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Weather Forecast

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**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.

## 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 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.

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## 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,

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## Delhi Budget Session begins with ‘kheer’ ceremony

CM along with senior party members, participated in preparing the kheer

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The five-day Budget session of the Delhi Assembly commenced on Monday with a symbolic ‘kheer’ ceremony, marking the beginning of the important financial proceedings. The ceremony, organized by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), featured the traditional Indian dish as a symbol of prosperity and progress for the national capital.

Kheer, a popular Indian dessert, is made by boiling milk, sugar or jaggery with rice or semolina, and is often served

during auspicious occasions. The BJP leaders present at the event emphasized that the sweetness of the kheer repre-

sented the ‘sweet progress’ they aim to achieve for Delhi during this session.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, along with other senior members of the party, took part in the ceremonial preparation of the kheer, underscoring the importance of the momentous occasion. The gesture was seen as an effort to bring a sense of positivity and unity at the beginning of the Budget discussions, which are expected to play a pivotal role in shaping the financial trajectory of the city for the upcoming fiscal year.

## Delhi’s budget can’t be formed by making ‘kheer’, but on economic data: Atishi slams BJP govt

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Leader of Opposition and former Chief Minister Atishi on Monday sharply criticized the BJP-led Delhi government for not presenting the Economic Survey ahead of the budget. Atishi, in a press conference, questioned the government’s preparedness, highlighting the importance of the Economic Survey in shaping the state’s financial plans.

Atishi took a jibe at the BJP-led government’s approach,

stating, “Delhi’s budget cannot be formed by making ‘kheer’, but on the figures of

the economy.” Her comment was aimed at the traditional “kheer” ceremony that

marked the beginning of the Budget Session, mocking it as an inappropriate way to start financial deliberations.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, addressing the issue in the assembly, assured that the Economic Survey would be tabled soon. She attributed the delay to ongoing audits in various departments and explained that the survey would be comprehensive once all the necessary reports, including

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## 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 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.

## President Droupadi Murmu to begin two-day visit to Odisha

**TPN Correspondent | Delhi**

President Droupadi Murmu is set to embark on a two-day visit to Odisha starting Monday, with plans to participate in various events and engagements. During her visit, she will be a prominent guest at the foundation day celebrations of the Bharatiya Bishwabasu Sabar Samaj, which will take place at Kaliapalli in Nayagarh district.



According to official sources, President Murmu will arrive in Bhubaneswar from Raipur in the afternoon. She will then travel by helicopter to the town of Kantilo, located in Nayagarh. Her first stop will be the famous Kantilo Nilamadhab Temple, where she will offer her respects. Following the temple visit, she will head to the foundation day celebrations at Kaliapalli, where she will serve as the chief guest.

After the day's events, the President will return to Bhubaneswar and stay the night at the Raj Bhavan. On Tuesday, she will wrap up her visit and depart for New Delhi.

In light of the President's high-profile visit, extensive security measures have been put in

place in both Bhubaneswar and Nayagarh. A senior police officer stated that approximately 360 police personnel have been deployed to ensure her safety and the smooth conduct of her visit.

This visit marks an important occasion, as it highlights President Murmu's active participation in significant cultural and social events within her home state of Odisha. The security arrangements reflect the importance of the visit and the measures taken to ensure her protection throughout her engagements.

## Recklessness in garb of freedom of speech won't be tolerated: Fadnavis on Kamra row

**TPN Correspondent| Delhi**

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Monday condemned the “reckless” misuse of freedom of speech following stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra's alleged defamatory remarks about Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. Fadnavis, speaking in the state Assembly, stressed that such actions would not be tolerated and that Kamra had a history of making controversial remarks about prominent figures, including the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of India.



Kamra, during his performance at the Habitat Studio in Mumbai, had called Shinde a “traitor” and parodied him with a modified version of a Hindi song from the movie Dil Toh Pagal Hai. The song mocked Shinde's 2022 rebellion against Uddhav Thackeray, the former Chief Minister. Fadnavis accused Kamra of attempting to create controversies for publicity, saying his “modus operandi” was to provoke for attention.

The controversy intensified when Fadnavis pointed out that Kamra's remarks targeted not just Shinde but the people of Maharashtra as well. He argued that the 2024 Assembly poll results were a clear mandate from the people, distinguishing between those who were “khud-tar” (self-respecting) and those who were “gaddar” (traitors). “Is Kamra bigger than the people of Maharashtra?” Fadnavis questioned.

The Chief Minister also insinuated that Kamra might be aligned with opposition forces, pointing to the comedian's image with a red copy of the Constitution, which was also seen with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. He emphasized that while satire and stand-up comedy are acceptable, any attempt to undermine individuals in constitutional positions for publicity would not be tolerated.

Shiv Sena members in the Assembly raised the issue vocally, demanding strict action against Kamra. Arjun Khotkar, a Shiv Sena legislator, led the charge, with Minister Shambhuraj Desai and other members supporting his demand. The House erupted in uproar, prompting Speaker Rahul Narwekar to adjourn the session for five minutes.

Fadnavis concluded by saying that while freedom of speech is a right, reckless behavior in its name would face legal consequences. The CM assured that strict action would be taken in accordance with the law.

## Centre Announces 24% Salary Hike for MPs and Ex-MPs, Revises Pension Benefits

**TPN Correspondent | Delhi**

The Centre has announced a significant revision in the salary, pension, and allowances of Members of Parliament (MPs) and Ex-MPs, including a 24% hike in the salaries of current MPs. The new revision, notified on Monday, increases the monthly salary of MPs from ₹1,00,000 to ₹1,24,000. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs issued the notification, also increasing daily allowances and pension benefits.

**The revised benefits include the following changes:**

**Monthly Salary:** MPs will now receive ₹1,24,000, up from ₹1,00,000.

**Daily Allowance:** The daily allowance for sitting MPs has been raised from ₹2,000 to ₹2,500.

**Pension for Ex-MPs:** The pension for former MPs has increased from ₹25,000 to ₹31,000 per month.

**Additional Pension:** Former MPs will receive an additional pension of ₹2,500 per month for every year of service beyond five years, up from ₹2,000.

These revisions have been made in accordance with the Salary, Allowances, and Pension of Members of Parliament Act and are

based on the Cost Inflation Index specified in the Income Tax Act of 1961.

This salary hike comes amid ongoing discussions regarding similar revisions at the state level. Notably, the Karnataka government recently approved a 100% salary hike for the Chief Minister, ministers, and MLAs, with the Chief Minister's salary increasing from ₹75,000 to ₹1.5 lakh per month, and ministers' salaries rising by 108% from ₹60,000 to ₹1.25 lakh. The increase in MPs' salaries and pensions is part of the broader ongoing conversation about the compensation and benefits of elected officials, which has drawn both praise and criticism.

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

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 Kanal, 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's budget can't be formed by making 'kheer', but on economic data: Atishi slams BJP govt

those from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), were finalized. Gupta emphasized that rushing the process would be detrimental, asserting that the survey would be presented once the audits were complete.

Atishi, who also serves as the MLA from Kalkaji, questioned the delay, pointing out that in both Parliament and past Delhi budgets, the Economic Survey was always presented before the budget. She stated, “In Parliament, an Economic Survey is always presented before the budget, providing key data on a state or country's financial

health. This has been the practice in Delhi as well. How can a budget be prepared without an Economic Survey?” She further added that she had not seen such a delay in the past ten years of the government.

Rejecting the justification provided by the Chief Minister, Atishi said the delay in presenting the survey due to pending CAG reports was not valid, as there was no direct correlation between the two. She raised a pointed question, asking, “Has the Chief Minister even read the Economic Survey?” implying that the government was possibly hiding the document from the public.



# AAP MLAs Stage Walkout in Delhi Assembly Over Speaker's Decision

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

AAP MLAs staged a walkout on the first day of the Delhi Assembly's budget session in protest against Speaker Vijender Gupta's decision to skip the name of one of their legislators during a discussion under Rule 280. The Rule allows MLAs to raise issues concerning their constituencies, but the Speaker cited repetition of the matter and bypassed the AAP member's request to speak.

Led by Leader of Opposition Atishi, the AAP lawmakers voiced their concerns over the Speaker's action, accusing him of undermining their right to raise issues in the Assembly. The protest escalated when the MLAs, refusing to accept the Speaker's decision, staged a walkout from the session.

The Speaker responded by calling the walkout a "strategic disruption" and warned the opposition members against forcing him to take any further action. He also remarked that the opposition's actions may be linked to the upcoming tabling of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report. The CAG report, which is ex-



- MLAs protest Speaker skipping their member's turn.
- Speaker cites repetition, denies AAP legislator's request.
- Calls protest a disruption, hints at CAG report impact

pected to be presented later in the day, will cover the financial status of the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC).

The budget session, which marks the first such gathering since the BJP returned to power in Delhi, began with a symbolic "kheer" ceremony. BJP leaders emphasized that the sweetness of the dish represented progress and prosperity for the national capital,

setting a tone of optimism for the session.

The main focus of the session will be on the Delhi budget, which will be presented by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, who also holds the finance portfolio. This will be the first budget of the BJP government in over 26 years, following their victory in the Delhi Assembly elections last month, where they defeated the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

# UP No Longer 'Bimaru': CM Adityanath Says State Has Become 'Economic Power' Under BJP



- A booklet and documentary were released
- Showcasing the government's focus on 'service

TPN Correspondent | Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath marked the completion of eight years of BJP governance in the state with a press conference in Lucknow on Monday. Accompanied by both Deputy Chief Ministers, senior ministers, and key government officials, Adityanath reflected on the significant transformation the state has undergone under his leadership.

Recalling Uttar Pradesh's past,

Yogi Adityanath said, "Eight years ago, Uttar Pradesh was considered a 'Bimaru' state. Today, it has emerged as an economic power. The same state that was once associated with riots and terrorism is now seen as a model of development." He credited the change to the BJP-led administration's policies and governance.

The Chief Minister emphasized the state's improved economic status, stating, "Uttar Pradesh, once a brake on the country's development, is now driving

it forward. The state and its people remain the same, but a change in government has brought about comprehensive transformation." He also highlighted the challenges faced by the state before 2017, including farmer suicides, a youth identity crisis, and lawlessness.

Adityanath praised the growth in agriculture, noting an increase in Uttar Pradesh's agricultural growth rate to 13.5%. He pointed out that the state's GDP had risen by 28% due to this progress. A significant move during his government's early days was the waiver of Rs 36,000 crore in farm loans, which he said provided essential relief to farmers.

The Chief Minister also focused on agricultural procurement improvements, mentioning that wheat procurement had increased two and a half times between 2017 and 2023, with payments totaling Rs 43,424 crore. Moreover, Rs 88,746 crore had been disbursed through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) for paddy procurement, and over 32 lakh hectares of farmland had been protected from floods.

# 'Today's rulers worse than the British': Kejriwal attacks BJP

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday criticized the BJP for disregarding the legacy of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh and social reformer Dr. Bhim-rao Ambedkar. Speaking at the Aam Aadmi Party's "Ek Shaam Shaheedon Ke Naam" event, Kejriwal accused the ruling party of undermining the contributions of these national icons, even going as far as to say that "today's rulers are worse than the British."

This marked Kejriwal's first public appearance in Delhi after AAP's defeat in the recent assembly elections. The event, held at the AAP headquarters, was organized to commemorate Shaheed Diwas, paying tribute to freedom fighters Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev. It was a moment for Kejriwal to reflect on his party's ideals and reaffirm their commitment to the principles set forth by these revolution-



- Accused BJP of scrapping key welfare schemes
- Including ₹2,500 assistance for women.

ary figures.

Kejriwal emphasized that AAP entered politics to fulfill the dreams of Bhagat Singh and Ambedkar, not for the sake of power. He accused the BJP of not honoring their contributions to India's independence and social reform.

Senior AAP leader Gopal Rai also

spoke at the event, drawing a parallel between the party's recent electoral loss in Delhi and the story of Abhimanyu from the Mahabharata. Rai suggested that just as Abhimanyu was trapped in the "Chakravyuh" but fought valiantly, AAP too would rise again with even greater strength, despite the setbacks.

## Delegation of T.N. MPs to meet PM Modi seeking fair delimitation: CM Stalin

Urge for a transparent and equitable delimitation based on the state's democratic rights.

TPN Correspondent | Chennai

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced on Monday, March 24, 2025, that a delegation of Members of Parliament (MPs) from Tamil Nadu will soon meet with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to urge the implementation of a fair delimitation process. Stalin emphasized that the process should protect the political representation and democratic rights of Tamil Nadu and other states that could be adversely affected if delimitation is carried out based on the 2026 population census.

Speaking in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly, Stalin referred to the recent meeting of the Joint Action Committee (JAC) on Fair Delimitation held in Chennai, which attract-

ed significant national attention. The meeting was attended by Chief Ministers from Kerala, Telangana, and Punjab, as well as the Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka and the Leader of the Opposition in Odisha, who joined via video conference.

The resolution passed during the meeting called for the delimitation process to be transparent and conducted in consultation with the states. It also advocated for extending the current freeze on delimitation for another 25 years, arguing that states that have implemented population control measures should not be penalized. Furthermore, it was proposed that constitutional amendments should be introduced in Parliament, followed by resolutions in the respective state assemblies.



## Calcutta High Court Directs CBI to Investigate Doctor's Rape and Murder Case Further

Court asks for case diary, poses questions to CBI



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Calcutta High Court on Monday (March 24, 2025) directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to present the case diary of its investigation into the rape and murder of an on-duty doctor at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. The court raised concerns regarding the possibility of gang rape or evidence destruction in the ongoing investigation.

The case pertains to the tragic death of a postgraduate trainee, whose body was discovered in a seminar room at the state-run hospital on August 9, 2024. The petitioners, the doctor's parents, had requested a Court-monitored investigation. They claimed that the CBI's charge sheet indicated the possibility of a larger conspiracy, prompting them to call for a further investigation into the case.

Justice Tirthankar Ghosh, while hearing the petition, asked the CBI to clarify whether it was considering the possibility of gang rape or if there was any destruction of evidence. He also instructed the CBI to present the case diary on the next hearing date, March 28, 2025. The Court noted that the investigation would depend on the status report submitted by the CBI.

Sanjay Roy, a former civic volunteer, had been arrested by the Kolkata Police and was convicted of raping and murdering the doctor. In January, the sessions court sentenced Roy to life imprisonment. However, the High Court had transferred the investigation to the CBI following public interest litigation (PIL) petitions.

# Govt seems to have made up its mind to not let LS function: Priyanka Gandhi

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday slammed the government for repeatedly adjourning the Lok Sabha, alleging that it had deliberately created disruptions to prevent the House from functioning. Speaking to reporters in the Parliament complex after the Lok Sabha was adjourned for the second time that day, Priyanka Gandhi accused the government of finding excuses to create a

ruckus, thus hindering the legislative process.

The ongoing disruptions were triggered by BJP members raising the issue of a proposed reservation for Muslims in government contracts in Karnataka. The BJP has been vocal about claims that Karnataka's Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had suggested changing the Constitution to accommodate a 4% reservation for Muslims. However, Shivakumar has

strongly denied these claims, stating that he never proposed any amend-



ment to the Constitution to introduce religion-based reservations.

Gandhi emphasized that the government seemed to have "made up its mind" not to allow the House to function. She pointed out that the repeated adjournments and continuous disruptions were preventing any meaningful discussion or progress on important issues.

The Congress leader's comments re-

flect growing frustration among the opposition, which has been accusing the government of using tactics to avoid addressing key concerns in the House. The issue of reservation in Karnataka has stirred political debates, with the BJP accusing the state government of trying to change the Constitution, while the Congress maintains that Shivakumar's statement was misinterpreted.



# Heavy rush at New Delhi Railway Station but no stampede: officials



TPN Correspondent| New Delhi

New Delhi Railway Station witnessed significant passenger congestion as several trains experienced delays, causing chaos among commuters.

However, despite the heavy rush, there were no reports of stampedes or injuries, thanks to prompt crowd control measures implemented by the police, a police official confirmed.

- Surge in crowds due to multiple train delays on March 23, 2025.
- Prompt action by the police helped manage the rush, preventing stampedes
- Indian Railways is implementing enhanced crowd control strategies at 60 major stations

The situation unfolded as delays in the departure of multiple trains, including the Shiv Ganga Express, Swatantrata Senani Express, Jammu Rajdhani Express, Lucknow Mail, and Magadh Express, led to a buildup of large crowds on platforms 12 and 13. The congestion was exacerbated by passengers anxiously awaiting their trains.

In response to the escalating crowd,

the police quickly intervened to manage the situation. A senior police officer mentioned that necessary crowd control measures were put in place to ensure that there were no untoward incidents.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Railways), KPS Malhotra, reassured the public, saying, “There was some extra crowd and rush, but no stampede took place. A little later, a few trains

left, and the situation was better. No-body has been injured.”

This incident highlights the challenges of managing crowds at major railway stations, particularly during times of peak travel or delays. Authorities are increasingly focused on improving crowd control systems at key stations to avoid potential accidents. Just one month prior, in February 2025, a tragic stampede at the same station led to the deaths of 18 people, including women and children, as passengers rushed to board trains for the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj.

In light of the recent incidents, the Railways is planning a series of measures to better control crowds at 60 major stations, including New Delhi Railway Station, to ensure passenger safety and avoid similar situations in the future.

## Delhi Traffic Police to Take Stricter Action on Helmet Violations



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Delhi Traffic Police has been directed to enforce stricter measures against helmet-related violations, including the disqualification or revocation of driving licenses, along with the imposition of fines. These measures were outlined in a recent circular issued by Additional Commissioner of Police (Traffic Headquarters), Satya Vir Katara, to all traffic prosecuting personnel.

This move comes in response to alarming statistics indicating that nearly 40% of road crash fatalities in Delhi last year involved two-wheeler riders. A total of 611 riders lost their lives, and 2,233 others were injured in accidents across the national capital. According to the Delhi Traffic Police data, a total of 1,551 people died in road crashes in 2024.

An analysis of these fatalities revealed that many of the victims were either not wearing helmets or had improperly fastened their headgear, leading to severe head injuries. In addition, poor-quality helmets and reckless riding behaviors—such as

speeding, riding against traffic flow, and jumping red lights—contributed significantly to these deaths and injuries, said Dinesh Kumar Gupta, Additional Commissioner of Police (Traffic).

Under Section 129 of the Motor Vehicle (MV) Act, all two-wheeler riders and their passengers are legally required to wear protective headgear in public places. Violating this rule attracts a fine of ₹1,000. The Delhi Traffic Police has empowered officers of the rank of head constable and above to impose this fine and, under Section 206 of the MV Act, seize the offender's license, which could lead to disqualification or revocation proceedings.

Katara emphasized that these instructions should be strictly followed by all traffic prosecuting officials to ensure better road safety. The aim is to reduce the high rate of fatalities among two-wheeler riders, with particular focus on ensuring that riders use quality helmets and follow traffic regulations properly.

## Seven Arrested in Delhi for Human Trafficking Racket, 23 Women Rescued



TPN Correspondent| Delhi

Seven men were arrested for allegedly running an illegal human trafficking operation in central Delhi's Swami Shraddhanand Marg, with 23 women, including three minors, rescued, police reported on Sunday.

According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (Central) M Harsha Vard-

han, the accused were identified as Nurshed Alam (21), Mohammed Rahul Alam (22), Abdul Mannan (30), Shamim Alam (29), Mohammed Jarul (26), Monish (26), and Taushif Rexa (25), all from Bihar and Delhi.

The operation began on March 20, following a tip-off about an immoral trafficking network operating in central Delhi. Police monitored trafficking routes and tracked the movement of women being transported on scooters to nearby hotels. After confirming the illegal activities through decoy customers, police raided multiple locations, including a hideout in Paharganj's Main Bazaar. The trafficked women were reportedly brought in from West Bengal, Nepal, and other regions.

## Delhi Government Faces Potential Power Tariff Hike Amid Political Criticisms

considering an increase in electricity tariffs, sparking concerns among residents.

TPN Correspondent| New Delhi

Delhi Power Minister Ashish Sood on Monday, March 24, 2025, signaled a potential increase in electricity prices, attributing it to a ₹27,000 crore debt left by the previous AAP government with power distribution companies (Discoms). Responding to a question in the Delhi Assembly, Sood stated that Discoms have the authority to raise rates in order to recover this outstanding amount.

He explained that the previous AAP government failed to protect public interests regarding the debt and did not comply with Delhi High Court orders to issue tariff orders through the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC). "The previous government left behind a ₹27,000 crore debt with the Discoms, which is now impacting electricity rates," Sood said. He also indicated that the government is closely monitoring the situation and

remains in touch with DERC. He added, "Some people might even want this rise for political gains, but the government is committed to safeguarding public interests."

Meanwhile, former Delhi Chief Minister and AAP leader Atishi criticized the BJP-led central government for failing to deliver on promises, particularly the ₹2,500 financial assistance for women, which was promised for March 8 but has not yet been implemented. Speaking to ANI, Atishi claimed that Prime Minister Modi had misled Delhi's women, asserting that the registration process for



the scheme had not even started. She urged the government to fulfill its commitments during the ongoing Budget Session.

In another key development, newly elected Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta kicked off the inaugural budget session by preparing the ceremonial 'kheer' and expressed her gratitude to those involved in the budget-making process. The session, running from March 24 to March 28, marks a significant start for the BJP government, which returned to power after 27 years.

The assembly session will address various legislative matters, including the election of financial committees and discussions on key issues such as water shortages and infrastructure improvements in Delhi. This Budget Session is crucial for shaping the financial governance of the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

## BJP to Transform Mohalla Clinics into Urban Ayushman Arogya Mandirs Amid Concerns



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Geeta, 50, a resident of Okhla, has been visiting a Mohalla Clinic in her area for five years to manage her thyroid condition and cholesterol levels. "We know that the clinics will change, but we hope the facilities remain the same," she said while waiting to see a doctor.

The BJP government has announced plans to convert the Mohalla Clinics, a flagship initiative of the Aam Aadmi Party, into Urban Ayushman Arog-

ya Mandirs (U-AAMs). A report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, presented in the Delhi Assembly by the BJP, highlighted several shortcomings in the functioning of the clinics, prompting the government's decision to overhaul the system.

Over the past month, there has been a slight decrease in patient footfall at the clinics, according to doctors working there. However, the clinics, staffed by a team of four—doctor, nurse, pharmacist, and a multitasking worker—are still operating and awaiting further instructions from the authorities on the transition.

At a meeting on February 17, health officials and District Magistrates agreed to establish a total of 1,139 U-AAMs, with the existing 553 Mohalla Clinics being rebranded as U-AAMs. Health Department officials confirmed that the process of rebranding is already underway.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh announced the closure of around 160 Mohalla Clinics that are currently operating from rented prop-

erties. He also mentioned that the services would be expanded to include Ayurvedic treatments alongside modern medical care.

Doctors at the clinics expressed mixed feelings about the changes. Two doctors mentioned they were verbally informed that emergency services and vaccination facilities would be introduced at the clinics. "Emergency services will be added, meaning we could provide first aid in cases of road accidents," said one doctor, speaking on condition of anonymity.

However, there were concerns about the inclusion of Ayurvedic facilities. "Modern medicine and Ayurveda are very different. We're not sure if a separate section will be created for Ayurvedic treatments," a doctor shared.

These developments have raised questions about the future of the services offered at Mohalla Clinics, and many residents, like Geeta, are hoping the quality of care will remain unaffected by the changes.



# Maharashtra City on High Alert, Gatherings Banned Amid Aurangzeb Tomb Controversy

TPN Correspondent | Maharashtra

In light of growing tensions surrounding the tomb of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb and upcoming religious festivals, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar city in Maharashtra has been placed on high alert. Prohibitory orders have been imposed by Police Commissioner Pravin Pawar to ensure law and order, effective from March 25 to April 8, 2025.

The orders come in response to agitations led by several right-wing organizations, who have been demanding the removal of Aurangzeb's tomb located at Khultabad in the district. The controversy has been a point of contention for some time, with calls for the structure's demolition due to its association with the Mughal ruler, who is seen by some as a controversial figure in Indian history.

Authorities have issued the prohibitory orders under Section 37(1)(3) of the Maharashtra Police Act, 1951. These measures are intended to prevent disturbances and ensure the smooth conduct of upcoming events. The order specifically prohibits the assembly of five or more people, aimed at preventing unauthorized protests or marches. Additionally, there will be restrictions on the carrying of weapons, loudspeakers, and the use of high-volume sound systems in public spaces during this period.

Several major religious and cultural events are set to take place in the coming weeks, which could potentially amplify tensions. These in-



- Restrictions under Section 37(1)(3) of the Maharashtra Police Act, 1951,
- From March 25 to April 8, 2025
- Major Religious Events at Stake

clude the death anniversary of Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj on March 29, Gudi Padva festival on March 30, Eid on March 31, Jhulelal Jayanti on March 31, and Ram Navami on April 6. Authorities are particularly concerned that these celebrations could be disrupted by protests from right-wing groups or counter-demonstrations from other communities.

To maintain peace and security, local authorities have taken these precautionary steps, emphasizing the importance of cooperation from the public. The prohibitory orders will remain in effect for nearly two weeks, with the goal of minimizing unrest and ensuring the safety of all citizens in the region.

# South Korean Woman Arrested for Illegal Entry into India via Nepal

TPN Correspondent | Bahraich (UP)

A joint team of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and Uttar Pradesh Police arrested a South Korean woman on charges of illegal entry into India through Nepal. The arrest occurred on Saturday night near Seemant Inter College in Rupaidiha, located in the border district of Uttar Pradesh.



Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural) Durga Prasad Tewari confirmed that the woman, identified as 54-year-old Park Seryeon, alias Yogsuk, was detained at approximately 11 pm while attempting to cross the border without valid documentation. Park, a resident of Seoul, South Korea, was found trying to illegally enter India after crossing the Nepal-India border.

During questioning, the woman was unable

to produce any legal papers required for entry into India, prompting authorities to file a case against her under the Foreigners Act. As a result, she was arrested and taken into custody at the Rupaidiha police station.

In addition to her arrest, law enforcement officials seized several items from Park's possession, including her South Korean passport, a laptop, a mobile phone with a Nepalese

SIM card, Nepali currency, and various documents. These items are now being examined for further investigation.

SSB's 42nd Battalion Commandant Ganga Singh Udavat revealed that Park is reportedly associated with the Church of God (World Mission Society). Authorities are conducting further inquiries based on information received from her during the investigation.

The incident highlights ongoing concerns over border security and illegal immigration through the porous India-Nepal border. Authorities are closely monitoring the situation and continuing their investigation to uncover the full scope of Park's activities and the possible reasons behind her illegal entry into India. The case serves as a reminder of the importance of vigilance in protecting the nation's borders and ensuring the safety and security of its citizens.

# Anti-terror operation intensified in J&K's Kathua

TPN Correspondent | Jammu

The search operation to apprehend a group of infiltrating terrorists in the dense jungles of Kathua district, Jammu, entered its second day on Monday, March 24, 2025. The operation, led by Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat, intensified with the deployment of additional commandos, drones, and sniffer dogs to track the terrorists, who are believed to have infiltrated from across the border.

The operation began after intelligence reports indicated the presence of the terrorists inside a local "dhok" (enclosure) in Sanyal village, located about five kilometers from the International Border with Pakistan. The police team, including the Special Operations Group (SOG), initiated the search, but they came under heavy fire from the terrorists, leading to an intense gunfight that lasted over half an hour. Reinforcements were swiftly dispatched to assist in the operation, and a manhunt was launched to apprehend the terrorists, who are thought to have crossed the border either via a ravine route or through a newly created tunnel.

Fortunately, there were no reports of casualties during the initial gun-

fire. The area was cordoned off by security forces throughout the night, and operations resumed with the first light of Monday morning. However, there has been no fresh contact with the terrorists as of now. Authorities believe that two groups of terrorists, each consisting of five to six members, infiltrated on Saturday, March 22.

In the village, locals reported seeing armed terrorists seeking refuge in the expansive nursery area. One villager, Anita Devi, recounted an encounter with the terrorists, who held her husband at gunpoint but allowed her to escape after she attracted attention by shouting. A stray bullet also injured a 7-year-old girl, though she sustained only minor injuries.

Kathua has become a significant infiltration route for terrorists from Pakistan, spreading terror to neighboring districts like Udhampur, Doda, and Kishtwar. Security forces have been on high alert, conducting relentless operations to neutralize the threat posed by these infiltrators. The region has witnessed a series of terror-related incidents in recent years, particularly in 2024, which prompted heightened security measures to curb terrorist activities.



# Green Campuses for Green Cities' Initiative Launched across 1,000 cities by 2030

TPN Correspondent | PUDUCHERY

The 'Green Campuses for Green Cities' initiative, launched recently, aims to address environmental challenges through local actions, with the goal of creating environmentally sustainable educational campuses across 1,000 cities over the next five years.

This initiative, known as the 'National-Level Green Campus Initiative,' is driven by the Association for Promoting Sustainability in Campuses and Communities (APSCC), a key player in the Restoration Decades Global Challenge. The program is designed to foster sustainability in universities and higher education institutions by focusing on conservation, innovation, and motivation, aligning with the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), led by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

Lt. Governor K. Kailashnathan officially launched the campaign, emphasizing that the initiative should evolve beyond a policy framework into a movement. He highlighted the importance of collaboration among

government bodies, educational institutions, industries, and communities to ensure its success. He also expressed hope that Puducherry could become a national model for sustainable educational institutions in the near future.

Golda A. Edwin, convenor and Executive Director of APSCC, and M. Nandhivarnan, programme chair, revealed that the green campus model developed in Puducherry and Pondicherry University over 15 years of research would be expanded nationwide, reaching 1,000 cities by 2030.

G. Viswanathan, Chancellor of VIT University, encouraged educational institutions to actively participate in the green campuses initiative, underscoring the significance of academic involvement in environmental sustainability. M. Dhanase-

karan, Chancellor of Takshashila University, praised the collaboration between academia, government, and industry to promote ecological conservation and sustainable economic growth, emphasizing the need for universities to engage with local and rural communities as part of this mission.

P. Arulrajan, Chief Conservator of Forests and Wildlife, expressed hope that the initiative would bridge the gap between legal frameworks and public participation in conservation, with educational institutions playing a central role in environmental action.

R. Kesavan, Local Administration Secretary, emphasized that small, consistent actions towards pollution prevention could significantly slow down environmental degradation.



# SC Orders Probe Into IIT Delhi Suicides, Sets Up National Task Force

TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Delhi Police to register an FIR and investigate the tragic deaths of two IIT-Delhi students from the SC/ST community. This ruling follows concerns about a disturbing pattern of student suicides across educational institutions. Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan issued the directive, instructing the DCP (south-west district) to assign an officer of at least the rank of assistant commissioner of police to oversee the investigation.

The court emphasized the responsibility of educational institutions to ensure the safety and well-being of students. It stated that when a suicide occurs on campus, it is the institution's duty to promptly file an FIR with the authorities. The court stressed that such actions are not only legally required but also a moral obligation to ensure transparency and accountability. It also underscored the importance of police agencies acting swiftly to register an FIR, citing the need for diligence in such sensitive matters.

In addressing the wider issue of student suicides, the court acknowledged that each loss is a personal tragedy with far-reaching effects on families



and communities. It also noted that it was time to formulate comprehensive guidelines to tackle the mental health concerns that contribute to such distress among students.

As part of the ruling, the court ordered the creation of a National Task Force on student mental health, which will work towards preventing suicides in higher educational institutions. Former Supreme Court judge Justice S Ravindra Bhat has been appointed to lead the task force. The court also instructed the chief secretaries of all states and union territories to nominate a high-ranking officer to serve as a nodal officer for student welfare.

The case stems from an appeal filed by the parents of two IIT-Delhi students, Ayush Ashna and Anil Kumar, who died in 2023. The parents alleged that their deaths were a result of caste discrimination and not suicides, prompting further investigation into the matter.



# 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

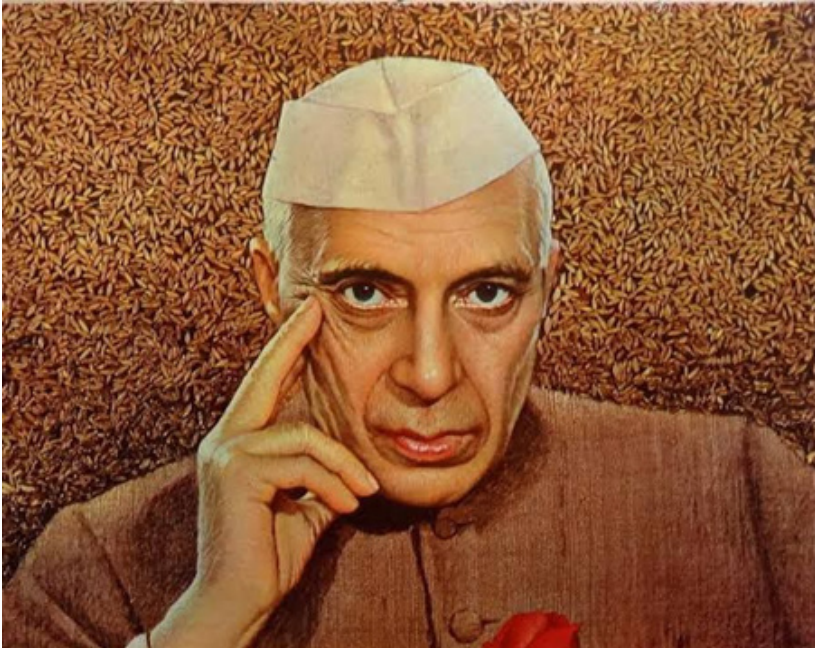
Failed in promoting the idea that all citizens should first identify with the nation-state.

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.

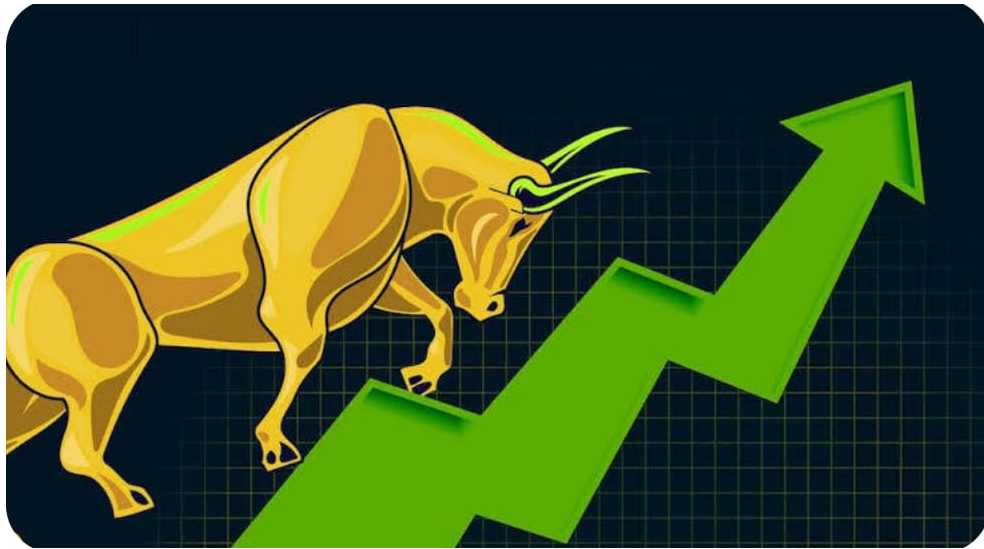
Lutnick elaborated on the potential benefits for wealthy individuals, citing an example where someone might purchase multiple Gold Cards for their family, ensuring access to the US in times of crisis or instability. “It’s a safety net,” Lutnick said, emphasizing the freedom and security the card offers. 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."