

**Weather Forecast**

DELHI	HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA
H 28° C L 14° C	H 35° C L 21° C	H 36° C L 23° C

## SEBI to challenge court order for FIR against ex-chief, officials

- Court orders FIR against former SEBI chairperson
- Judiciary to monitor probe, seeks status report in 30 days
- SEBI calls petition frivolous, plans legal challenge

TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

A special court has directed that a case be registered against former SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch and five other officials over alleged stock market fraud and regulatory violations. The court has decided to monitor the investigation and has asked for a status report within 30 days.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has announced that it will challenge the court's order, stating that it was based on a frivolous petition and that SEBI was not given an opportunity to present its side before the decision was made.

"There is prima facie evidence of regulatory lapses and collusion, requiring a fair and impartial probe," said special court judge Shashikant Eknathrao Bangar in response to the petition filed by reporter Sapan Shrivastava. The court noted that the allegations indicate a cognisable offence, warranting a probe. It also



cited inaction by law enforcement agencies and SEBI, which, according to the judge, necessitated judicial intervention. In response, SEBI stated that it would be "initiating appropriate legal steps to challenge this order." The board also argued that the officials named were not holding their positions at the time of the alleged violations.

"The court allowed the application without issuing any notice or granting SEBI an opportunity to place the facts on record," SEBI asserted. It further criticized the petitioner, stating that Sapan Shrivastava is known for filing frivolous litigations, with several of his previous cases being dismissed by the court, sometimes with penalties.

## Delhi court allows police to withdraw sedition case against Shehla Rashid

- 2019 sedition case withdrawn following LG's approval
- Delhi Police cited Screening Committee's recommendation
- Case was based on Rashid's tweets about the Indian Army



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Patiala House Court has allowed the withdrawal of a 2019 sedition case against former Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) leader Shehla Rashid, which was filed over her tweets concerning the Indian Army's actions in Jammu and Kashmir. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Anuj Kumar Singh approved Delhi Police's application on February 27, following the Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Delhi, V K Saxena's withdrawal of sanction for prosecution. A senior official confirmed that the case was reviewed by a Screening Committee, which recommended its withdrawal, leading to the application under Section 321 of the CrPC.

Delhi Police stated in its submission, "The case was examined by the Screening Committee, which recommended withdrawal from prosecution. The same was placed before the Government of NCT of Delhi, and the Hon'ble LG has approved the recommendation under Section 196 of the CrPC." The case was initially filed in 2019 based on a complaint by Supreme Court lawyer Alakh Alok Srivastava, alleging that Rashid's tweets accused the Indian Army of human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir. In her tweets, Rashid had claimed that armed forces were entering houses and picking up boys, which led to charges under sedition laws. However, the Indian Army dismissed her claims as baseless and unverified.

## Union Minister Raksha Khadse says Daughter Molested in Jalgaon

- One accused arrested, police searching for six others
- Maharashtra CM vows strict action
- CM Fadnavis Calls it an act of political miscreants

TPN Correspondent | Maharashtra

The daughter of Union Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Raksha Khadse and her friends were allegedly harassed by a group of miscreants at a fair in Jalgaon district, Maharashtra. The incident, which occurred on February 28, has sparked political outrage, with leaders from various parties condemning the act. Jalgaon Superintendent of Police confirmed that one accused has been arrested, and a search is underway for six other suspects. "A case has been registered under the POCSO Act, Molestation, and IT Act," police sources told IANS. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, reacting to the incident, hinted at political involvement. "Some officials of a party were behind this act. It is a cheap and disgraceful act. The police have taken action, and more arrests will follow. There will be no leniency, and strict measures



will be taken," he said. NCP (Sharad Pawar faction) leader Rohini Khadse questioned the state's law and order, stating, "If a Union Minister's daughter can face this, how will ordinary women get justice?" Meanwhile, senior NCP leader Eknath Khadse slammed the government, calling it a social issue and accusing authorities of failing to curb rising lawlessness. BJP MLA Ram Kadam assured that the government would ensure the strictest punishment for those responsible. "This kind of disgraceful mentality will not be tolerated. The culprits will be behind bars soon," he said.

## Delhi Government Clarifies

### No need for police approval for construction work

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Delhi government has issued a clarification stating that no police approval is required for construction activities in the city. The directive, issued via a circular on Saturday, makes it clear that building construction falls under the jurisdiction of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and other local bodies, and not the Delhi Police.

The move comes days after Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a review meeting with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and senior Delhi Police officials. Following the meeting, the Delhi government issued an order to prevent any unnecessary in-



terference by the police in construction activities.

"Building construction activity is regulated by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and other local bodies in their respective jurisdictions. This process does not necessitate seeking permission from the Delhi Police," the circular stated. It further directed the Delhi Police to sensitize field officers

to prevent the misuse of legal provisions and eliminate any misconceptions regarding police involvement in construction-related matters. The clarification aims to streamline construction activities, ensuring that builders, property owners, and developers do not face unwarranted hurdles from law enforcement agencies. The order is expected to prevent delays and curb any possible exploitation of legal loopholes by police personnel. With ongoing infrastructure projects and real estate development in the capital, this move is likely to bring relief to builders and residents, reinforcing clear governance guidelines regarding construction permissions.



**Mehndi on hands, Body in Suitcase**  
7 PAGE |

**Uttarakhand Avalanche Army Recovers two more Bodies, Death toll Rises to Six**  
7 PAGE |



## BJP vs Congress Over Kumbh, Ram Temple Event Attendance

- BJP calls Congress leadership anti-Hindu
- Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge targeted for skipping Kumbh and Ram temple inauguration
- Priyank Kharge counters, questions BJP leaders' attendance



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A fresh political row has erupted between the BJP and Congress over religious events, with the ruling party accusing Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge of being anti-Hindu for skipping both the Maha Kumbh Mela and the Ram temple inauguration. The BJP's attack intensified as Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Somnath temple, while Union Minister Ram Mishra attended the consecration of the newly built Govardhan Temple. BJP spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari took a direct dig at Rahul Gandhi, claiming that his "entire family is anti-Hindu." "They went to the mosque built by Babar (Babri Masjid in Ayodhya)

thrice but never visited the Ram temple. Rahul Gandhi frequently visits Raebareilly, but he couldn't spare time for Prayagraj's Kumbh, which is just 120 km away," Bhandari alleged. Congress did not officially respond, but party leader Priyank Kharge hit back on X (formerly Twitter), pointing out that even "half of BJP's Union Ministers and over half its MLAs never attended." He further questioned if BJP's logic applied to its allies, asking whether leaders like Nitish Kumar, Chandrababu Naidu, Ajit Pawar, and HD Kumaraswamy should also be labeled anti-Hindu. With elections approaching, the political battle over religious identity continues to intensify, with both parties trying to shape the narrative in their favor.



# PM Modi arrives in Gujarat on a three-day visit

**TPN Correspondent | New Delhi**  
Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Jamnagar, Gujarat, on the evening of March 1, 2025, to participate in several key events over the next two days. During his visit, the Prime Minister will lead a meeting of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) and visit Vantara, an animal rescue, conservation, and rehabilitation center located in the Reliance Jamnagar refinery complex. As PM Modi's motorcade made its way from Jamnagar Airport to the Circuit House, a large crowd gathered along the streets to welcome him. On March 2 (Sunday), the Prime Minister is scheduled to visit Vantara, a sprawling 3,000-acre center dedicated to wildlife rescue and conservation efforts. In addition to his conservation-focused visit, PM Modi will pay his respects at the Somnath Temple. As the chairperson of the Shree Somnath Trust, which manages the temple, he will also lead a meeting of the trust to discuss its ongoing projects and initiatives. Following his

stay in Sasan, the headquarters of Gir National Park, PM Modi will embark on a jungle safari on March 3 (Monday), exploring the renowned wildlife sanctuary. The safari is part of his efforts to highlight the importance of wildlife preservation and the unique biodiversity of Gujarat. Later that day, the Prime Minister will return to 'Sinh Sadan' and chair the National Board for Wildlife meeting as its ex-officio chairman. The NBWL consists of 47 members, including the Chief of Army Staff, state representatives, NGO members focused on wildlife conservation, chief wildlife wardens, and various secretaries from the state government. During the meeting, the Prime Minister is expected to discuss important measures to improve wildlife protection efforts across the country. Before wrapping up his visit, PM Modi will also interact with women forest staff members in Sasan, acknowledging their role in safeguarding the environment and promoting conservation in the region.



## Gangsters, Smugglers Have No Place In Punjab, Will Be Wiped Out': CM Mann

**TPN Correspondent | Punjab**  
Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann declared on Sunday that gangsters, smugglers, criminals, and other anti-social elements will be eliminated from the state. Speaking at the passing-out parade of 2,490 new police officers in Hoshiarpur, Mann emphasized that Punjab, a land rich in saints, martyrs, and legendary figures, will no longer tolerate the presence of these criminals who allegedly flourished under the patronage of previous governments. Mann outlined the state government's ongoing "crusade" to root out these anti-national elements, assuring that they will soon be behind bars. He further asserted that Punjab is at a pivotal moment, with his government launching a decisive battle against drugs. Under a zero-tolerance policy, the state aims to completely rid itself of the drug menace, with active cooperation from the public. The Chief Minister mentioned that the supply lines of drugs are being cut off, drug peddlers are being arrested, and the properties of drug smugglers are either being confiscated or demolished. He acknowledged the ongoing efforts of the Punjab Police in thwarting the designs of inimical forces that have tried to disrupt the peace of the state, highlighting the force's critical role in maintaining law and order. Mann stressed the need for continuous updates and advancements in



police investigations, science, and technology to meet the evolving challenges of law enforcement. He congratulated the newly inducted police officers, urging them to dedicate themselves to their duty and contribute to the state's progress and prosperity. He also called on them to play an active role in eliminating the drug menace, describing Punjab's fight against drugs as a national battle. The Chief Minister shared that over 10,000 young recruits have been inducted into the police force since 2022, with plans for an additional 10,000 personnel soon. He also mentioned the creation of a dedicated "Sadak Surakhya Force" (Road Safety Force), which has significantly reduced road accident casualties by 48.10% since its launch. Mann noted that Union Minister Nitin Gadkari had praised this initiative in Parliament, reinforcing the success of the state's road safety efforts.

## EC to Resolve Duplicate Voter ID Issue, Ensures Unique EPIC Numbers

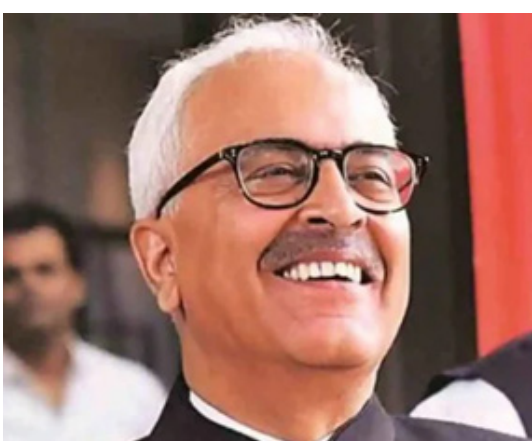
**TPN Correspondent | Delhi**  
The Election Commission of India (ECI) has addressed concerns regarding the duplication of Electors Photo Identification Cards (EPIC) numbers after reports surfaced of electors in two different states receiving the same voter ID numbers. On Sunday, March 2, 2025, the ECI clarified that despite potential overlaps in EPIC numbers, voters can only cast ballots at designated polling stations within their respective constituencies and states or Union Territories. The ECI statement explained that while some electors may have identical EPIC numbers, their demographic details, such as Assembly Constituency and polling booth, are unique. This ensures that even with the same EPIC number, voters will only be able to vote at their designated polling stations. The Election Commission traced the root cause of the duplication issue to a decentralized and manual system used prior to the introduction of the ERONET platform. The ERONET platform, a web-based tool designed to handle electoral registration, migration, and deletion processes, was introduced to mod-



ernize the system. The transition led to instances where different States and Union Territories used the same EPIC number series, resulting in duplications. The Commission has committed to addressing these duplications by ensuring that each elector receives a unique EPIC number. The ERONET 2.0 platform, which is currently being updated, will assist in rectifying any cases of duplicate EPIC numbers. This issue became widely discussed after several social media posts claimed that voters, particularly migrant workers from West Bengal, were assigned identical EPIC numbers

across different states, including Gujarat and Haryana. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also raised concerns, alleging electoral roll manipulation in her state, which is gearing up for the 2026 Assembly elections. Banerjee accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of using the ECI's involvement to manipulate the rolls and allow voters from other states to influence the West Bengal polls. The ECI, however, reassured the public that it is actively working to resolve the issue and ensure the integrity of the voter registration process.

## Surrender call: Groups retain sophisticated arms in Manipur



**TPN Correspondent | Manipur**  
Manipur Governor Ajay Bhalla's decision to extend the deadline for the surrender of looted and illegal weapons reflects not only the positive response to the amnesty scheme but also the fact that fewer weapons have been surrendered from police armouries. The extension comes after a significant number of weapons were handed over during the initial phase of the amnesty scheme, which ran from February 20 to 27. Between these dates, a total of 738 weapons were surrendered, with the majority being single-barrel guns and country-made firearms. Notably, the Meitei militia group Arambai Tenggol, which has been at the forefront of the clashes between Meitei and Kuki groups, contributed 246 weapons during this period. Former Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh lauded this develop-

ment, calling it "a big step towards peace" in the state. However, a detailed examination of the surrendered weapons reveals some key trends. Among the 738 weapons, only 106 were sophisticated firearms, while the remainder included 110 single or double-barrel guns and 30 country-made weapons. The lack of looted police weapons in the total surrender further influenced the Governor's decision to extend the amnesty period. Sources indicated that the extension was partly to encourage more individuals to come forward with more sophisticated weapons, including those taken from police armouries during the ongoing ethnic conflicts. While the response to the amnesty scheme has been encouraging, the relatively low number of advanced firearms returned suggests that some individuals may still be holding on to more dangerous weapons. Governor Bhalla's initiative aims to help restore peace and security in the state, which has been embroiled in ethnic violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities. By offering a chance for individuals to surrender their weapons without facing legal consequences, the government hopes to prevent further violence and rebuild trust among the warring factions. The deadline extension gives individuals more time to comply, with authorities hoping for even greater participation in the coming days.

## BSP chief Mayawati Strips Nephew Akash Anand Of National Coordinator Role

**TPN Correspondent | Delhi**  
In a significant shake-up within the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), party chief Mayawati on Sunday removed her nephew, Akash Anand, from all positions of authority in the party. This decision marks a turning point, as Akash had been widely regarded as the political heir to Mayawati. His expulsion follows closely after the removal of his father-in-law from the party. Akash Anand, who had been serving as the BSP's national coordinator, was replaced by Mayawati's brother, Anand Kumar, along with party veteran Ramji Gautam. In a statement during a party meeting in Lucknow, Mayawati made it clear that there would be no designated successor to her leadership as long as she is alive, signaling a shift in the party's internal hierarchy. The move came during the BSP's national executive meeting, which was attended by top party leaders, including Mayawati, her broth-



er Anand Kumar, national general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra, and several other state unit presidents. Interestingly, Akash Anand was absent from the meeting, raising questions about his future role in the party. Mayawati, who served as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh multiple times, emphasized the importance of strengthening the party ahead of the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections in 2027. During the meeting, she reportedly reviewed the party's current position and

discussed strategies to expand its influence and organizational structure in the years to come. The expulsion of Akash Anand marks a critical moment in the political landscape of the BSP, highlighting both internal power shifts and the ongoing evolution of the party's leadership dynamics. It remains to be seen how these changes will impact the party's fortunes in the upcoming elections, and whether the decision will lead to internal dissent or rejuvenate the party's base.



# 'Will not be spared': Arvind Kejriwal issues stern warning to eradicate drugs from Punjab



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor, Arvind Kejriwal, issued a strong warning on Sunday to drug dealers in Punjab, stating that the state will be completely freed from the drug menace. In a message shared on social media, Kejriwal emphasized the government's commitment to eradicating drugs and ensuring that those involved in the drug trade would not be spared. "Our government has launched a great war against drugs in Punjab. Drugs have ruined a large number of our youth and children. Those who sell drugs will not be spared. Drugs will be eradicated from Punjab forever," he wrote.

In line with Kejriwal's statement, Punjab police and local authorities

have intensified their anti-drug operations. In a recent action, two illegal properties owned by suspected drug peddlers were demolished in Khanpur village, located in the Phillaur Tehsil of Jalandhar district. DSP Sarwan Singh confirmed that drug suppliers had illegally encroached upon land in two villages. He further reported the demolition of a notorious drug smuggler, Jasvir Sheera's house in Khanpur, and a similar action taken against a female drug peddler's illegal property in another village.

"This is a clear message from the police. If anybody has built properties or anything with drug money or illegal money, we will take action," DSP Singh said. Earlier, on February 24, authorities had demolished illegal constructions associated with drug smuggler

Sonu from Talwandi village. Sonu, who had been involved in drug-related activities for three years, faced multiple criminal charges, including six FIRs.

The Punjab government has announced an all-out campaign against drug abuse, directing law enforcement agencies to carry out extensive operations. In addition to this, district administrators have been instructed to ensure the availability of adequate rehabilitation and de-addiction facilities. The government is committed to providing necessary medical resources, including Buprenorphine, and testing kits to help habitual users of drugs. This comprehensive initiative reflects the state's strong determination to combat drug-related issues and safeguard the well-being of its citizens.

- Kejriwal vows to eradicate drugs from Punjab
- Police demolish properties of drug peddlers
- Govt intensifies anti-drug operations, boosts rehab efforts

## Himanta Biswa: Left and Liberals are the Biggest Threat to Hindus



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stirred controversy on Sunday by claiming that the biggest danger to Hindus comes from the Left and liberal groups within their own society. Sarma made these remarks while addressing an award ceremony organized by a private organization.

According to Sarma, Muslims and Christians are not a threat to Hindus, but rather, it is the Left-wing and liberal factions that are weakening the Hindu community. "The Left and the liberals are the biggest danger to the Hindus," he said. He further claimed that the decline of Hindu influence in West Bengal was a direct result of policies adopted by the Left and liberals, which have been inherited and continued by the state's current Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee.

Sarma emphasized that India's civilization, with a history spanning over 5,000 years, did not begin with the country's independence in 1947, suggesting that the nation's roots and cultural identity go far deeper than its colonial past. His comments were a call for Hindus to recognize

the forces weakening their community from within, pointing to what he sees as the detrimental influence of Left-leaning ideologies.

The Assam Chief Minister's statement comes at a time when political discourse surrounding identity and religion is particularly contentious in India. Sarma's remarks resonate with the growing assertion of Hindu nationalist sentiments, particularly in BJP-ruled states, where there has been an increasing focus on Hindu cultural revival.

While Sarma's comments may have garnered support from those who advocate for stronger Hindu identity politics, they have also been criticized by others who view such statements as divisive and polarizing. Critics argue that framing ideological differences as a threat to Hinduism may exacerbate communal tensions in an already volatile political climate.

The ongoing debate highlights the complex relationship between religion, politics, and identity in contemporary India, with various factions vying for influence over the national narrative.

## AAP Office in Bhopal Locked Due to Unpaid Rent, Party Blames Financial Strain



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The office of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Bhopal, which was operating from a leased house, has been locked by the landlord allegedly due to non-payment of rent for the past three months.

Ramakant Patel, the MP AAP Joint Secretary, spoke to PTI over the phone and attributed the situation to the party's financial difficulties. "All this

happens when we work with honesty. Things will improve. We are honest. Right now, our party does not have funds. So, we couldn't do it," he said, reflecting on the party's current financial strain.

Patel explained that the party operates primarily with local funds, and the financial condition of their workers has not been favorable. When questioned about the specific rent amount and the duration of the delay in payment, Patel stated that he was unaware of the exact details, as he no longer serves as the party's spokesman.

Meanwhile, BJP's state spokesman, Narendra Saluja, took to X to mock the situation, writing, "AAP's MP office locked, next number is of Congress," implying that other opposition par-

ties might face similar difficulties.

This development comes in the wake of a heavy defeat for AAP in the recent Delhi Assembly elections. The party, which had been seen as a strong contender in the capital, was decimated by the BJP, which won 48 of the 70 seats. AAP, under the leadership of Arvind Kejriwal, was left with just 22 seats, dealing a significant blow to the party's standing in the region.

The incident highlights the ongoing financial struggles within the party and raises questions about its ability to sustain its operations, especially following the electoral setback. As AAP continues to grapple with these challenges, it remains to be seen how it will recover both financially and politically.

## They stand as one, Rahul says of Kerala Congress leaders after Shashi Tharoor controversy

TPN Correspondent | THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi emphasized that Kerala Congress leaders are united and stand as one after a contentious period sparked by Shashi Tharoor's comments. His statement came after a meeting of Kerala's top leaders with the party's national leadership at Indira Bhawan in New Delhi on Friday.

Gandhi posted a picture on Facebook showing Kerala Congress leaders addressing the media following the meeting, where he expressed, "They stand as one, united by the light of purpose ahead." He further tagged the post with #TeamKerala, signaling solidarity among the state leaders.

The nearly three-hour brainstorming session focused on strategizing for

the upcoming 2026 Kerala Assembly elections. The discussions stressed the importance of discipline, unity, and organizational strengthening within the state unit of Congress.

Sources from the meeting revealed that Gandhi urged the leaders to exercise caution in their public statements and actions, emphasizing that they must align with the party's position to maintain cohesion. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge also highlighted the need for unity within the Kerala unit, calling for the filling



of vacant posts to strengthen the party's presence in the state.

This meeting followed a period of controversy surrounding Shashi Tharoor, whose recent comments in a media interview about the lack of leadership in Kerala's Congress and the possibility of exploring "other options" raised tensions. While Tharoor later clarified that his remarks had been misinterpreted, the incident had sparked discussions about leadership in the state and the need for a more unified approach ahead of the elections.

Rahul Gandhi's post and the meeting's outcome underline the Congress party's effort to rally its leadership in Kerala and ensure a united front as it prepares for the critical electoral challenge ahead.

## Beed sarpanch murder case chargesheet filed after thorough probe: Fadnavis



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced on Saturday that a chargesheet has been filed in the high-profile murder case of Sarpanch Santosh Deshmukh, following a thorough investigation by the state's Crime Investigation Department (CID). The chargesheet, which spans over 1,200 pages, was submitted to a court in Beed district, covering Deshmukh's murder and two related cases.

The shocking murder of Santosh Deshmukh, the sarpanch of Massajog village in Beed, took place on December 9, 2024, and has stirred political controversy in the state. Deshmukh was reportedly abducted, tortured, and killed after he at-

tempted to prevent an extortion attempt targeting Avaada Energy company. Walmik Karad, a close aide to NCP minister Dhananjay Munde, was arrested in connection with the extortion case, intensifying the political firestorm surrounding the incident.

The CID has registered three separate cases: the murder of Deshmukh, the extortion bid against the energy company, and the assault on the firm's security guard. The police have invoked the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) in the murder case, aiming for a robust legal action against the accused.

Speaking to the media, CM Fadnavis expressed confidence in the investigative

process, stating, "The police have conducted a very professional investigation, and the chargesheet has been filed in a timely manner with all the necessary evidence." Fadnavis added that the government would request the court to fast-track the case and ensure strict punishment for the culprits. He also revealed that prominent lawyer Ujjwal Nikam has been appointed as the Special Public Prosecutor for the case.

As of now, seven individuals have been arrested in connection with the murder, but the primary accused, Krishna Andhale, remains at large. The Maharashtra government is determined to bring those responsible for this crime to justice, with the chief minister reiterating the commitment to ensuring a fair and swift trial.



## India's policymaking must account for uncertainty: PM's principal secretary



- Mishra urges outcome-driven policies
- Stresses India's resilience in crises
- Highlights FTAs, AI, and governance reforms

TPN Correspondent  
| New Delhi

Addressing the Business Standard Manthan Summit in Delhi on Sunday, PK Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, emphasized that policymaking in India must take into account uncertainty and adopt a comprehensive, outcome-oriented approach. He highlighted the need for constructive thinking to navigate global challenges effectively, citing India's response to crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine-Russia conflict, and instability in West Asia.

Mishra credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for steering India through these turbulent

times, making the country more "atmanirbhar" (self-reliant). He pointed out that despite global upheavals, India successfully managed the COVID-19 crisis by implementing economic reforms and stimulus packages, which helped restore growth momentum.

Speaking on policymaking, Mishra stressed that any government initiative must be based on a framework that accounts for uncertainty, while focusing on long-term outcomes. He pointed to the government's Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme as a significant example of a successful, forward-looking initiative that would require on-

going evaluation for long-term impact.

On India's external trade policy, Mishra underlined India's consistent stance amid growing global protectionism. He highlighted free trade agreements (FTAs) with Australia, the UAE, and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) as important milestones in India's strategic economic engagement. He noted that such initiatives will help India mitigate emerging challenges and strengthen its position in global trade.

Mishra also touched upon the importance of building an "anti-fragile system," drawing from the work of economic analyst Nassim Nicholas Taleb, to strengthen India's resilience. On the agricultural sector, he acknowledged its declining share of GDP while noting that it still employs 46% of the workforce.

Lastly, Mishra spoke on civil service reforms, mentioning initiatives like Mission Karmayogi and the iGoT platform aimed at modernizing India's civil services. He assured that the government is also exploring emerging technologies like AI to enhance governance and make it more accessible to citizens.

## No fuel for vehicles older than 15 years in Delhi from April 1

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

In a major move to tackle the escalating air pollution in the national capital, the Delhi Government announced a series of stringent measures aimed at curbing vehicular emissions. Starting April 1, petrol and diesel will no longer be provided to vehicles older than 15 years at fuel stations across Delhi. This announcement was made by BJP leader Manjinder Sirsa, who recently took charge as the Environment Minister.

Sirsa revealed that the new directives would be enforced after March 31, 2025. Following a meeting with officials, he emphasized that these measures are part of the BJP government's commitment to improving Delhi's air quality by reducing emissions from older, more polluting vehicles.

To facilitate the identification of these vehicles, the government will install specialized gadgets at petrol stations. These devices will flag vehicles over 15 years old, preventing them from refueling. Additionally, teams will be formed to track and prevent these vehicles from entering the city, further contributing to the city's efforts to reduce pollution.



In an effort to involve the youth and encourage environmental responsibility, Sirsa announced a large-scale plantation drive that will involve nearly 30,000 students from Delhi University. The initiative will not only contribute to the city's green cover but also offer participants certificates for their involvement in the cause.

While the primary focus of the new rules is on vehicles older than 15 years, a senior official from the Delhi Government clarified that diesel-run vehicles older than 10 years will also be denied fuel starting after March 31. This additional stipulation reflects the urgency with which the government is addressing the most polluting forms of transportation in the city.

Furthermore, Sirsa outlined plans to make the installation of anti-smog guns mandatory at high-rise buildings, major hotels, office complexes, construction sites, and even at the Delhi airport. The minister stated that these anti-smog guns would help reduce the concentration of harmful pollutants in the air, particularly in areas with heavy foot traffic and high emissions.

These new measures are expected to have a significant impact on Delhi's pollution levels, particularly during the warmer months when air quality typically worsens. The government's proactive steps highlight the urgency of addressing the city's air quality crisis and demonstrate a commitment to creating a cleaner and healthier environment for residents.

## Vintage Cars Rev Up Delhi's Roads in Timeless Rally



TPN Correspondent  
| New Delhi

New Delhi witnessed a stunning display of automotive history during the 58th Statesman Vintage and Classic Car Rally, where timeless vehicles rolled through the city, offering a nostalgic visual treat for onlookers. The rally, which took place on the city's bustling streets, showcased an impressive collection of vintage and classic cars, taking spectators on a trip down memory lane.

The event, which celebrates the enduring charm of clas-

sic automobiles, saw a diverse array of well-preserved vehicles, many of which have become rare collectibles over the years. From the sleek lines of Rolls-Royces and Cadillacs to the elegance of Jaguars and vintage Ford models, each car added its own touch of glamour to the streets. The rally was a reminder of the craftsmanship and engineering excellence that defined a bygone era of automobile manufacturing.

Car enthusiasts and collectors from all over the country participated in the event, proudly

showcasing their prized possessions. The rally not only provided a platform for these owners to exhibit their vehicles but also allowed visitors to admire the unique designs and intricate detailing that these classic cars are known for. The vibrant colors, polished chrome, and gleaming bodywork stood out against the modern backdrop of New Delhi.

For many, the event was more than just a display of old cars; it was a celebration of a time when automobiles were seen as symbols of luxury, prestige, and innovation. It was also an opportunity to recognize the efforts of car collectors and restorers who devote significant time and resources to preserving these mechanical wonders.

The 58th Statesman Vintage and Classic Car Rally not only attracted car lovers but also provided a rare chance for the younger generation to experience the timeless elegance of cars that have long been out of production. The rally ended on a high note, leaving spectators with fond memories of the vintage vehicles that continue to captivate hearts with their grace and beauty.

## Delhi court acquits five men in 2015 kidnapping case

TPN Correspondent  
| New Delhi

A Delhi court has acquitted five men in a 2015 kidnapping case, citing serious doubts and contradictions in the prosecution's evidence. The court described the prosecution's narrative as "improbable" and "unbelievable," concluding that the case could not be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.

Additional Sessions Judge Atul Ahlawat, in his February 24 order, stated that the evidence presented by the prosecution was not credible, casting a "serious shadow of doubt" over the case. He pointed out that the prosecution had failed to establish its case and, as a result, acquitted the accused—Rizwan, Rohit, Salim, Gulzar, and Shera.

According to the prosecution, Rajendra Gupta was kidnapped on July 12, 2015, and a ransom of ₹30,000 was demanded from his family. However, the court noted that key witnesses—Gupta, his son-in-law Anil Kumar, and his son Pradeep Gupta—did not support the prosecution's claims and were declared hostile during trial. Despite attempts to disregard their hostile testimonies, the court found their remaining



statements unreliable and insufficient to convict the accused.

The court highlighted several contradictions in the statements of Kumar and Gupta, especially regarding the initial stages of the alleged kidnapping. It also noted that Pradeep Gupta's testimony had inconsistencies, including a revised account of being moved between different locations after the kidnapping. The court questioned his failure to raise an alarm despite being in a crowded area in broad daylight, traveling in a motorcycle and an autorickshaw.

Moreover, the prosecution's assertion that Gupta had received a phone call from a woman luring him to Kha-

juri Chowk was contradicted during cross-examination, when Gupta denied receiving such a call. This led the court to doubt the credibility of Gupta as a witness.

The court further criticized the prosecution for submitting video evidence and call records that, instead of supporting the case, undermined it. It also criticized the investigating officer for conducting a "shoddy investigation" and failing to probe vital aspects, including the role of a woman in the case.

The case was initially registered under kidnapping for ransom, criminal conspiracy, and common intention at the Khajuri Khas police station.

## Delhi Police Plans Aggressive Crackdown on Gangsters and Organized Crime

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

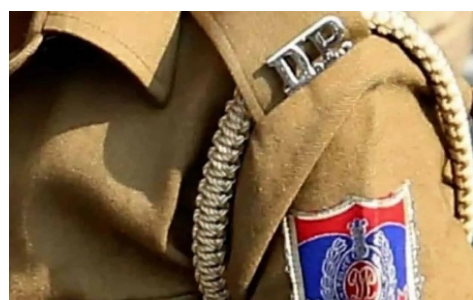
Delhi Police is ramping up its efforts to tackle organized crime and take action against gangsters operating both domestically and internationally, according to sources. This decision comes after a high-level review of law and order conducted by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, which included key officials such as Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood, and Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan. The review emphasized the need to strength-

en policing strategies to address the growing and evolving crime situation in the national capital.

Following a meeting at the Delhi Police headquarters on Saturday, it was decided that a list of emerging criminals would be compiled and actions taken to dismantle their networks. A significant part of the strategy includes keeping a close watch on jailed gangsters like Kaushal Chaudhary and Neeraj Bawana, as well as gangsters operating internationally, such as Anmol Bishnoi, Arsh Dala, Goldy

Brar, and others.

The police are also focusing on juveniles with criminal records who have direct or indirect ties to these gang-



sters. Efforts are underway to compile a list of such juveniles, and the police intend to recommend they be tried as adults in court.

Another crucial component of the plan involves monitoring the social media activities of gangsters and their associates to track illegal connections and activities. Authorities will also target individuals aiding these criminals, keeping their activities under strict surveillance.

Top police officials, including Delhi's

Police Commissioner, Special Commissioners of Police, and various district and unit deputies, gathered to discuss the implementation of enhanced security measures. Key focus areas for the upcoming crackdown include tackling illegal immigration, preventing street crimes, improving women's safety, and countering organized crime networks.

Additionally, the authorities are committed to disrupting drug trafficking, both nationally and internationally.



## We Must Be Alarmed: Vice President On "Orchestrated Conversions"



- VP warns against "orchestrated conversions"
- Calls for vigilance on religious influence
- Stresses need to protect cultural identity

TPN Correspondent  
| Thiruvananthapuram

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar expressed grave concern on Sunday over what he described as "orchestrated, financially backed misadventures aimed at effecting conversions" in the country, urging the public to remain vigilant in preventing these activities. Speaking at the 4th P Parameswaran Memorial Lecture, organized by the Bharatheeya Vichara Kendra, Dhankhar emphasized the importance of preserving India's organic and natural demographic evolution.

Dhankhar stated that demographic changes should occur naturally, but if shifts are brought about artificially, particularly with the intent of increasing a specific demographic group to gain influence, it raises alarms. He cautioned that such inorganic demographic changes, which could lead to divisions in society, should be closely watched. "Demography matters. It should not be confused with majoritarianism. We cannot have a society divided into two camps," he said.

The Vice President also condemned the methods used for conversions, which, according to him, involve exploiting vulnerable individuals through "allurements, temptations,

and support," subtly suggesting a change of religion. He underscored that exploiting people's pain or difficulties to induce religious conversion was unacceptable. "The country allows everyone the freedom to choose their religion, but manipulating this fundamental right cannot be tolerated," he added.

Dhankhar further linked these conversion efforts to "ill intent towards the nation," citing concerns over illegal immigration. He argued that unchecked migration has placed strain on the country's resources, including employment, healthcare, and education. He raised concerns about how such demographic changes could influence electoral outcomes, creating "fortresses" in certain regions, and destabilizing the nation.

The Vice President stressed that this issue was not only a matter of policy but an existential threat to India's nationalism and democracy. He called for heightened awareness and collective action to preserve the "pristine demographic sanctity" of the country. Dhankhar concluded by urging the nation to remain alert and united in the face of these challenges, which he described as "highly destabilizing developments" that could no longer be overlooked.

## Haryana Local Body Elections Underway, With Enthusiastic Voter Participation

TPN Correspondent  
| Dehradun

Voting for the local body elections in Haryana commenced on Sunday, with voters arriving early at polling booths across the state. Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar was among the first to cast his vote, doing so in his hometown of Karnal. After voting, Khattar emphasized the importance of local governance, describing it as a vital pillar of democracy. He also noted the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) strong track record in local elections, pointing to the party's success in the past two municipal elections in Karnal.

In Rohtak, booth number 179 saw a notable turnout, with several elderly voters arriving early to cast their ballots, showcasing high enthusiasm among the electorate. The local body elections are being held across 33 municipal bodies in Haryana, including eight

municipal corporations, 21 municipalities, and four municipal councils. Polling will take place from 8 am to 6 pm, with results expected to be announced on March 12.

Key areas of the election include mayoral and ward councillor elections in seven major municipal corporations: Gurugram, Manesar, Faridabad, Hisar, Rohtak, Karnal, and Yamunanagar. Elections will also be held for mayoral positions in Ambala and Sonapat following the election of the former mayors, Shakti Rani Sharma (Ambala) and Nikhil Madan (Sonapat), to the state assembly. A total of 39 candidates are vying for mayoral posts across eight municipal corporations.



Notably, the voting for Panipat municipal corporation has been scheduled separately for March 9, with campaigning concluding by 6 pm on March 7. In addition to the municipal corporations, elections are being held for the post of president and ward members in municipal councils in Ambala Sadar, Pataudi Jatoli Mandi, Thanesar, and Sirsa. Elections for the president position will also be conducted in municipal councils in Sohna, Assandh, and Ismailabad.

In Gurugram district, voting is taking place in five municipal areas, including the Municipal Corporations of Gurugram and Manesar, as well as the municipal councils of Sohna, Pataudi, and Farrukhnagar. District Magistrate and Election Officer Ajay Kumar confirmed that 1,109 polling stations in the district are fully equipped and ready for the smooth conduct of the elections.

## Army of beggar: MP minister Prahlad Patel's take on 'people begging from govt' stirs row

TPN Correspondent  
| Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh Minister Prahlad Patel has sparked a heated controversy with his recent remarks, in which he claimed that people have developed a "habit of begging from the government." Patel, who serves as the state minister for Panchayat and Rural Development, suggested that this "army of beggars" is not contributing to a stronger society.

Patel, a former Union minister, made the remarks on Saturday during the unveiling ceremony of a statue of Veerangana Rani Avantibai Lodhi in Rajgarh district. In his speech, he criticized the increasing dependency on the government, suggesting that such behavior undermines the strength of society.

The minister's comments quickly attracted sharp criticism from the Opposition. The Congress party, in particular, condemned Patel's statement, accusing him of referring to the public as "beggars." Opposition leaders have argued that such remarks reflect a lack of empathy towards the struggles of ordinary citizens who rely on government support for their welfare.



The controversy has put the BJP government in the spotlight, with critics calling for a more sensitive approach towards the challenges faced by people, particularly those living in rural areas who depend on government schemes for livelihood support. Patel's remarks are seen by many as a dismissal of the difficulties faced by marginalized communities and vulnerable groups.

This incident highlights the ongoing political tensions in Madhya Pradesh, where the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress continue to clash

over issues of governance and public welfare. While the BJP has defended Patel's comments, stating that they were taken out of context, the Opposition remains firm in its criticism, calling for a public apology from the minister.

Patel's statement has reignited the debate over the role of government assistance in addressing poverty and economic disparity, with many questioning the government's commitment to uplifting marginalized communities. The incident is likely to remain a focal point in the state's political discourse in the coming days.

## Water of Ganga river unfit for bathing at several places in Bihar: Economic Survey

TPN Correspondent | UP

The water of the Ganga river in Bihar is not suitable for bathing in most areas due to a high level of bacteriological contamination, according to the Bihar Economic Survey 2024-25. The survey, which was recently presented in the state assembly, reveals concerning findings about the water quality in the state, highlighting the presence of elevated levels of "bacteriological population," including total coliform and faecal coliform bacteria.

The Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB) monitors the water quality of the Ganga at 34 locations across the state, conducting tests on a fortnightly basis. These regular tests have been crucial in assessing the river's water quality, and the results have raised alarm over the unsafe levels of bacterial contamination.

As per the Economic Survey, the presence of a high bacteriological population in the Ganga's water is primarily attributed to the discharge of untreated sewage and domestic wastewater from the cities located along the banks of the river and its tributaries. The uncontrolled release of waste into the river has significantly impacted its cleanliness, rendering it unfit for bathing and other activities in many places.

The survey also referenced the latest water quality test results from the BSPCB, which indicated the severity



of the issue. The contamination of the Ganga poses a significant public health risk, as the high levels of harmful bacteria can lead to waterborne diseases and infections among those who come into contact with the water.

The findings have raised concerns about the urgent need for improved sewage treatment and waste management along the Ganga's course in Bihar. Authorities are expected to focus on measures to reduce pollution, such as enhancing the capacity of sewage treatment plants, improving waste disposal systems, and increasing awareness about the impact of untreated waste on water bodies.

The state's residents and environmentalists are calling for stronger actions to ensure the protection and restoration of the Ganga's water quality, which holds immense cultural, religious, and ecological significance.

## 42 illegal firearms surrendered in Manipur, 5 illegal bunkers dismantled

TPN Correspondent | Manipur

In an ongoing effort to curb illegal firearms in the violence-hit regions of Manipur, 42 more firearms and cartridges were voluntarily surrendered by the public across five districts, as confirmed by the state police on Sunday. The surrender took place on Saturday in several districts, including Imphal West and East, Churachandpur, Bishnupur, and Tamenglong.

The firearms surrendered in Bishnupur district included five weapons, two of which were pistols, alongside six grenades and over 75 cartridges. In Tamenglong, authorities reported the surrender of seventeen country-made guns, nine locally crafted mortars (referred to as 'pompri'), and additional cartridges at Kaimai police station. Other firearms and ammunition, including 10 firearms and cartridges, were handed over at police stations in Yaingangpokpi, Porompat, Churachandpur, and Lamsang.



The public's cooperation comes amid heightened efforts by the authorities to bring peace to the region, which has been marred by ethnic conflict. Additionally, the Manipur governor extended the deadline for surrendering looted or illegal arms until March 6, urging citizens to take part in these initiatives.

On the same day as the surrenders, police conducted search operations in Imphal West district at Sairemkhul, where significant arms caches were found. Among the seized items were an INSAS LMG with a magazine containing

20 rounds of ammunition, an AK-56 rifle, three SLR rifles, a 9mm SMG carbine, a .303 rifle, a DBBL gun, and four grenades without detonators. Authorities also recovered one Chinese hand grenade and several other materials, which they are continuing to investigate.

These recent developments reflect the ongoing challenges in the region, as the state continues its efforts to restore normalcy amid tensions. The police remain committed to ensuring the security of Manipur's citizens and preventing the illegal flow of weapons in the strife-torn areas.



# The Imperialist Philosopher Who Demanded The Ukraine War

In August 2022, six months into Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a cultural festival named Traditions was held just outside Moscow, at the former summer retreat of the celebrated Russian poet Alexander Pushkin. The keynote speaker for this event was Alexander Dugin, a scholar and influential ideologue widely seen as the intellectual force behind the movement supporting the war. Dugin, often referred to as the prophet of the new Russian Empire,\* has long advocated for a vision of Russia as a dominant, spiritual force in global history. His recent book \*Being and Empire\* (2023), a dense, 784-page tome, argues that Russia is "the last place of the true subject of history in time and space."



At the Traditions festival, Dugin delivered a lecture titled Tradition and History, which lived up to its grandiose name, covering an expansive range of topics. Dugin spoke about the

spiritual core of the Russian nation, looking back to its pre-modern past for clues to its deeper, metaphysical identity. He discussed the seasonal rhythms of the Russian peasantry, positing that the labor of the land

was not merely a form of work, but a manifestation of Russia's spiritual essence. Through this lens, the everyday life of the Russian people was imbued with profound, historical significance.

Dugin's intellectual and ideological positions have made him a central figure in the Russian political and cultural elite. His ideas about a new Russian Empire, grounded in a blend of nationalism, orthodoxy, and mysticism, are seen as providing a philosophical justification for Russia's aggressive military actions in Ukraine. At the Traditions festival, this worldview was not merely academic but presented as a living, spiritual truth for the nation.



## Shashi Tharoor | The outsider within

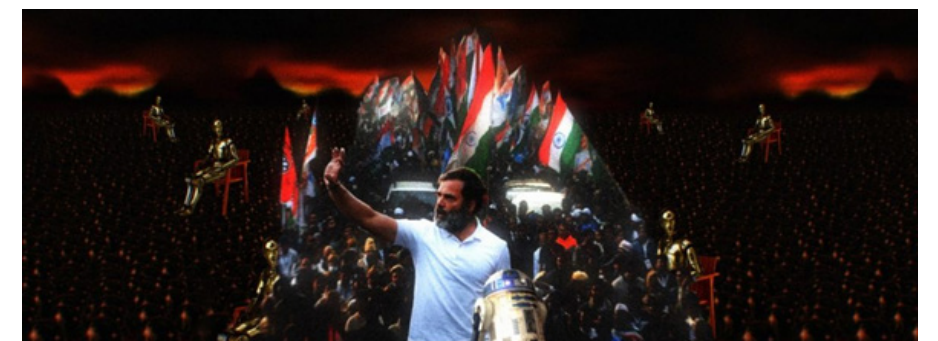
The four-time MP for Thiruvananthapuram has landed in back-to-back controversies after his comments on Kerala's industrial growth and Congress leadership

Shashi Tharoor, known for his literary prowess and political career, has often found himself at the center of controversy due to his sharp words, which sometimes appear to cause more trouble than they are worth. As a four-time Member of Parliament in the Congress, his political commentary has frequently stirred reactions, not only from his rivals but also from within his own party. From the "cattle class" comment in 2009 to his latest remarks about Kerala's Congress leadership, Tharoor's words have been both his greatest asset and his Achilles' heel in the political arena.

Most recently, Tharoor's interview in a newspaper sparked a new round of controversy. He reportedly spoke about the lack of a clear leader in Kerala's Congress unit and mentioned alternative "options" such as speaking tours and writing books, should the party not require his services. Although he later accused the media of twisting his words to imply that he was seeking a leadership position, the damage had been done. The comments were seen by many as a subtle pitch for a more prominent role in Kerala's politics, especially ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections, adding fuel to the fire of his strained relationship with state Congress leaders.

This incident came closely after another storm. Earlier in February, Tharoor praised Kerala's industrial ecosystem, highlighting the growth in the startup sector and the Left Democratic Front (LDF) government's achievements in fostering MSMEs. His remarks, made just before the Invest Kerala Global Summit, were seized by the ruling LDF to counter Congress's negative view of the state's investment climate. This infuriated local Congress leaders, who quickly tried to downplay his comments. The issue only subsided after Tharoor met with Rahul Gandhi, seeking clarification and damage control.

## The Congress Party's Struggle for Relevance: A Call for Reform and Leadership



Will the Congress party ever learn from its repeated electoral defeats? This is the question that looms large over the party's future. Once the architect of India's independence, known for its art of political compromise and deft management of competing regional ambitions, the Congress now seems a shell of its former self. The party is plagued by a lack of coherence, a vanishing ideology, intolerance for dissent, and an inability to manage regional leaders effectively. These internal struggles, coupled with a lack of meaningful leadership, have led to its continuous defeats at the polls.

The Congress, which once commanded respect, is now overshadowed by a group of divisive and narrow-minded political forces. Today, the country finds itself in the hands of leaders who focus more on dividing societies, suppressing dissent, and marginalizing minorities than on fostering inclusive growth. The rise of such politics, focused on hyper-nationalism and divisiveness, represents a painful departure from the ideals that once made India a beacon of democracy.

Meanwhile, the right-wing parties have thrived, effectively harnessing the power of nationalism to build a strong base. Figures like Prime Minister Narendra Modi, backed by populist policies and a focus on national pride, have created a political environment where division is the norm, and governance takes a backseat to rhetoric. The right-wing's success lies in its ability to consolidate a vote bank by manufacturing societal divisions, often using nationalism as a weapon to unite its supporters.

This presents a dire challenge for the Congress: it must articulate a clear, compelling ideology that speaks to the needs of ordinary Indians—addressing unemployment, economic revival, education, social welfare, and regional harmony. The Congress must also recognize the importance of building a strong organization that reaches out to constituents year-round, not just during election cycles.

# Trump, Musk, and Patel: A Geopolitical Reckoning Liberals Can't Ignore



When Donald Trump reclaims the White House, he doesn't stand alone. Alongside him is Elon Musk, the world's richest man and the mastermind behind X (formerly Twitter), and Kash Patel, newly appointed as FBI Director following a contentious Senate vote. Together, this trio forms a power bloc that could reshape global politics, economics, and ideologies in ways that pose an existential challenge to liberals who champion global cooperation and progressive values.

This powerful coalition—Trump's nationalistic fervor, Musk's unrestrained influence, and Patel's security-driven vision—suggests a future where dominance trumps cooperation. For liberals who have spent decades building international alliances, climate action, and institutional trust, this shift signals the unraveling of everything they've worked for.

Under Trump's "America First" mantra, reinforced by Musk's wealth and Patel's security grip, the U.S. could turn inward, severing key alliances like NATO in favor of deals with like-minded

autocrats—such as Putin or Modi. Patel's FBI, driven by political loyalty rather than traditional law enforcement principles, could tighten intelligence flows, further isolating the U.S. from its global partners. For liberals, this represents a disastrous departure from multilateral diplomacy and could lead to a fragmented world where international norms are ignored, and global stability is endangered.

This emerging isolationist framework would put global leaders in a precarious position, forcing them to recalibrate their strategies as America no longer plays the stabilizing role it once did.

Elon Musk's control over X, with its vast global reach and 210 million followers, has already reshaped American political discourse. His platform has amplified Trump's return and boosted the rise of figures like Vivek Ramaswamy. Musk's influence extends beyond U.S. borders, where he's backed far-right European leaders and criticized climate activism. Under his leadership, X has become an increasingly hostile environment for progressive voices, further

aligning with Trump's populist rhetoric.

For liberals, this consolidation of power by one billionaire who influences political debates without facing elections is deeply unsettling. Musk's growing alignment with Trump could elevate X into a megaphone for right-wing ideologies, leaving little room for left-leaning perspectives in public discourse.

### Patel's FBI: A Security-Driven Shakeup

Kash Patel's appointment as FBI Director signals a turning point. A staunch Trump ally with no law enforcement experience, Patel's approach promises to reshape the FBI into a political tool. His focus on rooting out "dissenters"—real or imagined—could turn the agency into an enforcer of Trump's vision rather than an objective intelligence body. International partners may hesitate to share intelligence, fearing that political agendas will influence national security decisions. This could escalate geopolitical tensions, further isolating the U.S. from its allies.

Liberals are particularly

alarmed by the rise of a security state driven by partisan loyalty. With Patel in charge, the FBI could become a vehicle for silencing opposition, both domestically and abroad, marking a dangerous shift toward authoritarianism.

### The Global Right Strikes Back

Giorgia Meloni, Italy's populist prime minister, recently declared the left's worldview "decadent" and "elitist." With Trump, Musk, and Patel rising, it's clear why: this trio is not only challenging the left—they are overpowering it. With their combined wealth, influence, and security control, they are re-writing the rules of politics and economics in a way that leaves liberals scrambling to adapt.

As Trump's political machine, Musk's fortune, and Patel's security apparatus converge, the world is on the brink of a new geopolitical order—one that prioritizes dominance over diplomacy, strength over cooperation, and loyalty over justice. For liberals, the message is clear: adapt or watch their ideals crumble.



# Ramzan Mubarak!: PM Modi Extends Greetings As Holy Month Begins

- PM Modi extend Ramzan greetings
- Wish for peace, harmony, and devotion
- J&K communities celebrate with unity

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday extended his heartfelt greetings to the people on the occasion of the holy Islamic month of Ramzan. In a post on X (formerly Twitter), he wished for peace and harmony to prevail in society as the month of fasting and devotion begins.

"As the blessed month of Ramzan begins, may it bring peace and harmony in our society," the Prime Minister said in his message. He emphasized that this sacred month serves as a time for reflection, gratitude, and devotion, reminding people of the core values of compassion, kindness, and service. He concluded his message with a warm "Ramzan Mubarak!"

Congress leader and Member of Parliament Rahul Gandhi also shared his greetings, sending wishes for happiness and peace during the holy month. "Ramzan Mubarak! May this sacred month fill your life with happiness and bring peace to your heart," Rahul Gandhi wrote in his post on X, extending his heartfelt wishes to the people observing Ramzan.

In Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri, the community marked the start of Ramzan with joy and togetherness. People in the region came together to distribute sweets, celebrating the beginning of the holy month. The distribution of sweets symbolizes a sense of unity and the spirit of sharing that is central



to Ramzan. Ramzan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, is a time of fasting, reflection, prayer, and community for Muslims around the world. During this month, Muslims fast from dawn until sunset, engage in acts of charity, and strengthen their connection with God through devotion and worship. As the holy month begins, both political leaders and citizens have come together to celebrate the values of unity, compassion, and peace that Ramzan embodies.



## Eknath Shinde Dismisses Speculations Over Rift Within Mahayuti Alliance

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Sunday dismissed rumors of a rift within the ruling Mahayuti alliance, assuring that the BJP-led coalition would remain intact. Addressing a joint press conference ahead of the upcoming budget session, Shinde humorously responded to claims of internal conflict, quipping that a "cold war" would be impossible in Maharashtra's scorching heat. "This is the second session of our government. Only we (BJP and Shiv Sena) have changed roles. But Ajit Dada's role remains constant... We have restarted several projects that were stalled by the MVA government. Ajit Dada will present the Maharashtra budget," Shinde said.

His comments followed opposition claims that Shinde had met Union Home Minister Amit Shah on February 22 in Pune to discuss alleged attempts by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to undermine his authority. Reports suggested that Shinde had complained about being sidelined and that his decisions were being reversed by Fadnavis. Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut further alleged that during the meeting, Shinde had expressed his desire to be the Chief Minister again, to which Shah purportedly responded that only by merging his Shiv Sena faction with the BJP could Shinde's claim to the CM post be considered.

Shinde's comments were aimed at quelling these rumors. "No matter how many breaking news stories you publish, we (Mahayuti) will not break. What is cold war? There is nothing like that. In this scorching heat of Maharashtra, how is a cold war possible?" Shinde added, mocking the speculation.

The Mahayuti coalition, comprising the BJP, Shiv Sena, and NCP, secured a significant victory in the 2024 Assembly elections, winning 235 out of 288 seats. Despite the ongoing speculation, Shinde's remarks underline the coalition's resolve to maintain unity and focus on governance in the state.



## Omar Abdullah Ensures Smooth Arrangements for Ramadan in Jammu and Kashmir

TPN Correspondent | Srinagar

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah chaired a high-level meeting on Saturday to review the arrangements for the holy month of Ramadan, which begins on Sunday. During the meeting, he directed the Power Department to ensure there are no electricity outages during Sehri and Iftar times, ensuring a smooth and comfortable experience for the people observing the fast.

Abdullah emphasized that during Ramadan, the public expects the government to provide essential services without inconvenience. He stressed the importance of delivering services effectively, particularly in the power sector. "People want, and we must strive, to ensure that there are no power outages during Sehri and Iftar time," he said. Any required shutdowns, he instructed, should be planned and implemented during the day, allowing for maintenance work at more convenient times.

The Chief Minister also highlighted the importance of addressing any issues with the electrical system and faulty distribution transformers (DTs) immediately to prevent disruptions during Ramadan. On the water supply front, Abdullah noted that the recent spell of snow and rain had improved the situation, but still emphasized the need to maintain a steady supply of clean drinking water to households.

In addition to the power and water supply concerns, Abdullah directed officials to ensure cleanliness around mosques and shrines, optimize traffic management, and bolster security arrangements. Both the inspectors general of police for Jammu and Kashmir have already addressed security measures, ensuring that public safety is a top priority. Further, the Chief Minister directed all Deputy Commissioners to set up operational district control rooms to address grievances and enhance the public service delivery process during the holy month. "Our collective effort should be to ensure a smooth and hassle-free Ramadan for the people. It is our responsibility to put all necessary arrangements in place," Abdullah remarked.

# Mehndi on hands, Body in Suitcase

Congress worker Himani Narwal found dead in Rohtak

TPN Correspondent | Haryana

A major political row erupted after Congress worker Himani Narwal was found dead in a suitcase near the Sampla bus stand in Rohtak. The 20-22-year-old had mehndi on her hands and a scarf around her neck, suggesting she had attended a celebration recently. Sampla police, who received information about the body on Friday, have launched an investigation.



Himani Narwal, from Kathura village in Sonapat, was an office-bearer of the Youth Congress in Rohtak. She gained prominence after appearing alongside Rahul Gandhi during the Bharat Jodo Yatra and played an active role in the Haryana Assembly election campaign with Bhupinder and Deepinder Hooda. She was also

known for performing with Haryanvi folk artists at Congress rallies and social events. Congress MLA Bharat Bhushan Batra confirmed her close association with the Hoodas during the election campaign. Her X account identified her as the vice president of the Indian Youth Congress.

**Who was Himani Narwal?**

The Congress has identified the deceased as Himani Narwal, an office-bearer of the Youth Congress in Rohtak. Himani Narwal hails from Kathura village in Sonapat. Narwal became popular after she appeared alongside Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the Bharat Jodo Yatra. She was also active during the Haryana Assembly elections,

campaigning for the Congress. During the election campaign, Narwal was pretty active with Bhupinder Hooda and Deepinder Hooda.

Congress leaders strongly condemned the murder. Haryana Congress president Bhupinder Singh Hooda called it a "barbaric act" and a "blot on the law and order situation" in the state. He demanded a high-level, impartial probe and justice for the victim's family. Former Youth Congress chief Srinivas BV also paid tribute, recalling her dedication to party activities, including the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

Police are investigating the case, and the body has been sent for post-mortem. Authorities are working to identify the culprits behind the brutal killing.

## Uttarakhand Avalanche

# Army recovers two more bodies, death toll rises to six

TPN Correspondent | Uttarakhand

The Indian Army recovered two more bodies from the avalanche-hit area near Mana village in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, raising the total fatalities to six. The search operation continues to locate the remaining two missing individuals.

According to PRO (Defence), Dehradun, the bodies recovered today are being transported to Mana post. The rescue mission, involving the Army, ITBP, Air Force, NDRF, and SDRF, is working relentlessly to locate the missing workers. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami confirmed that advanced equipment, including ground-penetrating radar, thermal imaging cameras, and victim-locating cameras, is being used to aid the search efforts.

The Chief Minister noted that while weather conditions are improving, the risk of further avalanches remains high. As a precaution, authorities have suspended work in high-altitude areas.



Chamoli District Magistrate Sandeep Tiwari provided an update on the situation, stating that doctors had confirmed four deaths by Saturday. Initially, authorities estimated 55 workers were present, but later confirmed one was on unauthorized leave and had returned home, adjusting the

total count to 54, with four still missing at that time. Meanwhile, the Indian Air Force deployed a Mi-17 helicopter to airlift a drone-based Intelligent Buried Object Detection system for search operations in the avalanche-affected region. IAF Cheetah helicopters have been active-

ly assisting in rescue efforts since Saturday, after the avalanche struck a BRO camp near Mana village on February 28. The multi-agency search and rescue operation remains underway, with officials committed to locating the remaining missing individuals.



# Trump-Zelensky Clash Spurs Europe to Strengthen Security Amid Fears Of U.S. Shift

TPN Correspondent | London

Europe is reassessing its security strategy after a public confrontation between U.S. President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky at the White House. The diplomatic fallout has prompted European leaders to reinforce their support for Ukraine and evaluate their options amid fears of a weakened American commitment.

Following the White House meeting, Zelensky received a warm reception in Britain, where he attended a summit hosted by UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and held an official audience at Sandringham. His visit comes as European leaders seek to reassert their backing for Ukraine, fearing that a shift in U.S. policy could embolden Russia and leave Europe more vulnerable.

Trump's administration has initiated direct talks with Russian officials to negotiate an end to the war, sidelining both



Ukraine and Europe. This shift, coupled with a phone call between Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin, has raised concerns that Washington may force Kyiv into an unfavorable peace deal, potentially strengthening Moscow's position in the region.

European leaders, including those from Germany, France, Spain, Poland, and the Netherlands, have expressed solidarity with Ukraine through public statements, with Zelensky personally acknowledging their support. However, the possi-

bility of the U.S. stepping back from its role as a security guarantor has led to urgent discussions on Europe's defense preparedness.

The U.S. has provided approximately \$114 billion in aid to Ukraine since the war began three years ago, while Europe has contributed around \$132 billion. Should American support wane, European forces stationed at key Ukrainian infrastructure sites could face increased risks from Russian military actions. Without a strong deterrent, Moscow might re-

sume hostilities, threatening regional stability.

In response, European officials are convening a series of high-level meetings to discuss their defense strategy. A summit in London on Sunday and a special European Council session in Brussels on Thursday will focus on accelerating military reinforcement and defining clearer security guarantees for Ukraine.

Ukraine remains determined to secure security assurances from Washington, recognizing the importance of U.S. support in deterring future Russian aggression. However, the diplomatic rift has fueled European efforts to build a more independent defense policy.

As tensions escalate, Europe faces a critical decision: whether to rely on Washington's unpredictable stance or rapidly strengthen its own military capabilities. The outcome of this week's discussions will likely shape the continent's security strategy in the years ahead.



## Israel Stops Entry of Aid Into Gaza as Ceasefire Ends

TPN Correspondent | Tel Aviv

Israel announced on Sunday that it is halting the entry of all goods and supplies into the Gaza Strip following the expiration of the first phase of the ceasefire with Hamas. The Israeli prime minister's office did not specify the duration of the blockade but warned of "additional consequences" if Hamas does not agree to what Israel says is a US-backed proposal for an extended ceasefire. The first phase of the truce, which saw an increase in humanitarian aid deliveries, expired on Saturday. While negotiations for a second phase were expected—potentially involving the release of more hostages in exchange for an Israeli pullout—no agreement has been reached.

Israel stated that it supports a proposal to extend the ceasefire until April 20, covering Ramadan and Passover. The plan, reportedly put forward by US Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff, suggests Hamas release half of the remaining hostages on the first day and the rest once terms for a permanent ceasefire are settled. So far, Hamas has not responded to the offer, and there has been no official comment from mediators Egypt, Qatar, or the United States. The situation remains tense as humanitarian concerns grow over the renewed blockade of aid.



## "What Are Your Needs?" New Scam In Indonesia Uses President Deepfakes

TPN Correspondent | Jakarta

A deepfake scam using AI-generated videos of Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto has swindled people across 20 provinces, with fraudsters luring victims by promising financial aid.

The scam involves a manipulated video of Prabowo, where he appears to ask viewers, "What are your needs right now?" Those who fell for the message were instructed to contact a WhatsApp number and pay between 250,000 and one million rupiah (\$15-\$60) as an "administrative fee" to receive aid that never materialized.

Authorities have arrested one suspect who pocketed 65 million rupiah (\$4,000) through the scheme, while a second person linked to another deepfake scam was also detained. However, similar fake videos continue to circulate widely on platforms like TikTok, with some clips amassing millions of views. Social media platforms are now scrambling to remove misleading content. TikTok confirmed taking down at least one such video, while Meta has not yet responded to requests for comment. Experts warn that deepfake scams are on the rise in Indonesia, posing serious threats to public trust and financial security. TikTok said it had removed one of the deepfake scam videos and the associated account, adding it would continue to remove any that violated the platform's community guidelines, which prohibit misleading posts. Facebook parent Meta did not respond to AFP's request for comment. AFP, along with more than 100 other fact-checking organizations, is paid by TikTok and Meta to verify social media posts that potentially contain false information.

## Thousands Evacuated As Japan Battles Largest Wildfire In 30 Years

TPN Correspondent | Tokyo



A massive wildfire in northern Japan has forced the evacuation of thousands as authorities struggle to contain the country's worst blaze in over three decades.

The fire, which broke out near Ofunato city, has already claimed one life, damaged over 80 buildings, and spread across an estimated 1,800 hectares. Around 2,000 residents have fled to stay with relatives, while more than 1,200 have taken shelter in emergency centers.

Military helicopters are assisting in firefighting efforts, with nearly 1,700 firefighters mobilized from across the country. Japan experiences most of its wildfires between February and April, when dry conditions and strong winds heighten risks.

Aerial footage by NHK showed columns of white smoke billowing, four days after the blaze first materialized, with military helicopters trying to douse them. One burned body has been discovered so far, with more than 80 buildings damaged and around 1,700 firefighters mobilized from across the country. The number of wildfires has declined since the peak in the 1970s, according to government data, but there were about 1,300 across Japan in 2023 — concentrated in the February to April period when the air dries and winds pick up.

## JD Vance Faces Pro-Ukraine Protest During Vermont Ski Holiday

TPN Correspondent | Vermont

US Vice-President JD Vance faced a wave of pro-Ukraine protests during his ski holiday in Vermont, following his heated exchange with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky at the White House. Protesters gathered in Waitsfield on Saturday, holding signs that read "International embarrassment" and "Vermont stands with Ukraine," while waving Ukrainian flags.

According to reports, the Vance family was forced to move to an undisclosed location from their planned ski resort due to the demonstration. The protest, initially planned before the Oval Office clash, saw increased participation after Vance's combative remarks against Zelensky and Ukraine aid policies.

"After what he did yesterday, he crossed the line," said protester Cori Giroux, speaking to Vermont Public Radio.

Despite the tensions, Vermont's Republican Governor Phil Scott, a critic of Trump, urged residents to be respectful. "Please join me in welcoming them to Vermont and hoping they have an opportunity to experience what makes our state, and Vermonters, so special," he stated. The controversy stems from Vance's confrontation with Zelensky during a White House meeting on Friday. The discussion, initially cordial, turned tense when Vance praised Trump's push for a diplomatic resolution to the Ukraine-Russia war. Zelensky challenged Vance, questioning what kind of diplomacy he was referring to.



"I'm talking about the kind of diplomacy that's going to end the destruction of your country," Vance retorted, accusing Zelensky of interfering in US politics by meeting with Trump's opponent Kamala Harris during the 2024 election campaign. As protests against the Trump-Vance administration continue, the fallout from the White House clash with Zelensky is expected to further deepen divisions on US support for Ukraine.

# US-Funded NGOs May Be "Biggest Scam Ever": Elon Musk

TPN Correspondent | Washington, D.C.

Billionaire entrepreneur and key Trump advisor Elon Musk has claimed that US-funded NGOs might be the "biggest scam ever," alleging that taxpayer money is being misused to fund organizations with little oversight. His remarks, made during a podcast with Joe Rogan, have sparked intense debate over the role of these organizations in government spending.

Musk, who heads the newly formed Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) under the Trump administration, stated that his team is working to cut wasteful expenditures. According

to him, several NGOs receive billions in government funds without proper scrutiny, allowing individuals to profit from non-profit organizations.

"The whole NGO thing is a nightmare. A government-funded non-governmental organization is just a government-funded organization—it's an oxymoron," Musk remarked, adding that some NGOs were formed recently yet received substantial amounts of money.

Citing an example, Musk revealed that one particular NGO, barely a year old, received \$1.9 billion in funding. He argued that these organizations operate as loopholes, enabling activities that would otherwise be illegal if directly carried



out by the government.

The Tesla and SpaceX CEO also accused billionaire philanthropist George Soros of exploiting the system, claiming that he mastered the art of leveraging small donations into massive funding from the government. "Soros figured out how to create a non-profit, lobby politicians,

and turn a \$10 million donation into a billion-dollar NGO," Musk alleged.

Musk's accusations align with his earlier criticism of government agencies such as USAID, which he described as "money laundering operations." He emphasized that while some NGOs might serve genuine purposes, the majority engage in questionable financial practices, siphoning public funds under the guise of philanthropy.

Referring to the US government's fiscal crisis, Musk pointed out that the country is losing \$2 trillion annually and has repeatedly failed financial audits. He highlighted a case where the Navy received \$12 billion for additional submarines

but was unable to account for the funds. DOGE, under Musk's leadership, is reportedly scrutinizing the government's payment system, which he claims has been operating with minimal oversight. "When we arrived, we found that payments worth trillions were being processed without proper categorization or descriptions—essentially blank checks," he said. Musk expressed deep concern over America's financial future, warning that continued mismanagement could lead to economic collapse. He noted that many NGO payments persist even after the approving officials retire or leave their positions, likening it to an unchecked gym membership renewal.



# Stock Markets set for Turbulence amid Global Uncertainties



Domestic stock markets are expected to face significant volatility this week, influenced by global developments. The tariffs announced by US President Donald Trump on Mexico, Canada, and China are set to take effect from March 4. Additionally, tensions have escalated after Ukrainian President Zelensky, who had engaged in peace talks, suddenly got into a disagreement with Trump, adding further uncertainty to the market. Given this



situation, investors are advised to remain cautious. However, if conditions turn favorable, there is a possibility of a counter rally in the benchmark indices. During the past week, stocks across all sectors declined, with only metal and private bank stocks showing some resilience. Analysts suggest that certain stocks may present good investment opportunities, provided investors exercise caution and implement

stop-loss strategies.



## Stock Recommendations

Shares of HDFC Bank, which had reached an all-time high in December, witnessed a 15% correction before recovering at the crucial ₹1,660 support level. The stock has outperformed the Nifty index and recorded a 5% increase in the last three sessions. It closed at ₹1,732 last Friday, and investors are advised to enter around ₹1,700 with a target price of ₹1,825, keeping a stop-loss at ₹1,675. Coal India has seen renewed buying interest after a prolonged selling phase, as it is now available at attractive valuations. Despite market weakness, the



stock has shown stability. Closing at ₹369 last Friday, investors may consider entering around ₹350, targeting ₹390-₹425, with a stop-loss at ₹335.



Axis Bank has demonstrated consistent strength since late January, performing well even in a declining market. Relative strength is improving, and price action remains favorable. The stock closed at ₹1,015 in the previous session, and investors can consider an entry around ₹1,000, aiming for ₹1,125-₹1,150, with a stop-loss at ₹975.



Trent has been on a downward trend since October, losing 45% of its value. However, value investors are show-

ing renewed interest following strong quarterly results. Closing at ₹4,851 last Friday, the stock presents a potential entry at ₹4,800, with a target of ₹5,250, and a stop-loss at ₹4,750.



Hindalco has been outperforming the Nifty index, with the metals sector showing signs of recovery. Price action in the stock has been strong. Closing at ₹634 last Friday, investors can consider entering at ₹625, with target levels of ₹690-₹725, and a stop-loss at ₹600. Investors should proceed with caution. With ongoing global uncertainties, market participants should closely monitor developments and maintain a disciplined approach while trading in the current environment.

## India's Economic Growth Shows Balance, Set to Reach 6.5% in FY25

India's economic growth is becoming increasingly balanced, with private consumption's share in GDP rising in fiscal year 2025, according to a new report by Crisil. The country's real GDP growth is expected to reach 6.5% for FY25, slightly revised from 6.4% in the second advanced estimate. This puts the projected growth closer to the pre-pandemic average of 6.6% for the past decade.

Dharmakirti Joshi, Chief Economist at Crisil, noted that this growth is underpinned by various factors, including normal monsoons, lower food inflation, and expected rate cuts in the range of 75-100 basis points in the current cycle, which began earlier this month. The GDP growth forecast for the next fiscal year is also pegged at 6.5%.

In fiscal 2024, public and household investments were the fastest-growing components, with the corporate sector lagging behind. Despite the financial flexibility and low leverage that many corporates enjoy, healthy investments have yet to materialize. Ongoing tariff wars and concerns about potential dumping from China have made the corporate sector more cautious in its investment decisions.

Joshi highlighted that the evolving risks from tariff actions, including those already in place and the possibility of more measures in the coming months, have created a downside bias to their



growth forecasts.

In terms of quarterly performance, India's GDP growth accelerated to 6.2% in Q3 of FY25 (October-December), up from a revised 5.6% in the previous quarter. For FY25, the growth is now estimated at 6.5%, while the previous fiscal year (2023-24) saw a revised growth rate of 8.2%, marking a 12-year high.

Regarding fiscal matters, the fiscal deficit for the first 10 months of the current financial year (April-January) stood at Rs 11.70 lakh crore, which is 74.5% of the annual estimate.

## India Poised to Lead the AI Age with Strong Policies and Infrastructure: Piyush Goyal

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal emphasized that India is poised to take the lead in the AI revolution, thanks to the government's forward-thinking policies that enable entrepreneurs and innovators to leverage the digital wave. Speaking at the Mumbai Tech Week 2025, Goyal expressed confidence that Mumbai could become the country's tech hub, given the significant investments in infrastructure, capital, and skill development underway in the city.



The global significance of AI was underscored by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the AI Action Summit in Paris. Co-chairing the event with France, PM Modi stressed that AI is a global responsibility, one that requires ethical, inclusive, and trustworthy development.

"Had an excellent interaction at the Mumbai Tech Week 2025, where I had the opportunity to discuss India's growing role in AI adoption and its commitment to ethical usage," Goyal posted on X. He highlighted that India is already taking a leadership position in artificial intelligence, with 3 billion AI-related app downloads recorded in 2024—far surpassing the U.S. (1.5 billion) and China (1.3 billion). According to Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, this growth indicates that India is not just conducting research on AI but is actively implementing it on a large scale.

He emphasized the need for governance frameworks that balance innovation with risk management and ensure access to AI, especially for the Global South. Modi also highlighted the importance of democratizing technology to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Prime Minister also pointed out India's success in building a Digital Public Infrastructure for its 1.4 billion citizens, ensuring open and accessible technology. He underscored that India is developing its own Large Language Model (LLM) for AI, taking into account the country's vast diversity. Modi concluded by announcing that India will host the next AI Summit, solidifying its position as a global leader in the AI era.

## Manufacturing and services sectors set to boost GVA output as profitability improves in Q3FY25

A report by ICICI Bank suggests that the Gross Value Added (GVA) output, a key indicator of total value created by businesses, across the manufacturing and services sectors is set to maintain its momentum in the third quarter of the Financial Year 2025 (Q3FY25). This projection follows a significant improvement in profitability observed in Q3.

The report highlights that both manufacturing and services sectors showed steady recovery in profitability after a subdued second quarter. For Q3, ICICI Bank's Global Markets report predicts a continued pick-up in GVA output for these sectors, driven by improved profitability levels.



In Q3FY25, companies across manufacturing and services sectors wit-

nessed a rebound in revenue growth after a brief slowdown in the preced-

ing quarter. The service sector, in particular, saw robust top-line growth,

with a year-on-year (YoY) increase of 12.9%, outpacing the manufacturing sector, which grew by 4.4% YoY.

Manufacturing growth was largely driven by increased production volumes, although muted commodity prices restricted revenue expansion, particularly in commodity-focused sectors. However, manufacturers excluding refineries registered a faster revenue growth of 8.8% YoY. Key industries such as FMCG, chemicals, and electronics played a significant role in driving this growth.

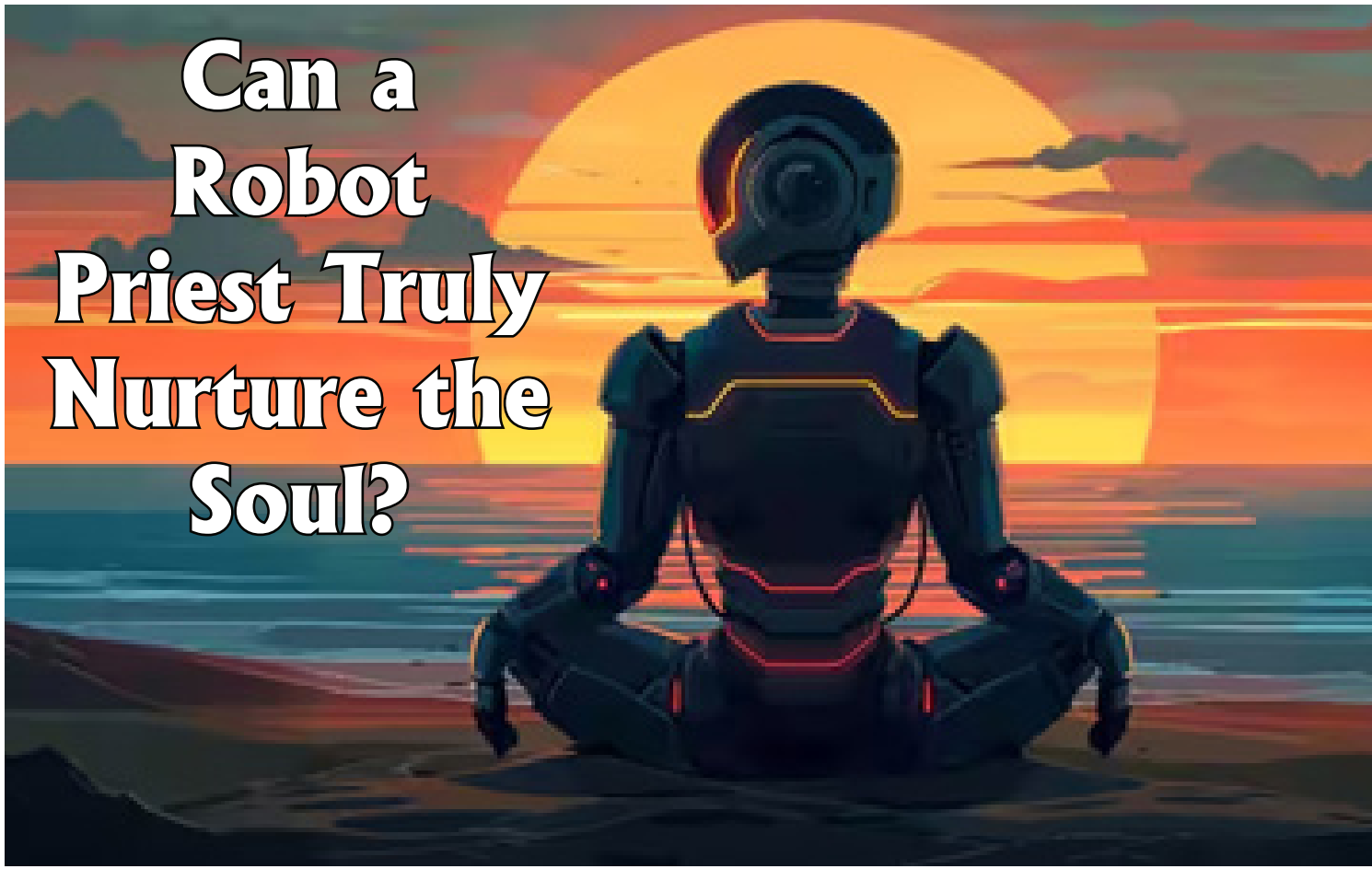
The report also noted that the revenues of the manufacturing sector, excluding commodity sectors, grew by a stronger 10.3%, indicating a diversity of growth drivers within the industry. This revenue increase was primarily

supported by higher production volumes. However, manufacturing expenses rose by 4.9% YoY, mainly due to rising raw material costs, which account for about 72% of total manufacturing expenses.

In the service sector, industries like telecom, information technology (IT), and real estate contributed significantly to growth. However, the IT sector saw a deceleration in sequential revenue growth, largely due to the ongoing geopolitical uncertainties.

The report also pointed out that while the Quick Service Restaurants (QSR) sector faced challenges in the quarter, it is expected to perform better going forward, thanks to favorable policy announcements in the Union Budget.





As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to weave its way into every aspect of our lives, it is now making its presence felt in sacred spaces. From robot monks reciting prayers in Japan to AI-powered blessings and robotic aartis in India, faith leaders across different religious traditions are beginning to explore the role AI can play in spiritual practices. But the question remains: Can a robot priest truly nurture the soul, or is AI simply adding convenience to worship? AI's role in religion is still in its early stages, but some believe it has the potential to transform spiritual experiences. In Japan, for instance, Buddhist monks have been using robots to chant sutras and perform rituals for congregants, while in Hindu temples, robots are used to conduct aartis – the sacred lighting of lamps. These robots can recite prayers and deliver blessings with remarkable accuracy, yet they lack the emotional depth and spiritual understanding that human priests provide. While AI may be able to perform certain religious duties with precision

and consistency, it is difficult to imagine that it can fully replicate the personal connection and empathy that human faith leaders offer. Religion is not just about ritual; it is about community, compassion, and emotional support during times of crisis or joy. A robot, no matter how advanced, may struggle to fill this deeply human role. Moreover, the integration of AI into religious practices raises important ethical and philosophical questions. Can AI truly understand the spiritual significance of religious rituals, or is it simply following pre-programmed algorithms? Can a machine offer the same comfort as a human priest who understands the nuances of human emotion and the complexities of faith? Ultimately, while AI can enhance convenience and accessibility in worship, it is unlikely to replace the deeply personal and emotional aspects of religious practice that nourish the soul. As technology continues to advance, it is essential to maintain a balance between innovation and the essence of spiritual connection.

## The Rise of AI-Powered Athlete Management: A New Era in Sports Training



**Performance Optimization:** Personalized insights are provided based on real-time data, adjusting workout intensity, technique, and recovery plans to ensure peak performance while minimizing the risk of injury. **Talent Scouting:** AI-powered video analysis helps identify emerging talent by evaluating biomechanics, speed, and movement patterns, ensuring that potential athletes from remote areas are not overlooked. **Coaching Support:** Virtual assistants provide data-driven strategies, analyze opponents, and assist in developing tailored development pathways for athletes, helping coaches focus on refining techniques and strategies.

Technology is no longer just an accessory in sports; it's becoming the digital coach athletes never knew they needed. Artificial intelligence (AI), computer vision, and data analytics are revolutionizing athlete management by personalizing training regimens, monitoring performance, and preventing injuries. These innovations are opening up new opportunities for athletes to reach their full potential.

**AI's Impact on Athlete Management**  
A new wave of athlete management is emerging, inspired by successful global models like Australia's Winning Edge Program and its FTEM (Foundation, Talent, Elite, Mastery) framework. These systems emphasize digitization, providing real-time tracking and performance analysis. India is working towards implementing similar models in preparation for hosting the 2036 Olympics. One of the most notable examples of this technological shift is seen in the Indian table tennis team's preparation for the 2024 Olympics. With AI-driven tools offering data-driven feedback, athletes have fine-tuned their skills and made crucial adjustments, optimizing their training to meet global performance standards. **Features of AI-Powered Digital Coaches**

AI-driven agents are transforming the landscape of athlete development. Key features include:

AI-powered systems offer several transformative benefits: **Personalized Training:** Tailored programs are designed based on individual performance data and injury history, optimizing training for smarter, not harder, results. **Injury Prevention:** Real-time biomechanical assessments detect potential issues early, extending athletes' careers and minimizing downtime. **Talent Identification:** Data-driven scouting tools ensure a broader, more inclusive talent pool, giving every athlete a fair chance to be discovered. **Real-Time Decision Making:** Coaches can adjust strategies on the fly based on live data, making precise decisions during competitions. **The Future of Sports Technology in India\*\***  
As India gears up for the 2036 Olympics, embracing AI and real-time analytics will not only elevate the nation's sports infrastructure but also position it as a global leader in sports technology. This digital transformation will foster a new generation of champions, making technology accessible to athletes at all levels and ensuring a competitive edge on the world stage.

## Apple's Foldable iPhone: What We Know So Far



Apple is reportedly working on a foldable iPhone that could rival devices from competitors like Samsung, Oppo, and Huawei. According to multiple reports and leaks, the tech giant may soon enter the foldable phone market, with a device featuring a book-style design and a unique screen ratio. While Apple has not yet confirmed any official plans, it has secured patents for technologies that could be utilized in such a device. A tipster on Weibo, a popular Chinese microblogging platform, recently leaked details about the device's inner and outer displays. According to the leak, Apple's foldable iPhone will feature a 5.49-inch outer display, similar to the

one on the first-generation Oppo Find N. The device is expected to unfold into a 7.74-inch internal screen, which the tipster describes as "unfolding like an iPad," offering a large screen ideal for content consumption. The leak also suggests that Apple's foldable iPhone will have a distinctive "unprecedented" screen ratio, possibly offering a different experience compared to current foldable models like Samsung's Galaxy Z Fold and Oppo's Find N. With this unique design, the device could serve as both a smartphone and a tablet, positioning it as a strong contender in the growing foldable market.

While the foldable iPhone has not been officially confirmed by Apple, industry insiders are speculating that it could debut as early as next year. Additionally, rumors point to the potential release of foldable iPads and MacBooks by 2027. Apple has also reportedly secured an ultra-thin glass supplier, possibly for its foldable phone's screen. Bloomberg's Mark Gurman previously mentioned that Apple is also working on an iPad-like foldable with no visible crease, which could launch in 2028. Though details about Apple's foldable plans remain scarce, it's clear that the company is taking significant steps toward entering the foldable device market in the near future.

## UK Woman Celebrates 106th Birthday, Credits Chocolate and Parties for Longevity

A UK woman celebrating her 106th birthday has shared her secret to a long and happy life: a love for chocolate and parties. Edith Hill, a retired secretary from Yorkshire, believes that eating chocolate daily helps keep her feeling young and active. Edith, who moved into a care home six years ago at the age of 100, marked her special day on March 3, 2025. Born in 1919, Edith has witnessed the rise of 23 prime ministers, lived through two world wars, and experienced the reign of five monarchs. Despite her love for sweets, Edith has always maintained a healthy lifestyle, never smoking or drinking excessively. In a conversation with *\*Mirror\**, Edith said, "It's being independent, eating lots of chocolate, and partying," when asked what she believed contributed to her long life. Her favorite chocolate is the classic Cadbury Dairy Milk, though she enjoys trying other treats, especially around Easter. Now living at Aspen Lodge Care Home in Skegness, Lincolnshire, Edith continues to charm those around her with her vitality. To commemorate her 106th birthday, the care home has organized a special celebration complete with a double chocolate cake, in honor of her favorite dessert. The facility has also launched a heartwarming campaign to collect 106 birthday cards for Edith, one for every year of

her remarkable life. So far, she has received 40 cards, and the care home is hopeful that they will reach the 106-card goal. Anita Tindle, the head housekeeper at the care facility, shared her admiration for Edith, saying, "It makes my heart melt that people have taken part. It goes to show that there is still community spirit and kindness out there. She is truly one in a million." Edith, who has a son, is looking forward to her birthday party, which will feature a spring theme and live performances of 1940s and 1950s classics. Her 86-year-old niece, Anne Turner, described her as "independent, kind, and loving," and emphasized Edith's strong connection with her family.



## Rare Footage Captures Polar Bear Cubs Emerging from Den for the First Time

In an extraordinary breakthrough, scientists have unveiled rare footage capturing polar bear cubs emerging from their dens for the first time. This rare moment was captured in the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, providing a glimpse into one of the most challenging and understudied life stages of these iconic Arctic animals. The captivating footage shows a mother polar bear exiting her den with her three playful cubs trailing closely behind her, slipping and sliding across the icy terrain. The heartwarming scene offers an unprecedented view into the early life of polar bear cubs, who are typically born in the winter months and spend the early weeks of their lives in the protection of their dens. To capture this rare glimpse, a team of researchers from Polar Bears International, the Norwegian Polar Institute, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, and the University of Toronto Scarborough has been monitoring polar bear dens in Svalbard for nearly a decade. The scientists utilized GPS collars

with remote cameras placed at the den sites to observe the bears' behavior without disturbing their natural habitat. This innovative technique has enabled researchers to gather valuable insights into the behavior, survival strategies, and early development of polar bear cubs in the harsh Arctic environment. The footage not only provides a fascinating look at the cubs' first steps in the wild but also serves as a critical resource for understanding the challenges polar bears face in a rapidly changing environment. As Arctic temperatures rise and sea ice melts due to climate change, these changes threaten the habitats and survival of polar bears, making such research increasingly vital. This momentous discovery sheds light on the resilience of polar bear families, offering hope and valuable data that can inform conservation efforts aimed at protecting these magnificent creatures in the face of climate change.





## India Beat New Zealand by 44 Runs, Set Semi-Final Date with Australia in Champions Trophy

India defeated New Zealand by 44 runs on Sunday to top Group A in the Champions Trophy and secure a spot in the semifinals against Australia. India posted 249/9 in their 50 overs with Shreyas Iyer leading the charge, scoring 79 runs off 98 balls. Hardik Pandya and Axar Patel contributed with 45 and 42 runs respectively. Despite a strong fightback from New Zealand's Kane Williamson, who made 81, the Black Caps were bowled out for 205 in 45.3 overs. The star of the match was Indian bowler Varun Chakravarthi, who claimed 5 wickets for 42 runs in 10 overs. Matt Henry was New Zealand's top bowler, taking 5 wickets for 42 runs. India's win ensures they top Group A, setting up a semifinal clash with Australia on Tuesday. New Zealand will face South Africa in Lahore on Wednesday.

### Brief Scores:

- India: 249/9 in 50 overs (Shreyas Iyer 79; Matt Henry 5/42)
- New Zealand: 205 all out in 45.3 overs (Kane Williamson 81; Varun Chakravarthi 5/42)



## Yuva All Stars Championship 2025 Set to Kick Off on March 6 in Haridwar



The much-awaited Yuva All Stars Championship 2025, a groundbreaking tournament in the kabaddi ecosystem, will commence on March 6 at the Vandna Kataria Indoor Stadium in Haridwar. The championship will feature 12 teams, including the six top-performing teams from the 11th edition of the Yuva Kabaddi Series. The tournament will take place over 30 days, with four matches scheduled daily at 10:15 am, 11:45 am, 4:00 pm, and 5:30 pm. Fans can catch the action live on FanCode. Vikas Gautam, CEO of Yuva Kabaddi Series, expressed excitement

for the unique format of the tournament, describing it as a "battle of the best" showcasing the nation's brightest young talents. The championship will feature teams like Palani Tuskers, Sonipat Spartans, Kurukshetra Warriors, UP Falcons, Chandigarh Chargers, and Vasco Vipers, who secured their spots after strong performances in the division rounds. The competition will also include six Invitational Youth Teams, which will be revealed soon. The tournament will have three rounds to crown the ultimate kabaddi champion.

## ISL 2024-25: Chennaiyin FC Focused on Strong Finish Ahead of NorthEast United Visit

Chennaiyin FC (CFC) will look to finish their regular season on a high when they face NorthEast United FC (NEUFC) in their penultimate match of the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 on Monday. Head coach Owen Coyle emphasized the importance of closing the season strong, following recent wins against East Bengal, Punjab, and a solid performance against Bengaluru. He also mentioned that some players would be given opportunities in this match and must seize those chances. The fixture has often produced high-scoring games, with CFC winning four out of the last five encounters. Coyle noted that NorthEast United's playoff hopes would make them a motivated opponent, highlighting their strong desire to secure a win or at least a draw. Chennaiyin's home form has been under scrutiny, but Coyle aims to finish these last two matches strong and bring joy to their supporters. Fullback Ankit Mukherjee, recovering from injury, expressed his intent to stay with the club next season.



## Stefanos Tsitsipas Wins First Title in Nearly a Year, Re-enters ATP Top 10

Stefanos Tsitsipas clinched his first title in almost a year with a dominant 6-3, 6-3 victory over Felix Auger-Aliassime in the Dubai final on Saturday. The match lasted one hour and 28 minutes, and Tsitsipas ended a 500-level finals losing streak, securing his first win in three attempts in Dubai after previous defeats to Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic. Tsitsipas, who had been ranked No. 3 in early 2023 but had dropped to 11th, will rise to 9th in the ATP rankings following his triumph. "I'm happy to be back in the top 10, it's one of the greatest feelings," Tsitsipas said. His victory was marked by a strong baseline game and resilience under pressure, as he never dropped serve in the match.

## Joginder Sharma, Ramit Tandon, Anahat Singh Promote Fitness During 'FIT India Sundays on Cycle' in Porbandar



Former cricketer Joginder Sharma, alongside Asian Games medallists Ramit Tandon and Anahat Singh, participated in the 'FIT India Sundays on Cycle' event in Porbandar, spreading the message of fitness and fighting obesity. The event, which started from Major Dhyani Chand National Stadium and traversed key locations like India Gate and Vijay Chowk, saw around 1000 participants, including citizens from various sectors and age groups. Joginder, who is now a Deputy Superintendent of Police, emphasized the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. Ramit Tandon and Anahat Singh, both prominent squash players, highlighted the significance of fitness beyond sports, stressing its role in maintaining overall health. In Porbandar, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya led 650 cyclists, encouraging citizens to embrace cycling for a healthier, pollution-free lifestyle. The event was attended by various government officials, including the Porbandar Collectorate and the Indian Navy.

## "Top Performers of Ranji Trophy 2024-25: Vidarbha's Dominance and Record-Breaking Stars"

The 2024-25 Ranji Trophy season concluded with Vidarbha securing their third title, and several Vidarbha players stood out in the tournament's top performers list.

### Top Run-Getters:

- Yash Rathod (Vidarbha) was the highest run-scorer with 960 runs in 18 innings at an average of 53.33, including five centuries.
- Shubham Sharma (Madhya Pradesh) accumulated 943 runs at an average of 104.77, with a best score of 240.
- Tanmay Agarwal (Hyderabad) scored 934 runs in 12 innings at 77.83, including three centuries.
- Karun Nair (Vidarbha) impressed with 863 runs in nine matches, including four centuries, his best being

135 in the final.

- Danish Malewar (Vidarbha) contributed with 783 runs, including a match-winning 153 in the final.
- Top Wicket-Takers:**
  - Harsh Dubey (Vidarbha) dominated with 69 wickets, breaking a long-standing record, and also scored 476 runs, earning the Player of the Tournament award.
  - Auqib Nabi (Jammu and Kashmir) took 44 wickets at an average of 13.93.
  - Shams Mulani (Mumbai) took 44 wickets and scored 365 runs, including a century.
  - Dharmendrasinh Jadeja (Gujarat) claimed 40 wickets at 20.85.
  - Jalal Saxena (Kerala) was a prominent all-rounder, with 40 wickets and 366 runs.







## Shubham Sharma to Represent India at Mister Supranational 2025



Shubham Sharma, the newly crowned Mr India 2025, is set to represent India at the prestigious Mister Supranational 2025 pageant in Poland, scheduled for June 28. The 24-year-old from Maharashtra emerged victorious from a pool of 80 contestants who competed in the mega auditions held in Mumbai. Sharma expressed his gratitude, stating, "Winning Mr India 2025 is a dream come true, and I am honored to represent my country globally. I look forward to making India proud at Mister Supranational 2025." The Mr India 2025 competition tested contestants on personality, talent, confidence, intellect, fitness, and presentation, with a distinguished jury panel including Mr World 2016 Rohit Khandelwal and Mister Supranational winners. Additionally, the competition introduced a web series titled "The Hunt for India's Most Desirable Man," documenting the contestants' journey from registration to the grand finale.

## Vidya Balan Warns Fans About Misleading AI Content



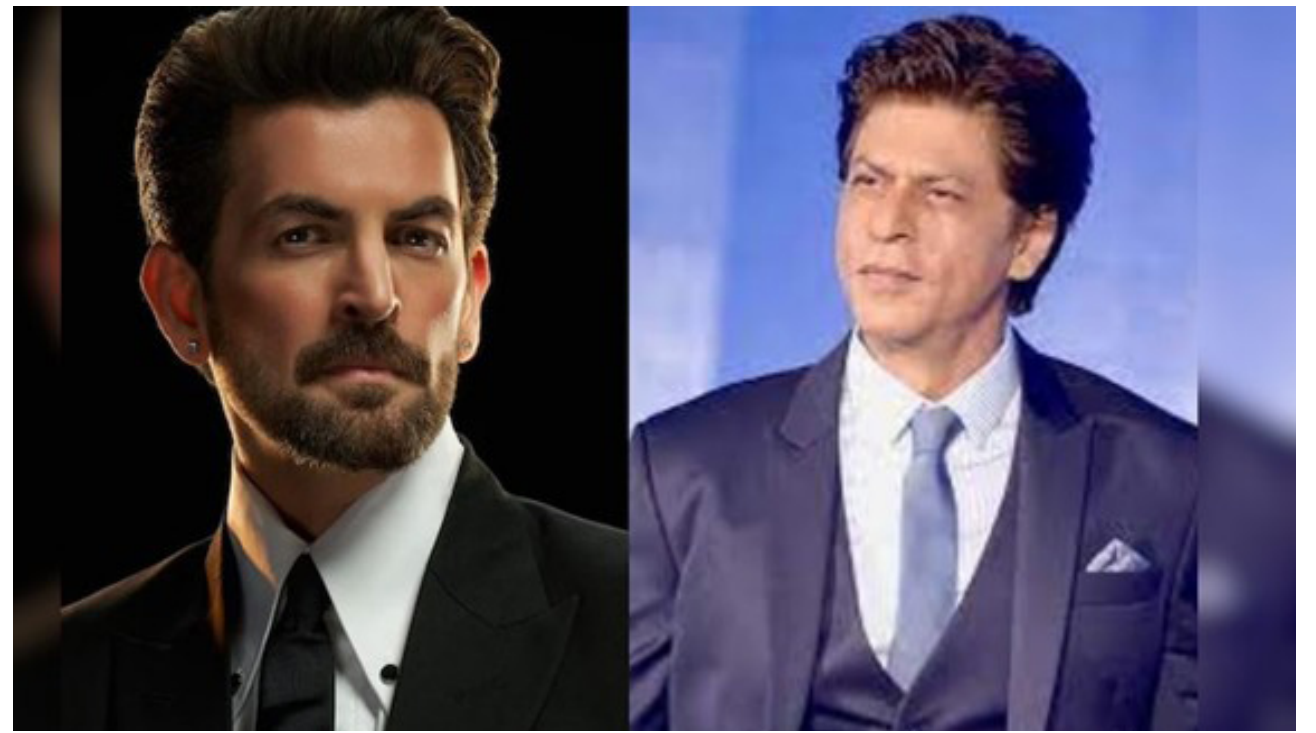
Actor Vidya Balan has cautioned her fans against AI-generated videos circulating on social media that falsely feature her. In a post shared on Instagram, the 46-year-old actress clarified that these videos are inauthentic, stating that she has no involvement in their creation or dissemination. "I urge everyone to verify information before sharing and be cautious of mis-

leading AI-generated content," Balan wrote, urging fans not to engage with such content. She emphasized that any claims made in these videos do not reflect her views or work. This isn't the first instance of AI content involving celebrities; others like Rashmika Mandanna, Katrina Kaif, and Aamir Khan have also faced similar issues online. #FakeAlert #Stay-Aware

## Neil Nitin Mukesh Reflects on Viral 2009 Filmfare Moment with Shah Rukh Khan

Neil Nitin Mukesh recently addressed the viral moment from the 2009 Filmfare Awards, where he told Shah Rukh Khan to "shut up" after a joke about his name. The incident sparked headlines, with SRK humorously pointing out that Neil had three first names but no surname. In response, Neil defended his reaction, explaining that it was a lighthearted moment, but he would never speak to a senior like SRK in such a manner.

Neil clarified, "We are in an era where I would never say 'shut up' to my seniors. It was a different situation, and the conversation had a lot of things at play." He also spoke about the importance of his name, which honors his father and grandfather, emphasizing that he would not tolerate disrespect towards it. On the work front, Neil's latest satirical action comedy, *Hisaab Barabar*, is now streaming on Zee5.



## Malaika Arora Celebrates Mother Joyce Polycarp's Birthday with Family and Friends



Malaika Arora celebrated her mother Joyce Polycarp's birthday with heartfelt moments shared on Instagram. The actress posted a series of beautiful pictures, including a special snap of Joyce with her daughters, Malaika and Amrita Arora, as well as their close friend Kareena Kapoor. The post also included a nostalgic throwback photo of the sibling duo posing with their mom and a tender moment between Malaika and Joyce. Malaika's caption read, "Happy birthday my Momsy... love you," accompanied by

red heart emojis. The post received warm birthday wishes from friends like Seema Kiran Sajdeh, Isha Koppikar, Farah Khan, and Sophie Choudry, among others. Amrita Arora also shared a loving tribute to her mother, reposting a picture with Joyce and writing, "Happy birthday, my lovely mommy! We love you and wish you the best always." On the professional front, Malaika was last seen in a special appearance in the Marathi film *Yek Number*, while Amrita has been away from acting since 2015.

## Producer Nagavamsi Explains Release Date Change for 'Mad Square'

The release date for *Mad Square*, the sequel to the popular *Mad* movie, has been moved up by a day. Initially scheduled for March 29, the film will now release on March 28. Producer Nagavamsi explained that the change was made due to the presence of Amavasya (new moon) on March 29, which led to the decision to shift the release date. Nagavamsi shared, "On the advice of the distributors, we moved the release to March 28. Since Amavasya falls

on March 29, we believe this change will be beneficial for the film's box office performance." The film, starring Nithin, Sangeeth Shobhan, Ram Nithin, and Vishnu, promises to bring more laughter in this sequel. Directed by K.V. Anudeep and produced by Harika Suryadevara, Sai Soujanya, the film is backed by Sitaara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas. Nagavamsi also wished success to Nithin's *Robin Hood*, releasing on the same day.



## Director Sandeep Reddy Vanga Responds to Former IAS Officer's Comments on 'Animal'

Director Sandeep Reddy Vanga has responded strongly to the criticism made by a former IAS officer about his film *Animal*. In a recent interview, the director addressed the remarks that suggested movies like *Animal* were unnecessary for society and were created solely to make money. The former IAS officer had also criticized films like *Animal*, stating that reading books could help one become an IAS officer, but it would not help in filmmaking. Sandeep Vanga expressed that the comments

deeply hurt him, likening it to being accused of a crime. He dismissed the criticism as baseless and shared his thoughts on the matter. Vanga stated, "If you want to become an IAS officer, yes, you can go to Delhi, join a coaching center, and study hard. But filmmaking or writing a script does not come from books or formal courses. It comes from learning by doing and having a passion for it." He emphasized that films are a result of personal taste and experience, not something that can be learned through books alone.

