid buildup, leading to bloating and discomfort. To prevent this, consume a fiber-rich meal or snack—such as oatmeal, bananas, or whole grains—before drinking coffee or tea.

**Limit Excessive Caffeine Intake**  
Too much caffeine can overstimulate the digestive system, causing acid reflux, inflammation, and bloating. If you're prone to bloating, try reducing your caffeine intake and see if your symptoms improve.

If caffeine bloating persists, consider herbal teas like ginger, peppermint, or fennel tea, which have natural anti-bloating properties. These teas can soothe digestion, reduce inflammation, and prevent gas buildup.

Cinnamon and ginger have digestive benefits that can counteract caffeine's bloating effects. Adding a pinch of cinnamon powder or fresh ginger to your coffee can neutralize acidity, improve digestion, and reduce bloating.

By making these simple adjustments, you can continue enjoying caffeine without the discomfort of bloating. Experiment with these strategies to find what works best for you!



## Who is Vignesh Puthur

### Mumbai Indians spinner from Kerala

Mumbai Indians' new left-arm wrist spinner, Vignesh Puthur, had a dream IPL debut in the 2025 season as he claimed the crucial wickets of Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shivam Dube, and Deepak Hooda against Chennai Super Kings. Despite MI's loss, his performance stood out as one of the biggest positives for the team. Brought in as the Impact Player, Puthur replaced Rohit Sharma and made an instant impact by dismissing CSK skipper Gaikwad in his very first over. He followed it up by removing big-hitter Shivam Dube, and later, he also got rid of Deepak Hooda, finishing with figures of 3/32.



Who is Vignesh Puthur? The 24-year-old spinner from Malappuram, Kerala, was signed by Mumbai Indians for ₹30 lakh in the IPL auction. Though he has never played at the senior level for Kerala, he has represented the state at the U-14 and U-19 levels. Currently, he plays for Alleppey Ripples in the Kerala Cricket League and has also featured in the Tamil Nadu Premier League.

Hailing from a humble background, Puthur is the son of an autorickshaw driver and a homemaker. Initially a medium pacer, he switched to leg-spin on the advice of local cricketer Mohammed Sherif, which proved to be a turning point in his career. His performances in the Kerala College Premier T20 league for St. Thomas College put him on the radar of IPL scouts. Earlier this year, Mumbai Indians sent him to South Africa as a net bowler for MI Cape Town in the SA20 league, which helped him gain experience.

## Portugal beat Denmark in Thrilling Quarter-Final



Portugal secured a thrilling 5-2 victory after extra time against Denmark in the second leg of the UEFA Nations League quarter-finals, winning 5-3 on aggregate to book a semi-final clash with hosts Germany in June. Despite an early setback when Cristiano Ronaldo's penalty was saved by Kasper Schmeichel, Portugal mounted a strong comeback, with Francisco Trincao's late double and Goncalo Ramos' goal sealing the dramatic win. Portugal's Fightback Denmark, carrying a 1-0 first-leg advantage, held their ground early as Schmeichel denied Ronaldo from the spot in the 6th minute. However, Portugal equalized on aggregate in the 38th minute when Joachim Andersen's attempted clearance ended up in his own net. Denmark responded in the 56th minute through Rasmus Kristensen's header, regaining their aggregate lead. But

Portugal refused to back down. Ronaldo made amends for his penalty miss by scoring a crucial rebound goal in the 72nd minute. Just four minutes later, Christian Eriksen tapped in an open goal, putting Denmark back in front overall. With the game slipping away, Trincao struck in stoppage time to force extra time. The Sporting Lisbon winger then put Portugal ahead shortly after the restart, threading his second goal through a crowded penalty box. He was also involved in the final goal, as Goncalo Ramos finished off the contest. Denmark fought bravely, but Portugal's relentless attack proved decisive. Having won the inaugural Nations League in 2019, Roberto Martinez's side now aims to become the first team to win the tournament twice. Portugal will face Germany in the semi-finals as they continue their quest for European glory.

## THIS IS PEAK IPL

### Delhi Capitals chase down 210 with just 1 wicket left, after being 7/3 and 65/5.



In a nail-biting encounter, Delhi Capitals (DC) secured a thrilling one-wicket victory over Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) with three balls to spare in Match 4 of IPL 2025. Chasing a challenging target of 210, DC stumbled early as LSG's bowlers struck crucial blows. However, a resilient partnership between Vipraj Nigam and Ashutosh Sharma reignited their hopes. As the match neared its cli-

max, DC required five runs off four balls with just one wicket in hand. A composed finish saw them cross the line, sealing an unforgettable win. LSG's Shardul Thakur's fiery opening spell and Nicholas Pooran's explosive knock earlier in the game went in vain. DC's triumph marks a strong start to their campaign, showcasing their depth and resilience under pressure.

## Spain edge Netherlands on penalties, set up Nations League semi-final

Defending Nations League champions Spain edged past the Netherlands in a thrilling 5-4 penalty shoot-out victory after their quarter-final second leg ended 3-3 in Valencia on Sunday. With this win, Spain set up a semi-final clash against France on June 5 in Stuttgart. Spain took an early lead after Mikel Oyarzabal converted a penalty following a foul in the box. The Netherlands equalized in the 54th minute when Memphis Depay won and scored a spot-kick. Oyarzabal struck again in the 67th minute, capitalizing on a strong Nico Williams run. However, the Netherlands found another response as Ian Maatsen's powerful strike leveled the game with 11 minutes left. The match went into extra time, where Lamine Yamal curled in a brilliant strike to give Spain the lead. But there was another twist as Unai Simon brought down Xavi Simons, who then stepped up to convert the penalty and force a shoot-out. Penalty Shoot-out Thriller Spain held their nerve in the shoot-out despite Yamal missing his spot-kick. Unai Simon made a crucial save against Donyell Malen, and Pedri sealed the win

with the final penalty. Spain now faces France, the 2021 Nations League winners, in the semi-finals. France reached the last four after a 5-4 shoot-out win over Croatia in a game where Michael Olise and Ous-

mane Dembele scored in regulation time. With their title defense still alive, Spain will now prepare for a high-stakes clash against Kylian Mbappe's France in Stuttgart.



## Tamim Iqbal suffered a Heart Attack while Playing

### Underwent angioplasty after being rushed to the hospital.

Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal suffered a heart attack during a Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League match on Monday, prompting an urgent medical response. The 36-year-old was leading Mohammedan Sport-

ing Club against Shinepukur Cricket Club when he experienced chest pain during the first innings. Tamim fielded for just one over before being rushed to the hospital in critical condition. Medical Emergency and Treat-

ment Initially, arrangements were made to transport him by helicopter from BKSP ground in Savar, but due to logistical issues, he was instead taken to Fazilatunnesa Hospital. A medical bulletin issued by

the hospital confirmed that Tamim underwent an angiogram and angioplasty to clear a blockage. "He returned to us in a critical condition. It was a heart attack, and the procedure went smoothly. He is currently under observation," the bulletin stated. Doctors credited the swift coordination between medical staff at the stadium and hospital for his timely treatment. Following the incident, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) cancelled a scheduled board meeting, and BCB President Faruque Ahmed rushed to the hospital along with senior officials to monitor his condition. Tamim Iqbal, who retired from international cricket for the second time in January 2024, had earlier reversed his decision in July 2023 after intervention from then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. The former Bangladesh captain played 70 Tests and 243 ODIs, amassing 5,134 and 8,357 runs, respectively, along with 1,758 runs in 78 T20Is.







## Pooja Hegde Speaks Out on Paid Trolling in Film Industry

Actress Pooja Hegde has opened up about the growing issue of paid trolling in the film industry, revealing that she has been a target of orchestrated social media attacks. In a recent interview, she shed light on how such negativity is not limited to male stars but also affects female actors, despite their significant contributions to a film's success. While it's commonly believed that the industry revolves around male leads, Pooja emphasized that heroines also play a crucial role in drawing audiences to theatres. However, with limited opportunities for female actors and a highly competitive landscape, jealousy and rivalry often fuel targeted criticism. She pointed out that PR agencies actively run negative campaigns, spreading memes, trolls, and online hate against actresses. While many heroines are aware of this unhealthy trend, most choose to remain silent. Pooja's revelation highlights how this practice, once prevalent in Bollywood, is now making its way into South Indian cinema as well.



## Preity Mukundhan Calls Acting with Prabhas Her Career's Biggest High



Tamil Nadu-born actress Preity Mukundhan, who has been making her mark in Tamil cinema, is set to appear in Kannappa alongside Manchu Vishnu. Initially, she auditioned for the lead role, but the part went to Nupur Sanon. However, when Nupur exited the project, the role came back to Preity, giving her a major opportunity in Telugu cinema. Reflecting on her experience,

Preity shared her excitement about working with Prabhas, calling it the most unforgettable moment of her career. "I never thought I would even get to meet him in my life, but now I've acted with him. This is my career's biggest high," she said. For her role in Kannappa, she underwent extensive training in horse riding and sword fighting. Known for her glam-

orous photoshoots on Instagram, Preity confidently embraces bold and stylish looks. She was previously seen as the lead in Om Bheem Bush, opposite Sree Vishnu. However, the film's underwhelming performance at the box office delayed her next big project. Now, with Kannappa, she is looking forward to making a strong impact in the industry.

## Weekend Box Office: Five Films Set for Release

The Tollywood box office has seen a lukewarm March, with only Court exceeding expectations. As the month comes to a close, five films are gearing up for release, promising a variety of cinematic experiences for audiences. Among them, Robinwood and Mad Square stand out as the only straight Telugu films, while Lucifer 2: Empuraan, Veera Dheera Shoorra, and Sikandar add to the mix with their star power and diverse appeal. Nithin's Robinwood is already making waves, thanks to its catchy track Adi Dha Surprise and the much-talked-about cameo by Australian cricketer David Warner. With Sreeleela as the female lead, this comedy entertainer could mark a strong comeback for Nithin, who has been struggling at the box office. Mad Square, arriving on March 28, has its eyes on younger audiences, particularly collegegoers, who contributed to the success of its predecessor. A premiere on



the 27th is under consideration, while ticket bookings are already underway. The highly anticipated Mohanlal starrer Lucifer 2: Empuraan, helmed by Prithviraj Sukumaran, is set for release on March 27. Given the immense success of Lucifer—which was later remade in Telugu as Godfather—fans have high expectations for this sequel. Meanwhile, Vikram's Veera Dheera Shoorra has flown under the radar compared to the other releases. How-

ever, with S.J. Suryah in a crucial role, the film could surprise audiences with its performances. Adding Bollywood flair to the lineup, Salman Khan's Sikandar, co-starring Rashmika Mandanna, will also hit screens at the end of the month. While its reach in smaller centers remains uncertain, a Salman-starrer never fails to generate buzz. With such a diverse slate of releases, the Ramzan weekend promises an exciting showdown at the box office.

## Ajay Devgn Unveils First Look of Raid 2



Ajay Devgn is set to return as IRS officer Amay Patnaik in Raid 2, with the first-

look poster unveiled on Monday. The sequel, directed by Raj Kumar Gupta, is slated

for release on May 1, 2025. The intense poster shows Ajay standing

amid towering stacks of files, exuding a determined expression. Sharing the look on social media, he wrote, "Naya shehar. Nayi file. Aur Amay Patnaik ki ek nayi raid. #Raid2 knocking at your doors in cinemas near you on 1st May, 2025." Produced by Bhushan Kumar, Kumar Mangat Pathak, Abhishek Pathak, and Krishan Kumar, Raid 2 is presented by Gulshan Kumar and T-Series in association with Panorama Studios. The film features Riteish Deshmukh, Vaani Kapoor, and Rajat Kapoor alongside Ajay Devgn. The original Raid (2018) was inspired by a real-life Income Tax raid from the 1980s and starred Saurabh Shukla and Ileana D'Cruz. Ajay Devgn, who was last seen in Singham Again, continues his streak of action-packed roles.

## Mohanlal Confirms Film With Mammooty

Mohanlal and Mammooty, the legendary duo of Malayalam cinema, are set to reunite on screen for a big-budget film tentatively titled MMMN, directed by Mahesh Narayanan. In a recent interaction with NDTV, Mohanlal opened up about his deep friendship with Mammooty, revealing that they stay in touch frequently and meet almost every week. He also shared that during his recent visit to Sabarimala Temple, he performed special poojas



for his family and Mammooty. Speaking about their upcoming film, Mohanlal stated, "We are working on a film. It is yet to be completed. We had to shoot it in Visakhapatnam, and Mammooty had to shoot in the UK. It

is a big film. We will finish it by May or June, so you can watch it in September or October." MMMN features a stellar cast including Nayanthara, Fahadh Faasil, Kunchacko Boban, Rajiv Menon, Renji Panicker, Revathi, and others. The film will be shot across multiple locations, including Delhi, Kochi, Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Azerbaijan, Thailand, Abu Dhabi, Sri Lanka, and London, with a planned 150-day shoot schedule.

## Varun Tej's VT15, An Indo-Korean Horror Comedy,

Varun Tej's upcoming film, temporarily titled VT15, began shooting on Monday with a traditional pooja ceremony in Hyderabad. Directed by Merlapaka Gandhi, the project blends Indian and Korean filmmaking in the horror-comedy genre. Produced by UV Creations and First Frame Entertainment, the film is being made on an expansive scale. The announcement, made on

Varun Tej's birthday, gained further traction after the release of an intriguing poster in January. Noted composer S Thaman will score the film's music, while Manoj H Reddy is handling cinematography. According to sources, Ritika Nayak is set to join the cast, though the film's editor has yet to be announced. Sharing photos from the pooja ceremony, UV Creations



wrote, "The journey begins. The super entertaining journey of #VT15 begins with an auspicious pooja ceremony. Get ready for a blockbuster ride full of laughs, chills, and thrills."