



Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD	VIJAYAWADA	TIRUPATHI
H 33° C L 25° C	H 35° C L 26° C	H 36° C L 26° C

From Common Man to Maharaja: Kejriwal Slammed for VIP-like Vipassana Journey

Faces backlash for a lavish security convoy during his Vipassana retreat in Punjab.

BJP, Congress, and AAP leaders slam Kejriwal for hypocrisy on VIP culture

Contradicts his 'common man' image, raising questions on governance accountability.

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Arvind Kejriwal, national convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), has come under fire for his extravagant cavalcade to attend a 10-day Vipassana (meditation) retreat in Hoshiarpur, Punjab. The Delhi Chief Minister, accompanied by his wife Sunita, is at the Dhamma Dhaja Vipassana Centre for the retreat that began on Wednesday. However, the scale of the security detail that accompanied him has sparked significant political backlash.



ing that if power was his test, he had failed miserably.

Congress Joins the Criticism

Congress leader Sandeep Dikshit, who had contested against Kejriwal in the recent assembly elections, also criticized the AAP chief. He suggested that Kejriwal had grown accustomed to a lavish lifestyle, accusing him of using simplicity as a façade. "I have been saying for 10 years that he is greedy for power. When he used to get votes on the basis of simplicity, we used to say that his simplicity was just a pretence," Dikshit said. He also pointed out the irony of Kejriwal using such a large convoy for a retreat meant to promote peace and simplicity.

This controversy has sparked a wider debate about political leaders' use of public resources for personal affairs and whether it aligns with their previously stated values. Kejriwal's critics argue that his reliance on VIP treatment undermines his image as a leader advocating for a simpler, more accountable style of governance.

The cavalcade reportedly included more than 100 Punjab Police personnel, bulletproof vehicles, jammers, and ambulances, drawing comparisons to US President Donald Trump's security arrangements. AAP Rajya Sabha MP, Swati Maliwal, criticized Kejriwal on social media, saying, "Kejriwal, who criticizes the world for VIP culture, is today roaming around with a security cover bigger than Donald Trump."

BJP Criticizes Kejriwal's VIP Image

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) wasted no time in mocking Kejriwal for what they viewed as hypocrisy. Delhi cabinet minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa slammed the AAP leader, saying, "Arvind Kejriwal, who once pretended to be a common man in a WagonR, now moves in a lavish convoy of bulletproof Land Cruisers, over 100 Punjab Police commandos, jammers, and ambulances like a VIP Maharaja all for Vipassana, a retreat meant for peace." Sirsa accused Kejriwal of hypocrisy, claim-

No mediator needed, anyone can talk to me directly: Delhi CM Rekha Gupta

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta assured home guards that they could directly approach her with any grievances, stressing that there is no need for mediators in the communication process.

Gupta made the remarks during a meeting with a group of home guards, who had raised concerns about not receiving their salaries for the past five months. The home guards, who are deployed as bus marshals in Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) buses for women's safety, expressed frustration that some of them had not been paid since Diwali last year.

In response, Gupta assured the home guards that their issues would be addressed promptly. "If somebody wants to talk, then come directly to me, no one requires any kind of mediator," Gupta emphasized during the meeting.

The Delhi CM met the concerned home guards at her residence, listened attentively to their grievances, and promised

that their salary issues would be resolved at the earliest. The home guards, who play a vital role in ensuring safety for women passengers in public transport, had been facing delays in their compensation, which added to their stress and dissatisfaction.

The meeting was seen as an effort by Gupta to establish a more direct and transparent line of communication between the government and its employees, ensuring that their concerns are heard and addressed without the involvement of intermediaries. It also reflected her commitment to resolving issues that affect essential services like public safety and employee welfare.



Expel Abu Azmi from Samajwadi Party

Bring him to U.P. and we'll 'take care': CM Adityanath

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday demanded that the Samajwadi Party (SP) take a firm stand on the controversial comments made by its leader, Maharashtra MLA Abu Azmi, who praised Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Adityanath called on the SP to expel Azmi, accusing the party of glorifying a ruler responsible for numerous atrocities against India's cultural and spiritual heritage.

The Chief Minister, speaking in the Legislative Council, criticized the SP for supporting a leader who considers Aurangzeb a hero while disregarding India's rich history and legacy, especially that of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. "A person who is ashamed of the legacy of Shivaji Maharaj but considers Aurangzeb his hero does not have the right to live in India," Adityanath said.

He questioned the SP's double standards, pointing out the party's criticism of the Kumbh Mela while praising a ruler who destroyed temples and op-

pressed India's people. He further accused the party of abandoning the principles of socialist leader Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, who upheld the cultural unity of India despite his opposition to the Congress.

Adityanath also mocked the SP's failure to disown Azmi, demanding that the party expel him and publicly condemn his remarks. He issued a direct challenge, asking the SP

to either bring Azmi to a public gathering for clarification or send him to Uttar Pradesh, where they would handle the matter decisively.

The controversy erupted after Azmi's remarks praising Aurangzeb led to his suspension from the Maharashtra Assembly. Adityanath referred to the ruler's cruelty, citing instances such as Aurangzeb's imprisonment of his father, Shah Jahan, and his brutal treatment of non-Muslims. "No civilized Muslim names their child Aurangzeb," Adityanath added, urging the SP to clarify whether it truly sees such a tyrant as a role model.



Remarks about 'stealing of mangalsutras have come true: Kharge attacks PM Modi

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of causing financial distress for women in India. Kharge's remarks were in response to a rise in women mortgaging their gold, a trend he linked to the Prime Minister's past statements during the Lok Sabha campaign about "stealing of mangal-sutras."

Quoting recent reports, Kharge highlighted alarming figures, stating that between 2019 and 2024, four crore women had mortgaged gold worth Rs 4.7 lakh crore. He also pointed out that in 2024, 38 percent of all loans taken by women were gold loans. Furthermore, he referred to data from the Reserve Bank



of India, which indicated a 71.3 percent increase in gold loans over the past year (February 2025).

Kharge also criticized the Prime Minister for his handling of women's financial security. "Narendra

Modi-ji, you had talked about 'stealing of mangal-sutras.' That has now come true," Kharge wrote on 'X'. He accused Modi of leading women to a point where they had to mortgage their gold ornaments due to the combined impacts of demonetisation, inflation, and declining household savings. "First, you made women's 'stree-dhan' disappear with demonetisation, and now, because of inflation and financial hardships, they are forced to mortgage their most valuable possession - their jewellery," Kharge added.

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Will Implement Domicile Policy If Voted To Power In Bihar: Tejashwi Yadav

TPN Correspondent | Patna

Ahead of the 2025 Bihar Assembly elections, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav made strong promises to the unemployed youth during the Yuva Chaupal rally in Patna on Wednesday. Speaking at the Miller High School ground, Yadav outlined a series of commitments aimed at addressing youth unemployment and improving opportunities for young people in the state.

Yadav promised to form a Youth Commission within a month if the

RJD-Mahagathbandhan coalition comes to power in Bihar. He also emphasized the implementation of a domicile policy, ensuring that the youth of Bihar will be given preference in government jobs. "We will focus on job creation and ensure that Bihar's youth get the opportunities they deserve," he said, targeting the Nitish Kumar-led NDA government over rising unemployment and migration from the state.



In his address, Tejashwi Yadav promised to remove financial barriers for job aspirants by making competitive exam application fees free and covering travel expenses for candidates traveling to examination centers. This initiative, he said, would ease the financial burden on job seekers and encourage more youth to apply for government positions.

Criticizing Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Yadav mocked his age,

calling him a "junk car" unfit to lead the state. He pointed out that 58% of Bihar's population is between the ages of 18 and 25, stressing that the state needs a young leader to address its challenges.

Yadav also urged the youth to play an active role in bringing change by ensuring at least 10 votes each for RJD. The rally saw over 500 vehicles carrying supporters from various districts, signaling growing momentum for the party among the youth.

Delhi High Court refuses intervention in train station stampede plea

- High Court denies passengers' request to seek compensation via PIL
- Court states missed trains and refunds are personal legal matters
- Railways directed to file an affidavit on limiting platform ticket sales.



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday rejected the plea of passengers who had missed their train due to the February 15 stampede at the New Delhi Railway Station, seeking to be included as parties in a public interest litigation (PIL) related to the tragic event. The court advised them to pursue "personal" remedies, such as filing lawsuits for damages.

The bench, consisting of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, observed that the applicants' grievances regarding the failure of authorities to refund their tickets after they "escaped" the stampede, fell under personal legal matters, not a public interest cause. The counsel representing the applicants argued that their requests to the authorities for a refund had been ignored.

However, the court stated, "That is a personal cause of action. Take re-

course to remedies under the law. Why should we permit you to intervene in this matter? It is a public interest litigation (PIL)." The bench further clarified that the PIL's scope was to address issues related to crowd and passenger management, not the specifics of the stampede or individual compensation claims.

The court warned that allowing such interventions could open the floodgates for similar personal claims and said it would not be justifiable to allow such petitions to be included in the PIL. "We see what you are saying. It will give rise to personal tort, not a PIL," the bench added, denying their request to be impleaded in the case.

The court granted the applicants

the liberty to withdraw their plea, encouraging them to seek appropriate legal remedies. At least 18 people were killed in the stampede at New Delhi Railway Station on February 15, which occurred during a heavy surge of passengers traveling to Prayagraj for the Maha Kumbh.

The PIL filed by Arth Vidhi, the petitioner, highlighted the "gross mismanagement" and administrative failures that led to the tragic incident, which also left 15 injured. Following the event, the court directed the Railways to examine the issues of limiting passenger numbers and the sale of platform tickets, requesting an affidavit on the measures taken to address these concerns.

S Jaishankar Arrives In London, Holds Bilateral Talks With UK PM

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

During his official visit to the United Kingdom, India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar met with UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer to discuss strengthening bilateral ties, particularly in economic cooperation and enhancing people-to-people exchanges between the two nations.



In a post on X, Jaishankar shared that he conveyed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's warm greetings to Prime Minister Starmer during their meeting at 10 Downing Street. The two leaders focused on advancing the economic relationship between India and the UK, emphasizing the importance of enhancing mutual engagement in various sectors. They also highlighted the significance of fostering greater cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

A key part of the conversation also revolved around the ongoing Ukraine conflict. Prime Minister Starmer shared the United Kingdom's perspective on the war, with Jaishankar acknowledging the importance of such discussions in

the context of global geopolitics.

Jaishankar's trip also included a meeting with the UK's Foreign Secretary, David Lammy. Expressing gratitude for the warm welcome, Jaishankar conveyed his optimism for the talks. "Thank you FS @DavidLammy for this extremely warm welcome at the Chevening House. Look forward to our discussions," Jaishankar wrote in another post on X.

The meetings with the UK leadership reflect India's growing diplomatic engagement with the United Kingdom as both countries look to deepen their strategic ties and cooperate on global challenges such as the Ukraine conflict. The visit also underscores the importance of continuing high-level dialogues to address shared interests and concerns.

Rajasthan govt committed to preserving heritage, boosting religious tourism: CM Sharma



TPN Correspondent | Rajasthan

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel Choudhary on Tuesday reiterated his government's dedication to preserving the state's rich cultural, religious, and historical heritage while fostering the development of key religious and historical sites. In a review meeting held at his residence, Sharma emphasized the importance of these sites as part of Rajasthan's ancient heritage.

The CM stressed that the government is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting this "glorious heritage," according to an official statement. He highlighted Rajasthan's immense potential for religious and cultural tourism, noting that preserving the state's places of faith could significantly enhance the tourism sector, creating a wealth of job opportunities for locals.

Sharma further mentioned that under the 'Sankalp Patra,' the government had announced the development of the Braj Chaurasi Circuit as a major devotional tourism hub. Efforts are underway to develop tourism facilities along the Braj Chaurasi Kos Parikrama Marg, enhancing the pilgrimage experience in the region.

In the review meeting, Sharma directed officials to accelerate the development of Poonchri Ka Lautha Deeg and complete the necessary procedures for constructing several important panoramas, including Shri Gokul Jat Panorama, Raja Khemkaran Panorama, Dev Baba Panorama, and Govind Swami Panorama. These projects are expected to enhance the state's historical appeal and attract more visitors.

The CM also focused on improving the Tanot Mata Temple in Jaisalmer, urging for better facilities and infrastructure to accommodate the increasing number of devotees visiting the temple. Additionally, he called for improved connectivity between Girduwala, Kuldhara, and Longewala with Jaisalmer and Tanot, along with developing tourist facilities in these areas.

Sharma proposed that Sambhar Lake, near Jaipur, could be developed into a major tourist destination, drawing parallels to the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat. Lastly, he mentioned a recent cabinet decision to renovate temples outside the state and instructed the Devasthan Department to survey and list such temples for restoration.

Central Government Approves ₹4,081 Crore Kedarnath Ropeway Project

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

On Wednesday, March 5, the Central government approved the ₹4,081 crore Kedarnath ropeway project, which aims to significantly reduce travel time for pilgrims. The new ropeway, expected to cut the journey from Sonprayag to Kedarnath from 8-9 hours to just 36 minutes, is part of the National Ropeways Development Programme - Parvatmala Pariyojana.



The 12.9-kilometer long ropeway will be developed under the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) model with a total capital investment of ₹4,081.28 crore. This project is expected to greatly benefit pilgrims visiting Kedarnath, one of the most popular Char Dham pilgrimage sites. Currently, the trek to Ke-

darnath is strenuous and time-consuming, often requiring visitors to spend several hours walking along a challenging route. With the new ropeway, this journey will be completed in a fraction of the time.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw hailed the project as a milestone for the pilgrim-

age experience, stating, "This project is going to be a huge milestone in the pilgrimage journey of all the devotees traveling to the Char Dham." The initiative will not only improve accessibility for pilgrims but also provide a safer and more efficient mode of transport for those visiting the holy site.

The Kedarnath ropeway is expected to ease the pilgrimage process, particularly during the peak travel seasons, and enhance the overall experience for devotees. The project is expected to bolster the infrastructure at Kedarnath, providing much-needed support for the increasing number of visitors to the region. This development is also part of the government's broader efforts to improve connectivity to key religious sites in the country.

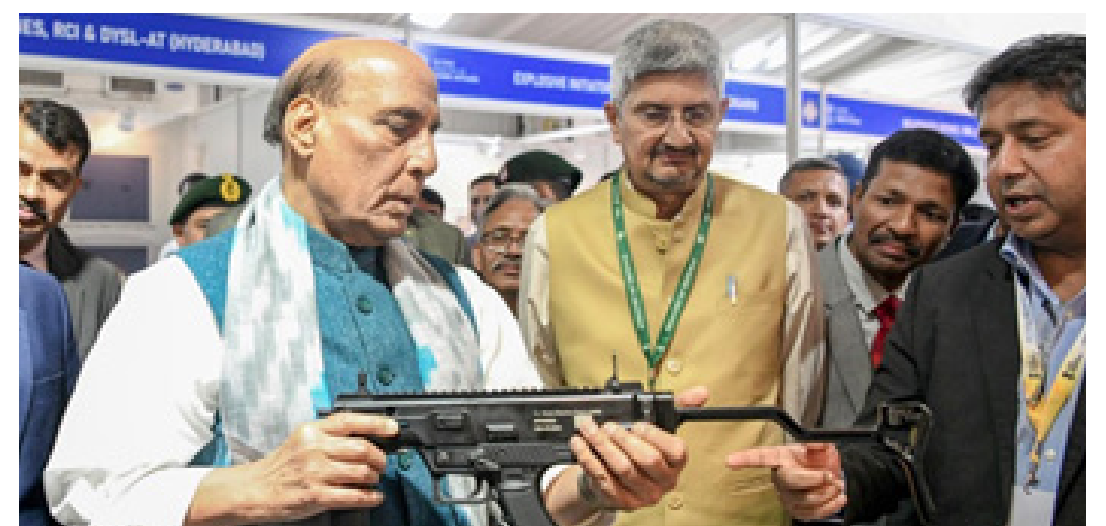
India's security apparatus must remain adaptive to emerging threats: Rajnath Singh

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

India's security landscape is increasingly shaped by non-traditional threats, ranging from cyber warfare to space-based espionage, as highlighted by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during a conference on March 4, 2025. The conference, organized by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), underscored the need for an adaptive security apparatus capable of countering emerging challenges.

Rajnath Singh emphasized that internal security goes beyond conventional threats such as terrorism and separatism. In today's rapidly evolving threat environment, new-age dangers like cyber-attacks, misinformation campaigns, and space-based espionage are becoming increasingly significant. These complex threats demand innovative solutions, advanced technologies, and a collaborative approach across India's security institutions.

The Defence Minister highlighted the growing overlap between internal and external security concerns, stressing the need for integrated efforts across various agencies to strengthen the country's defenses. He praised the DRDO for its con-



tributions to India's defense and internal security capabilities, particularly through innovations like small arms, surveillance systems, and anti-drone technologies.

Singh called for more joint efforts between the DRDO and the MHA to create scalable, time-bound solutions for national security. He further emphasized that technological advancements should not be limited to defense but should also be applied to disaster relief and humanitarian efforts. The use of technologies such as drones, thermal imaging, and victim locating devices is critical in reducing casualties and damage during natural calamities.

The Defence Minister also addressed the varied security threats in different regions of India, noting the distinct challenges in areas such as the Northeast, Naxal-affected regions, and border areas. He urged for region-specific solutions and called for greater public awareness of disaster management.

In summary, Rajnath Singh's remarks underscore the necessity of modernizing India's security infrastructure to address a diverse range of emerging threats while fostering collaboration across agencies and technological sectors.

Will Work As Per Our Agenda, Not Theirs: Delhi CM Slams AAP Over Poll Promises



- Rebuffs AAP's pressure on the ₹2,500 women's assistance scheme
- Announces consultations for Viksit Delhi budget focusing on health
- Urging the BJP to implement the scheme by March 8

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Wednesday strongly criticized the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), asserting that the opposition cannot dictate her government's agenda. She reaffirmed the BJP government's commitment to fulfilling its election promises, including the rollout of the Rs 2,500 monthly assistance for women.

The AAP has been continuously pressuring the newly-formed BJP government to expedite the implementation of this scheme. The party has raised the issue in the first assembly session and staged multiple protests demanding action.

During a press conference, Gupta responded firmly, saying, "Nobody needs to remind us how many days are left... We will work as per our agenda, they will not dictate it." She emphasized that consultations with women's organizations are underway for the upcoming Viksit Delhi budget, which will address various key issues such as health, safety, and economic empowerment. Gupta assured that the concerns and expectations of

women would be fully incorporated into government policies.

The Chief Minister also announced plans to visit slum areas over the next three days to engage directly with women and understand their concerns. She added that she would also meet with young people to hear their perspectives.

Gupta stated, "The upcoming Delhi budget will be one that fulfils the hopes of the people," reiterating her commitment to implementing all promises made in the BJP's election manifesto.

Earlier on Wednesday, AAP workers plastered posters across Delhi with the message "only three more days," creating pressure on the BJP government to fulfill its promise of Rs 2,500 monthly financial assistance to women by March 8, International Women's Day.

On Tuesday, AAP workers, led by Leader of Opposition Atishi, staged a protest outside Mandi House metro station, demanding a clear timeline from the newly elected BJP government for the rollout of the women's assistance scheme.

Tool to analyse, app for smooth traffic stops: Shah takes note of Goa Police initiatives

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, during a review meeting in Delhi on Monday, discussed the implementation of three new criminal laws in Goa, stressing that their primary aim is to ensure swift justice. Shah urged Goa to become a "model state" in effectively executing these laws, which are designed to strengthen the criminal justice system.

In his address, Shah highlighted the importance of these laws in promoting justice and ensuring accountability. He also took note of the recent initiatives by the Goa Police, which aim to enhance law enforcement and public safety. He directed the police officials to ensure that property recovered from criminals is returned to its rightful owners, in line with the provisions set forth in the new criminal laws.

The Union Minister expressed satisfaction with the progress made in Goa but emphasized the need for further study and scaling up of



these initiatives in other regions. He urged state authorities to look into the feasibility of expanding these successful practices across the country, aiming for a more effective and efficient criminal justice system.

Shah's comments underscore the government's commitment to reforming law enforcement and ensuring that justice is delivered promptly and fairly. The review meeting also focused on the importance of collaboration between various law enforcement agencies to ensure the successful implementation of these new laws. The Home Minister's call for Goa to set an example for other states reflects the significance of these reforms in strengthening the country's overall legal framework.

Will put across porters' demands to Govt, fight for their rights: Rahul

Advocates for Porters' Rights After New Delhi Railway Stampede

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

On March 5, 2025, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi voiced his support for the porters at New Delhi Railway Station, highlighting their bravery during the stampede on February 15, which claimed 18 lives. Gandhi shared a video of his recent interaction with the porters, in which they recounted their efforts to save passengers during the tragic incident.

The stampede occurred as a large number of passengers gathered at the station to board trains for Prayagraj. Gandhi praised the porters for risking their lives to assist the injured, guide people to safety, and transport the deceased, all while using their physical strength, handcarts, and even spending their own money to help those in need. Despite their heroism, Gandhi noted that the voices of the porters are often ignored, and their financial struggles continue to persist.

Gandhi expressed deep admiration for the porters' compassion and resilience, pointing out that many of them face severe financial hardship, with some struggling to even afford meals. One



porter shared their daily struggles with Gandhi, stating that on some days, they have no money to eat, either sending what little they earn back home or skipping meals altogether. Despite these challenges, the porters continue to work with dedication and goodwill.

The former Congress president assured the porters that he would fight for their rights and raise their demands with the government. Their primary request, as stated in the video, is for Group D employment, which would

provide them with more stable and secure jobs. Gandhi promised to make every effort to help improve their working conditions and ensure they receive the support they deserve.

Gandhi's statement reflects his commitment to advocating for marginalized groups, urging the government to address the issues faced by the porters and provide them with the recognition and benefits they have long been denied.

Family With 130 Boats Made Rs 30 Crore Profit During Kumbh : Yogi Adityanath



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday defended the Maha Kumbh, countering opposition criticism during a discussion on the state's 2025-26 budget. The chief minister praised the event's economic success and flawless law-and-order management, asserting that it was widely accepted by the public.

Responding to claims from the opposition, including the Samajwadi Party, that boatmen in Prayagraj were exploited during the event, Adityanath shared the story of a boatman's family who made a profit of Rs 30 crore from 130 boats in just 45 days. He explained that each boat earned Rs 23 lakh, with daily earnings of around Rs 50,000-52,000. This example, he argued, highlighted the economic benefits of the event.

Adityanath also lauded the law-and-order arrangements during the Maha Kumbh, emphasizing that over 66 crore devotees and tourists visited Prayagraj without any incidents of crime. "Not a single case of harassment, kidnapping, robbery, or murder was reported," he declared, stressing that the event was a peaceful and well-managed gathering.

The chief minister highlighted the massive economic impact of the Maha Kumbh, revealing that Rs 7,500 crore had been invested in the event, which generated an astounding Rs 3 lakh crore in business. He broke down the economic contributions, including Rs 40,000 crore in the hotel industry, Rs 33,000 crore in food and essentials, and Rs 1.5 lakh crore in transportation. Other sectors, such as religious offerings, donations, toll tax, and other revenues, also saw significant gains.

Adityanath argued that the investments in infrastructure during the Maha Kumbh would have long-lasting benefits for Prayagraj, including the widening of 200 roads, construction of 14 flyovers, and the building of several underpasses and corridors.

He also addressed the opposition's criticism of heritage projects, such as the installation of a statue of Lord Ram embracing Nishad Raj in Shringverpur. Adityanath remarked that while the opposition viewed such efforts as a "vote bank," they were about honoring the state's heritage. The chief minister concluded by pointing to international media praise for the Maha Kumbh, further underscoring its success.

Trying To Turn India Into Hindia?: Kamal Haasan Echoes MK Stalin's 2019 Jab

TPN Correspondent | Chennai

Actor-politician Kamal Haasan has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of trying to create a concept of "Hindia" by imposing Hindi on non-Hindi-speaking states, a move he argues undermines federal principles. Haasan, leader of the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM), made these remarks while attending an all-party meeting convened by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin. The meeting primarily focused on issues related to the Centre's proposed delimitation exercise and the three-language formula under the National Education Policy (NEP).

Haasan strongly opposed the Centre's push for the three-language formula, which includes Hindi as a compulsory language alongside regional languages. He said, "They are creating Hindia. Whatever decision taken by the Centre will not be in favour of non-Hindi-speaking states. This decision, which is against federal principles, is unnecessary." The three-language formula has sparked controversy in Tamil Nadu, where many fear it is an attempt to impose Hindi on the state, disregarding regional linguistic diversity.

The actor-politician also pointed out the deep-rooted linguistic pride among

Tamilians, stating, "Tamilians have lost their lives for a language. Don't play with those things. Tamilians, even children, know what language they need." His comments resonate with the long-standing cultural and linguistic sensitivities in Tamil Nadu, where there is a strong sentiment against imposing Hindi as a dominant language.

Haasan further criticized the proposed delimitation exercise, which aims to adjust parliamentary constituencies based on population. He questioned the need for such changes, asking, "Why are they repairing something that is not broken? Why are they sending democracy to the workshop for repair?" His concerns reflect fears that southern states, including Tamil Nadu, might lose seats in Parliament due to successful population control measures.

During the meeting, Chief Minister Stalin echoed these concerns, suggesting that the delimitation exercise should be based on the 1971 Census for the next 30 years. He also proposed the formation of a committee of MPs and representatives from southern states to collectively respond to the Centre's plan. The Tamil Nadu Congress president also supported Stalin's proposal to freeze the delimitation exercise for the next three decades.



Medical equipment worth crores lying unused in Delhi hospitals: CM



- Crores worth of medical equipment lying unused in hospitals
- Issues including unplanned construction and staff unpaid for months
- Blamed AAP government calling its health and education model a failure

TPN Correspondent
| New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta has raised concerns over the mismanagement of medical resources, alleging that medical equipment worth crores of rupees is lying unused in warehouses of government-run hospitals across the city.

During a visit to the Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital on Tuesday, Gupta pointed out that, since the Covid-19 pandemic, the hospital's warehouse has been completely filled with unused medical supplies. "Even today, 458 oxygen concentrators, 146 ventilators, 36,000 PPE kits, multipara monitors, masks, and other essential medical supplies are lying unused," she stated. The chief minister em-

phasized that this issue was not isolated to GTB Hospital, but was a common problem in many government hospitals throughout Delhi.

Gupta also criticized the planning of new hospital structures, claiming they were constructed without proper foresight and failed to meet the needs of the hospitals. In addition, she highlighted that hospital staff had not been paid their salaries for the past six months, worsening the situation.

The chief minister further pointed out the dire state of infrastructure in several Delhi government hospitals, calling for accountability. "Who is responsible for this? We will try to fix the problem," she asserted, promising action to address the issues plaguing the

healthcare system in the city.

Gupta also took a swipe at the previous government, accusing them of leaving behind a deteriorating healthcare system. She criticized the opposition's focus on schemes like the ₹2,500 monthly aid to women, arguing that they should first examine the state of Delhi's hospitals. Referring to the Mahila Samridhi Yojna, a key BJP promise in the lead-up to the Delhi Assembly elections, Gupta claimed that the AAP government's approach to healthcare and education had proven ineffective.

This criticism comes at a time when healthcare infrastructure in Delhi continues to be a major point of contention in political discourse.

Delhi Government Bans Petrol Sales to 15-Year-Old Vehicles to Tackle Pollution



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

In a bid to combat the severe air pollution in the national capital, the Delhi government has announced a significant policy change: vehicles aged 15 years or older will no longer be able to refuel with petrol at fuel stations. Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa confirmed this decision, which is expected to have a widespread impact on thousands of vehicle owners in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR).

Impact on Vehicle Owners

This move will primarily affect owners of older vehicles, particularly those with models such as the Hyundai Accent, the old Honda Civic, Maruti 800, and similar cars. Residents of Delhi NCR, who own cars that have surpassed the 15-year mark, will need to explore alternative solutions. While the government's focus is on reducing the number of polluting vehicles on the roads, it remains unclear if additional policies will be implement-

ed to encourage vehicle scrapping or incentivize owners to dispose of their old cars.

Enforcement of the Policy

To ensure compliance with this new regulation, the government plans to deploy AI-enabled cameras at fuel stations. These cameras, already used to monitor Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates, will be upgraded to identify vehicles that are not eligible for refueling based on their age. Stations lacking this technology are expected to install it in the coming months.

With over 100,000 end-of-life vehicles currently in Delhi, vehicle owners will face a tough choice. They can either scrap their old cars, sell them outside the city with a No-Objection Certificate (NOC), or opt for alternative forms of transport, such as electric or hybrid vehicles. This move may further accelerate the adoption of greener vehicles, contributing to the city's long-term goal of reducing its carbon footprint and improving air quality

Delhi, Bengaluru Made Massive Growth In Global Luxury Home Market In 2024

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

India's next generation of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) is increasingly drawn to luxury investments, with a growing interest in luxury real estate. According to a new report by Knight Frank, 25.7% of HNWIs aspire to own a luxury home, making it the second most sought-after luxury asset after high-end cars (46.5%). Art collection (11.9%) and private jets (9.9%) also featured on the luxury wish list.

The survey focused on individuals with an annual income exceeding \$125,000, revealing that nearly 30% of next-gen HNWIs globally prefer high-end real estate, followed by luxury cars at 27.8%, and private jets at 15.1%.

Knight Frank's report highlighted the

significant strides made by Delhi and Bengaluru in the global luxury home market. Delhi, in particular, experienced a remarkable surge, moving from 37th place in the Prime Inter-



national Residential Index (PIRI 100) in 2023 to 18th in 2024. This jump was driven by a 6.7% year-on-year (YoY) increase in luxury residential prices. Bengaluru also saw a positive shift, improving from 59th to 40th place,

reflecting growing demand for luxury properties in the city.

The global luxury residential market, overall, saw an average price increase of 3.6% in 2024. Strong growth was particularly noted in regions like the Middle East and Latin America, where markets rose by 7.2% and 6.3%, respectively. Despite broader global economic challenges, these regions showed resilience, driven by sustained demand in local markets.

The growth of the luxury residential market in cities like Delhi and Bengaluru signals a shift towards high-end investments among India's wealthy elite, as the country's urban landscape continues to evolve as a key player in the global luxury real estate market.

Naxal Operative Arrested in Delhi After Working as Domestic Helper Under False Identity

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

A 23-year-old woman Naxal operative from Jharkhand, who had been living in Delhi under a false identity, was arrested by Delhi Police on Wednesday. The woman, originally from Kudaburu village in West Singhbhum, Jharkhand, was working as a domestic helper in various parts of Delhi and Noida after assuming a new identity. She was arrested from Pitampura in outer Delhi.

The woman, who was wanted in connection with several police encounters in Jharkhand, had been evading authorities for a long time. She was facing charges under various sections of the Indian Penal

Code, Arms Act, Explosives Act, and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. A non-bailable warrant was issued against her on March 26, 2023, by a court in Jharkhand.

According to police officials, the woman had arrived in Delhi in 2020 and quickly adopted a false identity to blend into the city. She took up work as a domestic helper and settled in Pitampura, outer Delhi, where she managed to evade detection for several years.

Delhi Police's crime branch, after months of surveillance and intelligence gathering, received credible information about the presence of a Maoist extremist in the National

Capital Region (NCR). Deputy Commissioner of Police Vikram Singh stated that the arrest followed a thorough investigation and intelligence work, leading to the successful identification and capture of the woman.

The woman's arrest is a significant development in ongoing efforts to counter Naxal and Maoist activities. Her presence in Delhi under a false identity highlights the challenges in tracking individuals involved in such movements, especially when they try to integrate into mainstream society to evade law enforcement. The authorities are now investigating further connections she may have had while living in the NCR.

Delhi gov't's 12-month timeline to flatten Bhalswa landfill faces obstacles



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa's ambitious 12-month timeline to flatten the Bhalswa landfill faces several hurdles, as the project, which began five years ago, has experienced multiple delays and deadline revisions.

Currently, around five million tonnes of waste remain at the Bhalswa landfill, posing a significant challenge for the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), which is overseeing the cleanup efforts. The MCD officials noted that the city's three major landfill sites—Okhla, Bhalswa, and Ghazipur—collectively held 24 million tonnes of legacy waste in 2019. However,

the progress of biomining, the process used to remove and treat waste, has been slower than expected.

As per the MCD's status report, by December 2024, approximately 14.8 million tonnes of legacy waste had been cleared through biomining. Despite this progress, the ongoing dumping of fresh waste has kept the total waste at 16.15 million tonnes. This highlights the complex nature of the cleanup and the continued accumulation of waste, further complicating the timeline for completing the task.

The biomining project began in 2019 under a directive from the National Green Tribunal, but several extensions have been

granted due to unforeseen delays. The latest deadlines submitted by the MCD indicate that the three landfill sites—Ghazipur, Bhalswa, and Okhla—are now expected to be cleared by December 2028.

This extended timeline underscores the significant challenges faced by the MCD in managing and eliminating legacy waste. As the government pushes forward with the ambitious goal of cleaning up the landfills, the difficulties in meeting initial deadlines demonstrate the complex, long-term nature of waste management in Delhi. The success of this project will be a critical test of the city's ability to address its growing waste management crisis.

Cabinet Approves Construction of Two Major Ropeways in Uttarakhand: Vaishnaw



- Approves Kedarnath & Hemkund ropeways in Uttarakhand.
- To use ₹4,081.28 crore Tri-cable Detachable Gondola (3S) technology.
- To ease travel to the Sikh shrine and boost Valley of Flowers tourism.

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday (March 5, 2025) gave the green light for the construction of two significant ropeways in Uttarakhand, aimed at improving accessibility to two of the region's most revered pilgrimage sites — Kedarnath and Hem-

kund Sahib.

The 12.9 km ropeway project connecting Sonprayag to Kedarnath will be developed under the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) model, with a total investment of ₹4,081.28 crore. Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated

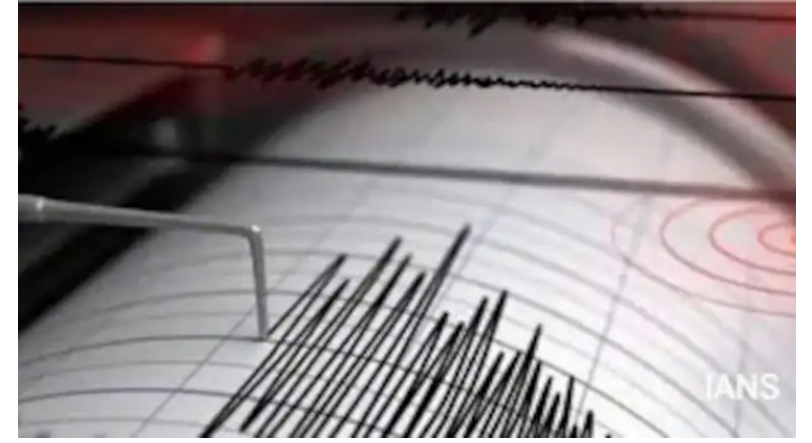
that the project will be implemented as a public-private partnership, utilizing state-of-the-art Tri-cable Detachable Gondola (3S) technology. This system is designed to carry 1,800 passengers per hour in each direction, with a daily capacity of 18,000 passengers.

Kedarnath, situated at an elevation of 3,583 meters (11,968 feet) in Uttarakhand's Rudrapur district, is one of the 12 sacred Jyotirlingas. Pilgrims currently undertake a strenuous 16-km uphill trek from Gaurikund to reach the temple, a journey which can take hours. The new ropeway will ease access for pilgrims and ensure all-weather connectivity between Sonprayag and Kedarnath, which is accessible for only six months a year. Helicopter services are currently available for visitors, but this ropeway will offer a more convenient and sustainable option.

In addition, a 12.4 km ropeway project from Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib will be constructed at a total cost of ₹2,730.13 crore. Hemkund Sahib, situated at 15,000 feet in Chamoli district, is a revered Sikh pilgrimage site open for five months annually, attracting about 1.5 to 2 lakh pilgrims each year. The trek to Hemkund Sahib also serves as the entry point to the UNESCO-recognized Valley of Flowers National Park. The new ropeway will provide easier access to this high-altitude site, benefiting pilgrims and tourists alike.

Both projects are expected to boost tourism, improve pilgrimage experiences, and enhance infrastructure in the region.

Two Earthquakes, Including One Of 5.7 Magnitude, Hit Manipur



TPN Correspondent | Imphal

Manipur was rocked by two consecutive earthquakes on Wednesday, including one with a magnitude of 5.7, which caused tremors across the Northeast. According to officials from the Regional Seismological Centre in Shillong, the first earthquake occurred at 11:06 am with a magnitude of 5.7. Its epicenter was located 44 kilometers east of Yairipok in Imphal East district, at a depth of 110 km.

The tremors were felt not only in Manipur but also in Assam, Meghalaya, and other northeastern states, with residents reporting shaking buildings and swaying structures. Around 12:20 pm, a second earthquake of magnitude 4.1 struck Manipur's Kamjong district, at a depth of 66 km.

Following the quakes, several buildings in Manipur were reported to have developed

cracks. Social media footage showed visible damage at a school building in Wangjing Lamding, located in Thoubal district, where a relief camp for people affected by ethnic strife was set up. Local authorities are currently confirming reports of damage, particularly in the areas where the relief camps are located.

Despite the visible cracks in buildings, no casualties or major structural damages have been reported so far in the affected regions. Authorities are monitoring the situation closely and are working to assess any additional impacts in other parts of the Northeast.

The tremors have heightened concerns across the region, with residents remaining on alert for potential aftershocks. While the situation remains under assessment, there have been no immediate reports of significant damage outside of Manipur.

Abu Azmi suspended from Assembly amid Aurangzeb remark row, cries injustice

TPN Correspondent | Mumbai

BJP MLA Sudhir Mungantiwar has called for the revocation of Samajwadi Party MLA Abu Azmi's membership in the Maharashtra Assembly, following his controversial remarks about Aurangzeb. Mungantiwar stated that Azmi's comments were disrespectful to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and demanded that Azmi's membership be permanently revoked, rather than just suspending him for a session or two. "Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is revered, and we can't let go of those who insult him so easily," Mungantiwar said.

Azmi, an MLA from Mankhurd Shivaji Nagar, stirred controversy when he criticized the portrayal of historical events in the movie "Chhava", which focuses on Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj, the son of the legendary Maratha king Shivaji. In his comments, Azmi described Aurangzeb as a "good administrator," claiming that India's borders extended as far as Afghanistan and Burma during his rule. He also stated that Aurangzeb built several temples and was not a cruel administrator. Azmi went on to claim that India, during Aurangzeb's reign, was referred to as the "golden bird," with the country's economy



contributing 24% of the global GDP.

The remarks led to a political uproar in the Maharashtra Assembly, with Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde demanding Azmi's suspension. In response to the backlash, Azmi attempted to clarify his statement, asserting that he had only repeated what historians and writers had said about Aurangzeb. "I have not made any derogatory comments about Chhatra-

pati Shivaji Maharaj, Sambhaji Maharaj. But still, if anyone has been hurt by my statement, I take back my words," Azmi posted on X.

However, the controversy escalated when Lok Sabha MP Naresh Mhaske filed an FIR against Azmi, accusing him of attempting to hurt religious sentiments. The FIR was later transferred to Mumbai, and the matter continues to fuel political debate.

Punjab police barricade Chandigarh border points to block farm leaders march

TPN Correspondent | Chandigarh

On March 5, 2025, farmers associated with the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) claimed they were being prevented from traveling to Chandigarh for a planned protest demanding several key agricultural reforms. As the farmers made their way to the city, barricades were set up at the Chandigarh-Mohali border, and additional security measures were implemented to prevent them from advancing.

The confrontation followed inconclusive talks between the SKM and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. Gurbachan Singh Chhaba, leader of the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee, condemned CM Mann's conduct during the meeting, accusing him of abandoning the discussions midway and of actively working against the interests of farmers by siding with the central government. Chhaba also criticized the government for raiding the homes of farmer leaders, detaining them, and arresting others in response to the protests.

In retaliation, the SKM called for a week-long sit-in protest in Chandigarh, starting March 5, to press for their demands. However, many farmers traveling by tractor-trolleys and other vehicles were stopped by the Punjab



Police, with several detained at various checkpoints, including in Moga and Samrala. Protesters chanted slogans against the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government, accusing it of undermining their cause.

The Chandigarh administration denied permission for the sit-in at Sector 34, while the city's police issued a traffic advisory to regulate movement and ensure public safety during the protest. Additionally, several SKM leaders, including Balbir Singh Rajewal and Gurmeet Singh Bhatiwala, were detained by Punjab Police on Tuesday.

The farmers' demands include the withdrawal of the Centre's draft National Policy Framework on Agricultural Marketing, a legal guarantee for minimum support prices, debt relief laws, and the purchase of specific crops at guaranteed prices. The SKM also calls for compensation for farmers who lost their lives during the 2020-2021 protests, along with land ownership rights for tillers and the cessation of forcible land acquisitions for national projects. The protests highlight ongoing tensions between farmers and the government over agricultural policies.

NHRC Orders On-Spot Inquiry into Nepalese Student's Alleged Suicide at KIIT



TPN Correspondent | Bhubaneswar

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has initiated an on-spot inquiry into the alleged suicide of a 20-year-old Nepalese engineering student, Prakriti Lamsal, at her hostel room in KIIT, Bhubaneswar, on February 16. The NHRC, known for typically delegating investigations to state authorities, has taken the unusual step of forming a three-member

team to probe both the student's death and the subsequent violent incidents that occurred on the campus.

Prakriti Lamsal, a first-year engineering student, was found dead in her hostel room under suspicious circumstances, leading to protests by fellow students. They have raised concerns about the treatment of the deceased and allegations of mishandling by the university administration in response to the incident.

In light of these events, the NHRC has taken immediate action to ensure an impartial investigation into both the death of Lamsal and the alleged attack on students who protested against the handling of the case. The commission aims to assess the situation on the ground and determine if any human rights violations took place during the protest or in the handling of

Lamsal's death.

The NHRC's involvement emphasizes the seriousness of the matter, as the case not only raises concerns about student welfare and university management but also highlights the broader issue of student rights and safety in educational institutions. The three-member team will gather information from students, faculty, and staff and review all relevant evidence to determine the facts surrounding the incident.

This inquiry marks an important step in ensuring accountability for the incident and protecting the rights of students on campuses across India. The NHRC's move to intervene directly in the matter has been welcomed by those seeking justice for Prakriti Lamsal and improved measures to safeguard student well-being.

The Delimitation Debate: Why Stalin's Argument Falls Flat



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has recently raised concerns about the upcoming delimitation process based on the 2026 Census, claiming it would unfairly reduce Tamil Nadu's parliamentary strength. In a post on social media, Stalin warned that southern states like Tamil Nadu, which have successfully controlled population growth, could see their representation in Parliament decrease, thus weakening their voice. This claim, however, has been debunked by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who reassured the southern states that their interests would be safeguarded, and there would be no reduction in their seats. Stalin's statements are unsur-

prising, considering the DMK's history of exploiting regional sentiments and promoting a North-South divide for political gains. The primary aim is to rally the Dravidian vote bank by creating fear about potential political marginalization. But what exactly is delimitation? Delimitation is the process of redrawing electoral boundaries based on the latest population data to ensure fair representation. It is a constitutional exercise, mandated by Articles 82 and 170 of the Indian Constitution, which requires periodic adjustments to maintain democratic equality. Contrary to Stalin's claims, delimitation is a legitimate and necessary process to ensure proportional

representation in Parliament and state assemblies. In India, delimitation has been carried out multiple times, with the last exercise conducted in 2002. Population-based adjustments in the distribution of parliamentary seats are based on Census data, and the 2026 Census will guide the next review. While delimitation can result in an increase or decrease in the number of constituencies, it does not alter the total number of seats in Parliament. As India's population grows, the number of Lok Sabha seats is expected to increase, benefiting the southern states in terms of absolute representation. For example, based on population projections, southern

states like Tamil Nadu are likely to see an increase in their parliamentary seats post-delimitation. Tamil Nadu, which currently holds 39 Lok Sabha seats, could see its share rise to 41. This represents a 5.12% increase in Tamil Nadu's seat share, not a decrease, as Stalin claims. Moreover, Stalin's opposition to delimitation is inconsistent with his party's stance on other issues. For instance, the DMK has not criticized the Congress party's slogan "Jitni Aabadi, Utna Haq," which calls for representation based on population. If population is an acceptable yardstick for reservations, why oppose its use for delimitation?



SEBI Under Scrutiny: A Call for Reform and Accountability

Recent developments surrounding the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the country's capital market regulator, have raised significant concerns about its credibility and ability to effectively regulate the stock market. On one hand, former Finance and Revenue Secretary Tuhin Kantana Pandey took over as SEBI's chairperson. On the other, a special court in Mumbai directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau to file a First Information Report (FIR) against Pandey's predecessor, Madhabi Puri Buch, and other officials, regarding alleged stock market fraud and regulatory violations dating back to 1994. The case revolves around the fraudulent listing of a company on the stock exchange, allegedly facilitated by authorities at the time.

Though Buch was SEBI chairperson years after the alleged fraud occurred, the court's directive highlights concerns about inaction by law enforcement and regulatory authorities over the years. The failure of SEBI and other agencies to

address the matter earlier has now triggered a judicial intervention, which calls for a thorough investigation into whether Buch ignored or mishandled complaints related to this historical case. This is a serious issue that requires immediate attention to preserve the integrity of the regulator.

Buch had previously faced another controversy when the now-defunct US short-seller firm, Hindenburg Research, accused her and her husband of having stakes in offshore entities allegedly linked to the Adani Group, a matter that was under SEBI's scrutiny at the time. This accusation triggered calls for her resignation, with critics citing a potential conflict of interest. Although Buch managed to weather the storm and continue in her role, the damage to SEBI's reputation was undeniable. These controversies have cast a long shadow over SEBI, undermining investor confidence and tarnishing its image as an impartial and trustworthy regulator.

Haleem hopping in Hyderabad why Ramzan is worth every sleepless night in this Telangana city

When Ramzan begins in Hyderabad, a distinct transformation takes place across the city, particularly in its food culture. While the religious observance of fasting is at the heart of the month, it's the evolving food scene that attracts people from all walks of life. The city's gastronomic offerings gain an entirely new dimension, becoming the main attraction during this holy month.

Haleem, the iconic dish of Hyderabad during Ramzan, is undoubtedly the most celebrated food of the season. This meat-lentil dish, which originated in the 1940s at Irani cafes,



has now become a culinary obsession. Despite its increasing price, with mutton Haleem now costing nearly Rs 300, it remains a favorite for many. The tradition of "Haleem hopping," where

people visit different restaurants to sample and compare versions of the dish, has become a popular activity. Irani restaurants like Grand Hotel and eateries in the Old City, such as Nayab Ho-

stel, are among the hotspots for Haleem enthusiasts.

However, in the last decade, the Ramzan food culture in Hyderabad has expanded beyond Haleem. Dishes like Marag (creamy mutton stew) and Pathar Ka Gosht (mutton cooked on stone slabs) have also gained significant popularity. These dishes, which were once hard to find, are now a staple at roadside stalls that emerge during Ramzan, especially in the bustling Old City. The crowds that gather around these stalls are a testament to how food brings people from all parts of the city together, including those who

might never have ventured into the crowded streets before.

The Old City, especially around Charminar, becomes a maze of food stalls and eateries during Ramzan nights. It's no longer uncommon to find people, regardless of their religion, enjoying the vibrant food scene. The atmosphere is electrifying, with both locals and IT professionals from newer parts of the city joining the late-night food tours. This surge in visitors is partly due to the government allowing establishments to stay open all night, making late-night strolls to Charminar a must-do for food lovers and

tourists alike.

Sehri, the pre-dawn meal before fasting, also adds to the unique culinary experience of Ramzan. While dishes like Biryani and Haleem are more commonly associated with Ramzan, Sehri offers a different menu with options like Khichdi Khatta-Kheema and a variety of kebabs, giving visitors a taste of traditional household meals. For many, the night isn't complete without a cup of Irani Chai at Nimrah Café, just outside Charminar. Whether Muslim or non-Muslim, the food scene in Hyderabad during Ramzan is an experience cherished by all.

Why the Death of a Nepali Student in Odisha Should Be a Wake-Up Call

The tragic death of a 20-year-old Nepali student at KIIT (Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology) University in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, has sparked not only outrage but also serious diplomatic concerns between India and Nepal. The incident on February 17 led to protests by over 500 Nepali students at the university, who were reportedly mistreated and forcibly removed from the campus. This alarming situation escalated when Nepal's Prime Minister, K.P. Sharma Oli, took to social media, demanding action from the Indian government and the Nepalese embassy, ultimately leading to the reversal of the eviction decision. This incident raises crucial

questions about India's treatment of foreign students, particularly from its neighboring countries like Nepal, with whom it shares deep cultural and historical ties. The unfortunate events also highlight the need for India to address its foreign student policies more effectively, as failing to do so could risk alienating a neighbor at a time when India is working to counterbalance China's growing influence in the region.

The turmoil triggered significant backlash in Nepal, leading to an official warning that Nepal would stop issuing No Objection Certificates (NOCs) to students wishing to study in India unless the situation was resolved fair-

ly. The Nepalese National Human Rights Commission called for an investigation into the student's death, citing allegations of negligence and mistreatment. In response, Prime Minister Oli suggested that Nepalese students should consider pursuing higher education in China instead of India.

Nepal has traditionally sent a large number of students to India for higher education due to geographical proximity and cultural familiarity. The incident at KIIT, however, risks pushing these students—and others from neighboring countries—towards alternative destinations like China, which could have long-term consequences for India's educational

and diplomatic ties.

The KIIT case is far from an isolated incident. Foreign students, particularly those from Africa and Northeast India, have repeatedly faced discriminatory treatment and racism in India.

This not only damages India's reputation but also complicates bilateral relations with other countries. Stereotyping and mistreating students based on region, religion, or culture can have severe political and diplomatic repercussions.

Prime Minister Oli's suggestion to pursue education in China reflects a shift in Nepal's diplomatic stance. His government has already distanced itself from India by opting to visit China first



during his tenure and signing on to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in December 2024. This move signals a growing strategic shift in Nepal's foreign policy, with potential implications for India-Nepal relations in the years to come. India has long been a hub for foreign students, offering an affordable education system with relatively high stan-

dards compared to Western institutions. However, incidents like the one at KIIT highlight significant gaps in how Indian institutions address the welfare of foreign students. The government's silence on the issue is concerning, and there needs to be a stronger institutional framework to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of foreign students.



Kamal Haasan accuses BJP of creating "Hindia", Opposes delimitation and Hindi Imposition

TPN Correspondent | Chennai

Actor-politician Kamal Haasan has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of trying to create a concept of "Hindia" by imposing Hindi on non-Hindi-speaking states, a move he argues undermines federal principles. Haasan, leader of the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM), made these remarks while attending an all-party meeting convened by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin. The meeting primarily focused on issues related to the Centre's proposed delimitation exercise and the three-language formula under the National Education Policy (NEP).

Haasan strongly opposed the Centre's push for the three-language formula, which includes Hindi as a compulsory language alongside regional languages. He said, "They are creating Hindia. Whatever decision taken by the Centre will not be in favour of non-Hindi-speaking states. This decision, which is against federal principles, is unnecessary." The three-language formula has sparked controversy in Tamil Nadu, where many fear it is an attempt to impose Hindi on the state, disregarding regional linguistic diversity.

The actor-politician also pointed out the deep-rooted linguistic pride among Tamilians, stating, "Tamilians have lost their lives for a language. Don't play with those things. Tamilians, even children, know what language they need." His comments resonate with the long-standing cultural and linguistic sensitivities in Tamil Nadu, where there is a strong sentiment against imposing Hindi as a dominant language.

Haasan further criticized the proposed delimitation exercise, which aims to adjust parliamentary constituencies based on population. He questioned the need for such changes, asking, "Why are they repairing something that is not broken? Why are they sending democracy to the workshop for repair?" His concerns reflect fears that southern states, including Tamil Nadu, might lose seats in Parliament due to successful population control measures. During the meeting, Chief Minister Stalin echoed these concerns, suggesting that the delimitation exercise should be based on the 1971 Census for the next 30 years.

S Jaishankar Arrives In London, Holds Bilateral Talks With UK PM

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

India and Belgium are working towards finalizing a defence agreement by the end of this year to enhance cooperation between their armed forces and strengthen defence industrial collaboration. This announcement was made by Belgian Defence Minister Theo Francken on Tuesday during a media briefing in New Delhi.

Francken, alongside Belgian Foreign Minister Maxime Prévot, was part of a delegation led by Princess Astrid, which met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. During the briefing, Francken described the agreement as a "very big step" towards establishing structural cooperation between the two countries' armed forces and creating a framework for collaboration between their defence industries.

Prime Minister Modi proposed the formation of a task force to expedite the process, urging both sides to finalize the agreement as soon as possible. "Your prime minister asked us to form the task force here in New Delhi and in Brussels to conclude the agreement before the end of the year," Francken



shared. In addition, Belgium plans to appoint a defence attaché at its embassy in New Delhi, which will serve as a point of contact for India's military and defence industries.

The proposed defence agreement is expected to boost cooperation between India and Belgium in various sectors, including defence technology, military training, and defence industry collaboration, aligning with both nations' shared interests in regional and global security.

Francken emphasized the importance of mutual growth in defence capabilities between the two nations. He noted that both countries could learn from each other in terms of military technology, and he reiterated the need for "peace through strength" in today's geopolitical landscape.

Foreign Minister Prévot highlighted the evolving global situation, mentioning the shifting policies of the U.S. administration. He stressed the need to strengthen ties between Belgium and India, calling India a powerful democracy and emphasizing the importance of reinforcing their bilateral relations.

The proposed defence agreement is expected to boost cooperation between India and Belgium in various sectors, including defence technology, military training, and defence industry collaboration, aligning with both nations' shared interests in regional and global security.

Accused seen dragging suitcase with Congress worker's body inside

- CCTV footage shows accused hauling suitcase on deserted road
- Victim Himani Narwal was allegedly strangled by a friend over a dispute
- Accused arrested; police investigating monetary angle in the murder

TPN Correspondent | Haryana

Days after Congress worker Himani Narwal was found murdered and stuffed inside a suitcase, chilling CCTV footage has surfaced showing the accused dragging the luggage on a deserted road.

The footage, recorded at 10:16 pm on February 28, shows a masked man hauling a hard-shell black suitcase. The body of Narwal, who was in her late 20s, was found near the Rohtak bus stand on Saturday. The accused, Sachin, believed to be a friend of the victim, was arrested earlier today. Police say he allegedly strangled Narwal with a mobile phone charger after a heated argument. Additional DGP K K Rao



stated that there was a monetary issue between them, but the exact

details are yet to be confirmed. "After strangling her, Sachin took

her jewellery and laptop, rode her scooter to Jhajjar to hide these items, and later returned to her home," said Mr Rao. He then stuffed her body into a suitcase, took an auto-rickshaw, and dumped the bag near the Sampla bus stand to mislead investigators.

Narwal was cremated on Monday evening after her family initially refused to perform the last rites until the accused was arrested. Former Haryana Chief Minister Bhopinder Singh Hooda spoke to Rohtak's Superintendent of Police regarding the investigation. Congress MLA BB Batra described Narwal as an active party worker and demanded strict punishment for those responsible for her murder.

'Defer delimitation exercise indefinitely,' Vijay tells union government

TPN Correspondent | Chennai

Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) President and actor Vijay on Wednesday strongly opposed any move to reduce Tamil Nadu's representation in the Lok Sabha based on population growth. He called for the number of seats in the Lok Sabha to be frozen indefinitely at 543, based on the 1971 Census figures, arguing that any changes that would lead to a reduction in the representation of Tamil Nadu and other South Indian states would be seen as "punishment."

Vijay's statement comes ahead of an all-party meeting chaired by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to discuss the issue. He emphasized that if South Indian states were to lose seats while states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar gained more due to population, it would be unfair. "Tamil Nadu and other South Indian states have invested heavily in education and population control measures over the past 50 years. A reduction in seats for these states would only punish them," Vijay said.

The actor-politician also strongly opposed using population alone as the basis for delimitation, pointing out that it was a flawed approach. He noted that the new Parliament building has seating arrangements for 888 members, which he believes suggests that the intention is to increase the number of Lok Sabha seats. Vijay stressed that increasing the number of MPs was not a pressing issue for ordinary citizens and that it should not be a priority.

Vijay argued that the number of Lok Sabha seats should be frozen, as the current population-based representation system has not seen



any changes in the last 50 years. He further stated that not all 543 MPs even have the time to ask questions in Parliament, proving that more seats are not necessarily needed.

Vijay also raised concerns over the appointment of Election Commissioners, suggesting that their selection process should be more transparent and carried out with consensus to ensure free and fair elections. He criticized the Centre for unilaterally choosing Election Commissioners and questioned the fairness of the process. In a political dig at the BJP, Vijay said that this issue would reveal which parties truly stand with the people of Tamil Nadu.

NDA govt ended Hindu-Muslim riots in Bihar: Nitish Kumar

TPN Correspondent | Bihar

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday asserted that his NDA government had successfully put an end to frequent Hindu-Muslim clashes in the state. Speaking during a debate on the motion of thanks to the governor's address, Kumar highlighted the government's measures, including the fencing of graveyards and bringing perpetrators of communal riots to justice, as key steps in improving law and order in Bihar.

Kumar, who is seeking a fifth consecutive term in office during the upcoming assembly elections, began his address by reminiscing on Bihar's law and order situation prior to the NDA's rise to power in 2005. He stated, "Before we came to power in 2005, the law and order situation was so pathetic that people feared for their safety." His remarks aimed to emphasize the drastic improvements made under his administration, particularly in terms of restoring peace and security in the state.

The chief minister claimed that the proactive steps taken by his government, including efforts to address communal tensions and the installation of security measures, had ensured a decline in religious violence. He specifically cited the fencing of graveyards, a step that was perceived as a preventive measure to curb the illegal encroachment of these sites, and the prosecution of those involved in past communal riots as significant actions that contributed to improved peace and stability in Bihar.



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However, as Kumar continued his speech, opposition members began raising angry slogans, challenging his assertions about the law and order situation. The tension in the assembly underscored the deep political divisions over the state's governance, with opposition leaders questioning the effectiveness of the government's policies and leadership.

With assembly elections looming later this year, Kumar's remarks are likely to play a significant role in shaping the discourse around law and order and communal harmony in the state.

Trump Announces Reciprocal Tariffs on India and Other Nations

- reciprocal tariffs on India and others from April 2.
- Targets high tariffs on US exports, India's 100% auto tariff
- Move escalates trade tensions, impacting economic relations

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

US President Donald Trump has reiterated his criticism of what he calls the "very unfair" tariffs imposed by India and other countries and announced plans to impose reciprocal tariffs on these nations, effective April 2. Trump's statement was made during his address to a Joint Session of Congress, marking the first of his second term.

Trump pointed to nations like India, China, and the European Union, which he claims have imposed significantly higher tariffs on US exports than the US charges in return. "Other countries have used tariffs against us for decades, and now it's our turn to start using them against those other countries," Trump declared. He further criticized India, saying, "India charges us auto tariffs higher than 100 percent."

Echoing his stance on inequitable trade policies, Trump reiterated that the United States would soon implement reciprocal tariffs on countries, including India and China. He noted that during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington, he made it clear that India would not be exempt from the new tariff measures. "Nobody can argue with me on this," Trump added confidently.

The new policy, set to take effect on April 2, will impose tariffs on imports from foreign



countries that match the tariff rates those countries impose on US exports. Trump emphasized the principle of reciprocity, stating, "Whatever they tariff us, other countries, we will tariff them. That's reciprocal – back and forth."

Trump's remarks come after the US administration imposed tariffs on imports from Mexico, Canada, and China, citing issues like illegal immigration and drug traffick-

ing. These moves have been met with international criticism, including from Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Trudeau accused Trump of trying to cripple Canada's economy while also "appeasing" Russia over its actions in Ukraine.

The new tariff measures are expected to escalate global trade tensions and may have significant implications for international economic relations.



Very dumb thing to do: Trudeau after US imposes 25% tariffs

TPN Correspondent | Canada

In response to the U.S.'s recent decision to impose new tariffs, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has expressed strong criticism, calling the move "a very dumb thing to do." Speaking to Canadians, Trudeau stated that while it's not common for him to agree with the Wall Street Journal, he found it necessary to acknowledge their viewpoint on the matter. "Donald, they point out that even though you're a very smart guy, this is a very dumb thing to do," said Trudeau in his speech.

The prime minister's remarks came just a day after Canada retaliated with its own import taxes in response to the U.S. tariffs. Trudeau emphasized the negative consequences of the tariff escalation, particularly the impact it would have on the relationship between the two neighboring countries. He also highlighted the broader geopolitical implications, stressing that the ongoing dispute was precisely what global adversaries wanted to see: two close allies fighting each other.

The controversy over tariffs marks the latest chapter in the tense trade relations between the U.S. and Canada. The U.S. tariffs, which are part of broader efforts by President Donald Trump to impose stricter trade measures on various nations, have drawn sharp rebukes from Canadian officials. Trudeau's comments reflect a broader sentiment in Canada, where leaders are expressing concern that the trade conflict could harm both economies and their long-standing partnership.

Trudeau's speech came in the presence of key ministers, including Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly, Finance Minister Dominic LeBlanc, and Public Safety Minister David McGuinty, who are all working to navigate the ongoing trade tensions. As both countries continue to grapple with the new tariff measures, the prime minister remains adamant that the issue can be resolved through diplomacy and cooperation, rather than escalating hostilities.

Hardest Part Is.. : Sunita Williams Discusses Unexpectedly Long Space Stay

NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore have been aboard the International Space Station (ISS) since June 2024, initially arriving on a Boeing Co. Starliner spacecraft for a test flight. Their mission, which was intended to last about a week, turned into an unexpectedly extended stay due to technical difficulties with the Starliner. As a result, NASA declared it too risky to bring them back home on the same craft, leaving the astronauts in space for what has now been almost 10 months.

The pair are now set to return to Earth in March 2025 on a SpaceX mission, but their prolonged time in orbit has drawn significant attention. While the extended stay has led to political commentary from figures like former President Donald Trump and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk, both Williams and Wilmore have downplayed the impact of politics on their mission.

Wilmore dismissed political claims, stating, "The words they said, well, that's politics... From my standpoint, politics has not played into this at all." He further explained that there was little information on any potential offers to return them to Earth earlier, con-



trary to Musk's claims of offering to bring them back sooner.

In response to Musk's suggestion that the ISS should be retired early, Williams emphasized that the station was still performing at its best. "We're actually in our prime right now," she said, adding that discontinuing the ISS ahead of its planned 2030 retirement would not be the right decision.

However, while both astronauts have shown remarkable resilience, Williams acknowledged that the most challenging aspect of their extended stay has been the uncertainty for loved ones back home. "I think the hardest part is having the folks on the ground have to not know exactly when we're coming back," she said, highlighting the emotional toll the delay has caused for their families.

If war is what US wants, we're ready: China says fentanyl 'flimsy excuse' to raise tariffs

TPN Correspondent | Beijing

China has strongly criticized the United States' decision to raise tariffs on Chinese imports, calling the fentanyl issue a "flimsy excuse" to justify the tariff hikes. In a statement posted on social media platform X, the Chinese Foreign Ministry rebuffed Washington's claims that China has not taken adequate steps to combat the fentanyl crisis, stressing that the U.S. is solely responsible for the situation within its borders.

The Chinese government emphasized that, contrary to U.S. accusations, Beijing had made significant efforts to help tackle the fentanyl problem. However, these efforts, according to the ministry, have not been acknowledged by the U.S. Instead, China claims that Washington has used these actions as a pretext to escalate tariffs, viewing it as a form of blackmail and punishment for China's cooperation. "We have taken robust



steps to assist the U.S. in dealing with the issue," the statement read. "But the U.S. has smeared us and used pressure tactics, which will not resolve the problem."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry further stressed that the approach of coercion, threats, and pressure would not work on China. "If the U.S. truly wants to solve the fentanyl issue, the right approach is to consult with China and treat each other as equals," it added. The ministry warned that the U.S. was miscalculating by resorting to maximum pressure tactics.

In a response to the U.S. tariffs, the Chinese Embassy in Washington warned that Beijing is prepared for any conflict, whether trade, tariff, or otherwise. "If war is what the U.S. wants, be it a tariff war or any other type of war, we are ready to fight till the end," the embassy posted.

The tensions stem from the recent increase in U.S. tariffs on Chinese imports, rising from 10% to 20%, following accusations that China has not done enough to prevent fentanyl shipments from entering the U.S.

Bangladesh got 'no official response' from India on Hasina's extradition request: Yunus



TPN Correspondent | Dhaka

Bangladesh's interim government Chief Adviser, Muhammad Yunus, has revealed that Dhaka sent formal letters to India requesting the extradition of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, but received no official response from New Delhi. Yunus, in an interview with UK-based Sky News, asserted that Hasina would face trial for "crimes against humanity" in Bangladesh, with the state-run BSS news agency reporting his statements.

Hasina, 77, fled Bangladesh on August 5 last year amid a massive student-led protest that led to the collapse of her 16-year rule under the Awami League. Following her departure, the Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) issued arrest warrants for Hasina and several of her close associates, including former ministers, military officers, and civil officials, accusing them of crimes against humanity and genocide.

Yunus emphasized that Hasina, along with her family and associates, would face trial either in person or in absentia, even if she remains in India. Despite Bangladesh's formal communication to India, Yunus confirmed that the Indian government had not responded officially to the extradition request. Last year, India acknowledged receiving a "note verbale" from the Bangladesh High Commission but refrained from commenting on the matter. The accusations against Hasina involve her use of security forces and police to orchestrate the abduction, torture, and murder of hundreds of activists. However, Hasina denies the allegations, claiming political persecution. Yunus also criticized the "House of Mirrors," a secret jail where detainees were allegedly tortured and murdered, calling it "the ugliest thing" he had ever seen.

After Ten Days of Decline, Markets Bounce Back: Tariff Optimism Fuels Rally, Sensex +740, Nifty +254

The ten-day losing streak has come to an end. Domestic markets gained heavily on Wednesday. They surprised investors with a spectacular rally. Despite mixed signals from the international community, our benchmark indices started with a gap-up. The US government said that Trump would consider reducing tariffs on Canada, Mexico and China, and the dollar's value fell. On the other hand, investors bought on the expectation that the US Fed would cut interest rates and valuable shares were available at attractive prices. They invested in metal, media, tourism, PSE and PSU bank shares. In total, Nifty rose by 254 points and Sensex by 740 points.



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The BSE Sensex, which closed at 72,989 in the previous session, opened at 73,005 on Wednesday. It touched an intraday low of 72,894. It reached an intraday high of 73,933. It finally closed at 73,730 with a gain of 740 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 22,073, reached a low of 22,067 and a high of 22,394. It rose by 254 points in total and closed at 22,337. The Nifty Bank rose by 244 points to settle at 48,289.

In the Nifty50, 46 companies gained while 4 lost. Metal, PSE, media, PSU bank, tourism, energy, defence, commodities and auto stocks were the top gainers. Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Adani Enterprises, Mahindra and Mahindra were the top gainers. Bajaj Finance, IndusInd Bank, HDFC Bank and Shriram Finance were the biggest losers.

Today, the market breadth has completely shifted in favor of buyers. Out of 2967 shares traded, 2461 gained. 436 lost. Shares of 14 companies reached 52-week highs while 124 reached 52-week lows. Shares of 290 companies simultaneously touched the upper circuit.

Ola Electric Company received an incentive of Rs. 73.7 crore under the PLI Auto Scheme. The Union Cabinet approved Rs. 3880 crore for the Jeevala Arogya Scheme. With this, shares of Hester Biosciences rose. Shares of Adani Group companies surged today. Shares of Adani Green and Adani Energy rose by 10%. Citi has given a buy rating to Lupin with a target price of Rs. 2260. 13 lakh shares changed hands in ICICI Bank. Jefferies maintains buy rating on Adani Wilmar with a target price of Rs 370. 10 lakh shares changed hands in Tata Steel. Avanti Feeds debuts in pet food market under the name Avanti First. Jindal Drilling shares rise 8% after Jindal acquires Pioneer for \$75 million. Motilal Oswal maintains buy rating on DCB Bank with a target price of Rs 150. Bharti Airtel has been given a buy rating with a target price of Rs 1950. MindTech India MD and CEO Anand Balakrishnan resigns from his posts. Rail Vikas Nigam gets letter of acceptance worth Rs 729 crore for a project. Jefferies gives buy rating to Varun Beverages with a target price of Rs 715

Tata Steel

Tata Steel is a global leader in steel production with diversified operations in India and internationally. It manufactures a broad range of steel products, serving sectors like automotive, construction, and consumer durables. Domestic infrastructure spending and urbanization. Global steel demand from emerging markets. Commodity price volatility and cyclical downturns in the steel industry. Long-term growth potential remains positive if infrastructure demand sustains and cost management initiatives continue.



conomic cycles. Positive, with long-term prospects linked to domestic infrastructure and export performance, though subject to cyclical fluctuations.

Adani Power

Adani Power is a leading private power generation company in India, primarily focused on thermal power but increasingly investing in renewable energy. It is part of the larger Adani Group, which has a diversified business model across energy, infrastructure, and logistics. Expansion in renewable energy capacity and modernization of existing plants. Government policies promoting increased power generation. Regulatory uncertainties and environmental compliance challenges. High debt burden impacting short-term profitability. Mixed in the near term due to market volatility and regulatory risks, but long-term growth will depend on successful transition to renewable energy and effective debt management.



NTPC

NTPC is India's largest power utility, predominantly operating in thermal power generation with a growing portfolio in renewable energy. It benefits from long-term power purchase agreements and regulated tariffs. Expansion into renewable energy projects. Government initiatives for increased power capacity. Regulatory changes and fuel price volatility. A defensive stock with stable long-term growth, bolstered by its transition to renewables.



JSW Steel

JSW Steel is one of India's top steel manufacturers with a significant presence in both domestic and export markets. It offers a diversified product mix, catering to infrastructure, automotive, and industrial sectors. Increased demand from infrastructure projects and a rebound in global steel markets. Strategic investments in technology and capacity expansion. Exposure to raw material price volatility and global eco-



JSW Energy

JSW Energy, part of the JSW Group, focuses on power generation through a mix of thermal and renewable energy sources. The company is actively expanding its renewable portfolio to capitalize on the global shift toward clean energy. Increased capacity in solar and wind energy. Government support for renewable energy initiatives. Volatility in fuel prices for thermal generation and project execution risks in renewable ventures. Positive long-term outlook as the company shifts more towards renewable energy, though near-term performance may be affected by market and regulatory dynamics.



RBI appoints Dr Ajit Ratnakar Joshi as new Executive Director



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi as its Executive Director (ED), effective from March 3, 2025. Dr. Joshi's extensive career spans over three decades, with significant expertise in the fields of statistics, information technology, and cyber risk management. Prior to his promotion, he served as the Principal Adviser in the RBI's Department of Statistics and Information Management.

Dr. Joshi has a rich background in the compilation of macroeconomic statistics and policy formulation. He has contributed to numerous committees and working groups that focused on these critical areas. Additionally, he has shared his knowledge as a faculty member at the Institute of Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT), Hyderabad, where he helped shape the next generation of banking and financial professionals.

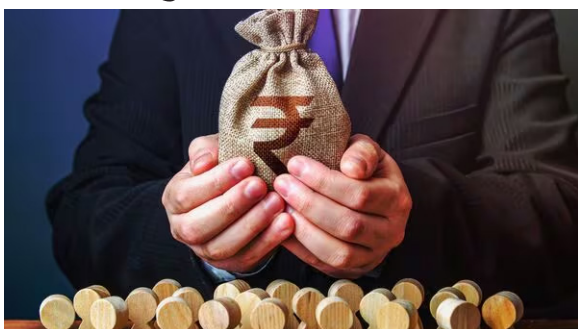
As Executive Director, Dr. Joshi will oversee the Department of Statistics and Information Management as well as the Financial Stability Department, two key areas crucial to the RBI's operational and regulatory framework. His leadership is expected to enhance the RBI's efforts in strengthening statistical analysis, improving financial stability, and addressing the evolving challenges in the financial sector.

Dr. Joshi holds a master's degree in statistics from Nagpur University, a Ph.D. in monetary economics from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras, and a Diploma in Development Policy and Planning from the Institute of Economic Growth in Delhi. Furthermore, he is a Certified Associate of the Indian Institute of Banking and Finance (CAIIB), which adds to his credentials in the banking and finance sector.

With his vast experience and academic qualifications, Dr. Joshi's appointment as Executive Director is poised to bring valuable insights and leadership to the RBI, particularly in areas crucial to the country's financial and economic stability. His appointment is seen as a positive move towards strengthening the RBI's capacity to address emerging challenges in the Indian financial system.

India's high-net-worth individuals grow 6% to 85,698, projected to hit 93,753 by THIS year

India has seen a notable rise in its population of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), those possessing assets over \$10 million, with the number increasing by six percent in 2024. According to Knight Frank's *Wealth Report 2025*, the number of HNWIs in India reached 85,698 last year, up from 80,686 in 2023. This growth highlights the country's expanding wealth landscape and economic potential.



The report projects that the number of HNWIs in India will continue to rise, reaching 93,753 by 2028, further solidifying the nation's position as a key player in global wealth creation. This increase in the HNWI population reflects India's long-term economic growth, rising investment opportunities, and the evolving luxury market. It is a sign of the country's growing prosperity, driven by strong economic fundamentals and an increasingly affluent elite class.

Shishir Bajjal, Chairman & Managing Director of Knight Frank India, emphasized that India's growing wealth underscores its economic resilience and long-term growth potential. This surge in wealth is not just about scale but also reflects a shift in the investment preferences of India's elite. The country's affluent individuals are diversifying their portfolios, investing in everything from real estate to global equities.

India's billionaire population has also seen significant growth. As of 2024, the country is home to 191 billionaires, an impressive rise from just 7 in 2019. Of these, 26 billionaires joined the ranks in the last year alone. The combined wealth of India's billionaires is estimated at USD 950 billion, ranking the country third globally, following the US (USD 5.7 trillion) and Mainland China (USD 1.34 trillion).

Looking ahead, Knight Frank predicts that India's influence in global wealth creation will only strengthen in the coming decade, driven by entrepreneurial dynamism, global integration, and emerging industries. This growth represents both the nation's economic vibrancy and its increasing prominence in the global wealth ecosystem.

SEBI Eases Nomination and Asset Transmission Rules

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced a new circular to streamline the nomination process and asset transmission procedures in the Indian securities market. The updated guidelines aim to provide greater flexibility and ease for investors, particularly those with single-holding accounts.



Under the new regulations, investors with single-holding demat accounts now have the option to opt out of nomination both online and offline. Depository Participants (DPs), rather than the Depositories themselves, will facilitate the online opt-out process for both new and existing investors.

Additionally, the new rules offer more flexibility for investors. Nominees can now be changed an unlimited number of times, providing greater control over the nomination process.

Transmission

of Assets Made Simpler

SEBI has also revised the transmission of assets rules for joint account holders. In the event of a joint account holder's death, the assets will automatically be transferred to the surviving joint holders without the need for fresh Know Your Customer (KYC) verification. However, the existing KYC must be updated to complete the process.

Surviving holders will also have the opportunity to update key details, such as their ad-

dress, mobile number, email, and bank account information during the asset transmission process.

Phased Implementation

The new rules will be implemented in a phased manner, starting from March 1, 2025, and are expected to conclude by September 2025. These changes are set to make the securities market more accessible, efficient, and investor-friendly.

Banksy's Reimagined The Singing Butler Sells for \$5.5 Million at Auction



A rare reimagining of Jack Vettriano's iconic painting "The Singing Butler" by street artist Banksy fetched nearly £4.3 million (\$5.5 million) at a Sotheby's auction in London on Tuesday. The sale of the piece, titled "Crude Oil (Vettriano)," came just a day after the announcement of the death of Scottish painter Jack Vettriano, aged 73. Vettriano's original "The Singing Butler" depicts a couple dancing on a windswept beach, accompanied by a butler and maid holding umbrellas. It became a commercial sensation after it was sold in 2004 for £744,800, setting a Scottish auction record. The image also went on to become the UK's best-selling print reproduction, outselling works by Monet and Van Gogh. Banksy's version, however, flips the romantic narrative into a stark environmental commentary. In "Crude Oil (Vettriano)," often dubbed "Toxic Beach," the artist adds a sinking oil tanker and two men in hazmat suits unloading toxic waste onto the beach. The piece critiques press-

ing issues like pollution, environmental damage, and the capitalist-driven destruction of nature. The artwork was sold by Mark Hoppus, bassist for the band Blink-182, who had purchased it years earlier. Hoppus, speaking at the auction, noted that his family had deeply appreciated the work but hoped to use some of the proceeds to support up-and-coming artists. He also pledged a portion of the sale's proceeds to Los Angeles-based medical charities and the California Fire Foundation, following the wildfires in the state earlier this year. Banksy's "Crude Oil (Vettriano)" was first exhibited in his 2005 show "Crude Oils: A Gallery of Remixed Masterpieces, Vandalism, and Vermin." Sotheby's described the work as "more relevant today than ever" due to the increasing frequency of environmental disasters. Meanwhile, tributes have poured in for Vettriano, whose work resonated with fans around the world, despite being rejected by some art critics.

PepsiCo vs Coca-Cola: The Latest Chapter in the Cola Wars



The rivalry between Coca-Cola and PepsiCo, two of the world's leading beverage giants, has flared up again with a new advertising clash. PepsiCo India recently launched its "Anytime is Pepsi Time" campaign, directly taking aim at Coca-Cola's "Half-Time" campaign in the context of the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy tournament. Coca-Cola's "Half-Time" campaign, which debuted a month ago across TV and digital platforms, positions the drink as the ideal beverage to enjoy during half-time breaks of cricket matches. In contrast, PepsiCo has cleverly flipped the script, urging consumers to enjoy Pepsi "any time" — emphasizing that no pause is necessary to savor the refreshment. Pepsi's latest campaign evokes nostalgia for its iconic 1996 "Nothing Official About It" ad campaign, which starred cricket legends like Sachin Tendulkar, Vinod Kambli, and Mohammad Azharuddin. At the time, Pepsi boldly took on Coca-Cola's official sponsorship of the cricket World Cup, with the

tagline suggesting that Pepsi was the drink for the people, not the official sponsors. "Nothing Official About It" became a cultural moment, and PepsiCo is clearly trying to channel that same effortless cool with its new campaign. The rivalry between Coca-Cola and PepsiCo is one of the most storied in advertising history. The 'Cola Wars' reached their peak in the 1980s, with Pepsi launching the famous "Pepsi Challenge" — a blind taste test where consumers preferred the sweeter taste of Pepsi over Coke. In response, Coca-Cola famously introduced "New Coke" in 1985, only to face backlash when consumers demanded the return of the original formula, which was rebranded as "Coca-Cola Classic." While both brands have histories dating back to the late 19th century — Coca-Cola launched in 1886 and Pepsi in 1893 — their rivalry continues to fuel creative marketing and bold advertising moves, with each trying to outdo the other in the battle for global dominance.

Scroll Smarter: Why Reddit is the Thinking Person's Social Media

Tired of political debates that go nowhere and movie discussions that end at 'mass or class'? Maybe it's time you discovered Reddit - where the internet actually thinks.



Yansi Gopisetty

Reddit is the internet's best-kept secret and a goldmine for curious readers who love a good debate. If you've never heard of it, don't worry - you're not alone. Reddit quietly operates as a massive global forum where people discuss everything, from serious political issues to bizarre conspiracy theories. Think of it as a WhatsApp group, but without the "Good morning" messages. Instead of endless reels and one-sided debates - Reddit offers real conversations where people actually think before they comment, well, most of the time. The platform



is made up of topic-specific communities called subreddits, where users post news, opinions, thoughts, questions, gossip, and memes while others respond with insightful or sometimes sarcastic comments. Now, why should you, a reader interested in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana politics, care about Reddit? Because this is where real, unfiltered discussions happen - without paid promotions, screaming debates, or viral propaganda that often

plague mainstream platforms.

If politics feels too heavy, Reddit also happens to be a paradise for cinephiles. Unlike YouTube comments that just say "goosebumps", Reddit's film communities break down every frame, dialogue, and hidden meaning in a movie. It's not just for politics and movies. Reddit has communities for everything under the sun - cricket debates, stock market trends, startup advice, space exploration,

memes, or even niche topics like conspiracy theories and historical mysteries, there's a subreddit for you. But since anyone can post, be wise in choosing communities, fact-check before believing anything, and remember: upvotes don't always mean truth. Fact-check before believing.

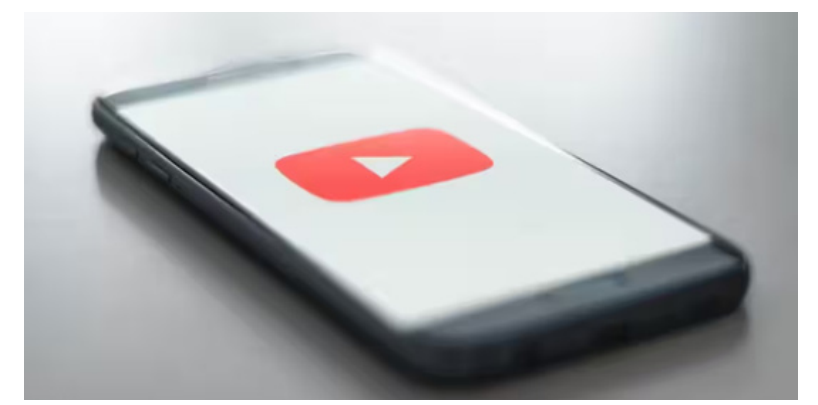
If you're tired of news that feels like a rerun and movie debates that never go beyond box office numbers, Reddit is your upgrade. It's where facts get more love than clickbait, where politics is discussed without panelists yelling, and where a simple movie thread can turn into a full-blown thesis, and one click can take you from serious policy talk to a heated debate on the best Maggi flavor. So jump in, explore, and stay curious—you might just find the most interesting conversations happening in the unlikeliest corners of the internet.

- How to navigate Reddit: Lurk for a while, read posts, and observe how discussions flow. Upvote smart discussions, ignore the noise.
- To get started, check out these subreddits: r/india for national issues, r/andhra_pradesh and r/hyderabad for local updates, r/IndiaCricket for cricket fans, r/tollywood for all things Telugu cinema.

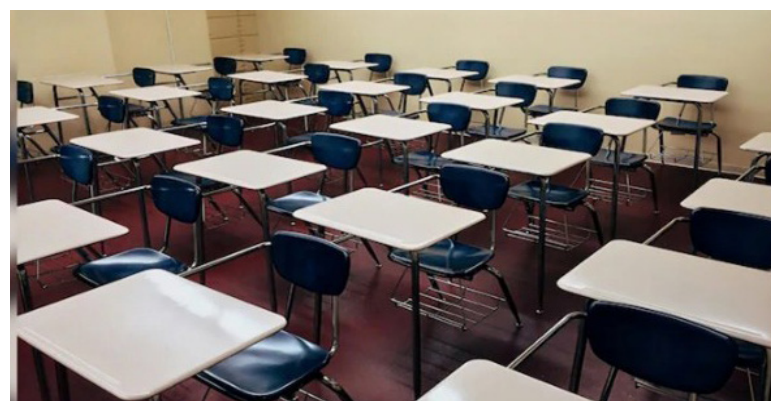
Social Media Giants Urge Australia to Reconsider YouTube Exemption for Children's Ban

Social media giants, including Meta Platforms (owner of Facebook and Instagram), Snapchat, and TikTok, have called on the Australian government to reconsider its decision to exempt YouTube from new laws that restrict social media access for children under the age of 16. The legislation, which passed in November, imposes some of the world's toughest restrictions on social media platforms, requiring companies to either prevent minors from logging into their services or face hefty fines up to AUD 49.5 million (\$31 million or roughly Rs. 269 crore). Under the current law, YouTube is exempted from the ban, as it is seen as a key educational tool and is the only platform permitted for children when part of a family account with parental supervision rights. However, Meta, along with TikTok and Snapchat, argues that YouTube should not be exempt, pointing out that minors using the platform are exposed to the same risks as other social media sites. YouTube, like its competitors, offers algorithmic content recommendations, social interaction features, and potential exposure to harmful content. Meta expressed its concerns in a blog post, stating that YouTube's exemption contradicts the stated purpose of the legislation. It called on the government to ensure that the law is applied equally to all social media services, urging a consistent approach across the industry. TikTok raised similar concerns, arguing that the decision to

exempt YouTube is "illogical, anticompetitive, and short-sighted." The company urged the government to ensure that no platform receives preferential treatment. Likewise, Snapchat echoed this sentiment, calling for fair and impartial application of the rules. Experts in mental health and extremism have also raised alarms about YouTube, arguing that the platform can expose children to addictive and harmful content, including material that can be just as dangerous as what is found on other social media sites. With increasing scrutiny on how social media affects young people, these companies are urging Australia to revise its approach to ensure a level playing field.



School In England Removes Mirrors From Toilets To Get Students Back In Class



A school in England has sparked controversy by removing mirrors from its toilets to address what it sees as an issue with students spending too much time in the restrooms. Grant Edgar, headteacher of William Farr Comprehensive in Welton, explained that the decision was made to prevent students from gathering in large groups and potentially delaying their return to class. According to Mr. Edgar, mirrors in the toilets often encourage students to spend excessive time there, which affects punctuality and creates discomfort for others who need to use the facilities. "Mirrors can encourage students to spend too much

time in toilets often in large groups," he stated, adding that this could cause some students to feel uncomfortable. The decision has sparked a variety of reactions from parents. Some have expressed frustration, with one parent commenting, "They're just mirrors, aren't they? We have mirrors at home, why can't we have them in school?" Others have called the move "silly," "a bit extreme," and "strange." Despite the criticism, Mr. Edgar defended the measure, emphasizing that the school had faced challenges during transition times and that the absence of mirrors would help keep students focused and on time for their lessons. For students who require mirrors for medical purposes, the school has made provisions, stating they can request a mirror at the reception. This is not the first time mirrors have been removed from school bathrooms for similar reasons. In January 2024, a middle school in North Carolina removed bathroom mirrors due to concerns about students using class time to create TikTok videos. In 2023, Christopher Whitehead Language College in Worcester replaced mirrors in girls' toilets with posters warning against the harmful effects of makeup. While the decision has generated debate, the school maintains that the goal is to help students make the most of their learning time and reduce distractions.

Champions Trophy: New Zealand Beats South Africa by 50 Runs, Set to Face India in Final



New Zealand secured a dominant 50-run victory over South Africa in a thrilling semi-final to reach the Champions Trophy final, where they will face India on Sunday in Dubai. Rachin Ravindra (108 off 101 balls) and Kane Williamson (102 off 94 balls) led the

charge with impressive centuries, helping New Zealand post a mammoth total of 362/6, the highest score in Champions Trophy history. Daryl Mitchell (49), Glenn Phillips (49*), and Michael Bracewell (16) contributed in the final 10 overs, adding 112 runs to the total.

In reply, South Africa, despite a fighting century from David Miller (100* off 67 balls) and fifties from Rassie van der Dussen (69) and Temba Bavuma (56), fell short, finishing at 312/9. Mitchell Santner was the standout bowler for New Zealand, taking 3/43 to help restrict the Proteas.

Achanta Sharath Kamal Announces Retirement After WTT Contender Chennai



Indian table tennis legend Achanta Sharath Kamal has announced that the upcoming WTT Contender Chennai, from March 25 to 30, will be his final tournament as a professional athlete. The 42-year-old, who made his international debut in Chennai, will conclude his illustrious career in the same city. Sharath Kamal has an impressive legacy, winning 13 Com-

monwealth Games medals, including six golds, and two Asian Games bronze medals. Despite his remarkable achievements, including participation in five Olympic Games, he has yet to win an Olympic medal. As the highest-ranked Indian at world number 42, Kamal expressed hope that the younger generation will carry forward his dream of Olympic success.

Rejuvenated Virat Kohli Ready to Conquer New Peaks



Virat Kohli's 84-run knock in India's Champions Trophy semi-final against Australia showcased his determination to overcome past challenges. While his century would have been his 25th in a chase, his measured approach was just as effective. Kohli tamed spinners, a long-standing Achilles' heel, and demonstrated

his readiness for more challenges. His disciplined batting against Australia's Adam Zampa and others highlighted his adaptability, particularly on a slow Dubai pitch. India head coach Gautam Gambhir praised Kohli's tactical approach, while Steve Smith acknowledged his exceptional chasing abilities. Kohli,

with 5999 runs in successful chases, continues to dominate ODI run chases, even surpassing 8000 career runs in the process. Kohli's focus on singles and patience, rather than aggressive strokes, helped settle his nerves and maintain control. His rejuvenation is clear—Kohli is back, more determined than ever to conquer new heights.

East Bengal vs FK Arkadag AFC Challenge League: Live Streaming Details



Indian football giants East Bengal will face Turkmenistan's FK Arkadag in the first leg of the AFC Challenge League quarter-finals on March 5, 2024. The match will take place at Salt Lake Stadium, Kolkata, starting at 7:00 PM IST. Despite being eliminated from the Indian Super League playoffs, East Bengal has been in excellent form

in the continental competition, topping Group A of the West region. However, they will face a tough challenge against FK Arkadag, the 2024 Turkmenistan champions, who went undefeated in their domestic league. While the match will not be televised in India, fans can catch the live streaming on the FanCode app and website.

Champions Trophy: Ravindra, Williamson Tons Propel NZ to 362/6 Against South Africa in Semis



Rachin Ravindra and Kane Williamson's centuries guided New Zealand to a formidable total of 362 for six against South Africa in the second semi-final of the Champions Trophy on Wednesday. Ravindra's 108 off 101 balls and Williamson's 102 off 94 balls, along with contributions from Daryl Mitchell (49) and Glenn Phillips (49*), helped New Zealand set a daunting target. Lungi Ngidi (3/72), Kagiso Rabada (2/70), and

Wiaan Mulder (1/48) were the standout bowlers for South Africa. With the winner of this match set to face India in the summit clash on Sunday in Dubai, New Zealand's strong batting display has set the stage for an exciting finale. **Brief Score:** New Zealand: 362/6 in 50 overs (Rachin Ravindra 108, Kane Williamson 102; Lungi Ngidi 3/72).

Teams: New Zealand: Santner (c), Young, Ravindra, Williamson, Mitchell, Latham (wk), Phillips, Bracewell, Henry, Jamieson, O'Rourke. South Africa: Bavuma (c), Ricketton, van der Dussen, Klaasen (wk), Miller, Markram, Mulder, Jansen, Maharaj, Rabada, Ngidi.

Special Olympics Bharat Sends Off 49-Member Contingent to World Winter Games

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Special Olympics Bharat organized a grand send-off ceremony for the Indian contingent heading to the 2025 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy, from March 8 to 15. The 49-member team, including 30 athletes and 19 support staff, was honored at the Major Dhyani Chand National Stadium in New Delhi. Dignitaries such as Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya, Special Olympics Bharat President Dr. Mallika Nadda,

and Executive Director Dr. VK Mahendru attended the event. Indian athletes will compete in six sports disciplines: Alpine Skiing, Cross Country Skiing, Floorball, Short-track Speed Skating, Snowboarding, and Snowshoeing, among 1,500 athletes from 102 countries. Minister Mandaviya and Dr. Nadda praised the athletes for their dedication and determination, wishing them success. The athletes were also gifted traditional Himachali woollen caps for good luck.



India's First Film Festival in Montana Celebrates Cultural Diversity



The Consulate General of India in Seattle, in partnership with the Montana World Affairs Council, hosted the first-ever 'Festival of Indian Cinema' in Missoula from March 2-4, 2025. The event, held at the University of Montana, featured screenings of popular Indian films like English Vinglish, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, and Raksha Bandhan. Over 500 students from 33 schools participated in the Montana Academic World Quest 2025, where India was the 'Theme Country.' Along with the film festival, interactive sessions on Indian classical dance, music, and digital payment platforms were organized. The event aimed to deepen students' understanding of India's cultural richness. The winning students will visit India later this year.

'Kanchana 4': Lawrence's Biggest Venture Yet!



Lawrence, who achieved a superhit with 'Kanchana' in 2011, followed it up with 'Kanchana 2' in 2015, which grossed 120 crores and became a blockbuster. As the franchise gained immense popularity, Lawrence increased the budget for each successive film. For 'Kanchana 4', a massive 65 crores have been allocated. This

time, Lawrence aims to make the film a huge success both in terms of content and box office collections. Pooja Hegde will be seen playing a 'deaf' character in the movie. Lawrence plans to release the film either by the end of this year or the beginning of next year, aiming for it to be his biggest hit yet.

'Agent' to Stream on Sony Liv from March 14



Akhil Akkineni's action-packed spy thriller Agent, directed by Surender Reddy, will be available for streaming on Sony Liv starting March 14. The film follows Ricky, a talented RAW agent assigned a dangerous mis-

sion by Colonel Mahadev, the leader of a secretive organization known as The Devil. As Ricky works covertly to complete the mission, former RAW agent Dharma, alias God, plots to destroy India, leading to unexpected

twists in the story. The movie stars Akhil Akkineni alongside Malayalam superstar Mammootty, Dino Morea, Sakshi Vaidya, Denzel Smith, and Vikramjeet Virk. Their performances add excitement to the

film. Written by Vakkantham Vamsi, with screenplay by Surender Reddy, Agent is produced by Ramabrahmam Sunkara, Ajay Sunkara, and Pathi Deepa Reddy under AK Entertainments and Surender 2 banners.

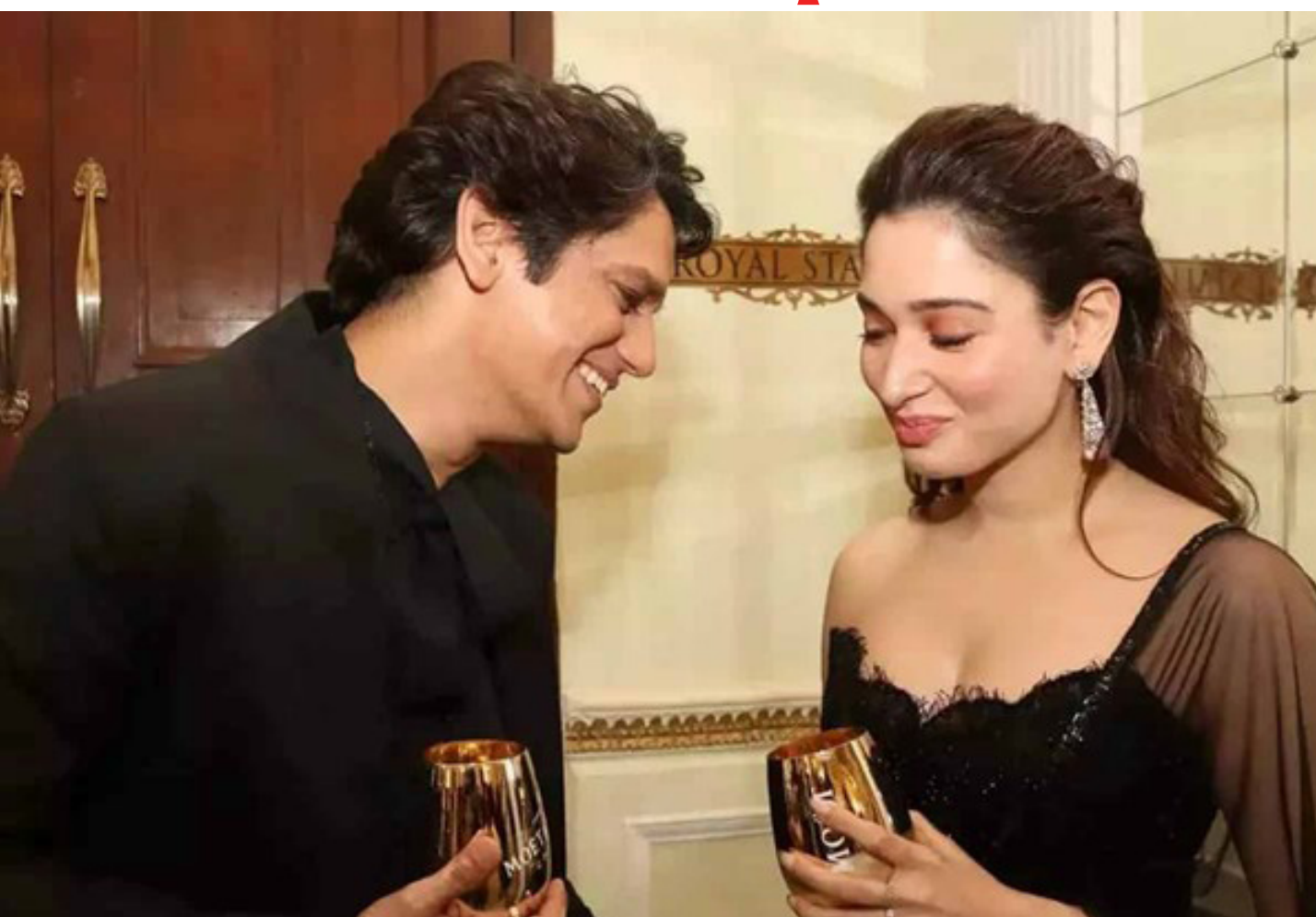
Nayanthara Requests Fans and Media to Drop 'Lady Superstar' Title



Actress Nayanthara, often referred to as 'Lady Superstar' by her fans, has requested the media and audiences to address her simply as Nayanthara from now on. In a heartfelt statement, she thanked her fans for their immense love and support throughout her career. While acknowledging that the title "Lady Superstar" was born from the affection of her fans, Nayanthara shared that it meant a lot to her. However, she humbly expressed

her desire to be called by her name, Nayanthara, as it holds a special place in her heart and represents who she is both as an actor and as an individual. She emphasized that while titles and accolades are meaningful, they could sometimes create a barrier between the stars and their work. Nayanthara reiterated that the bond of love with her fans is what truly matters, and she remains committed to entertaining them with her work in cinema.

Tamannaah and Vijay Varma's Breakup



Rumors have emerged surrounding the breakup of Tamannaah Bhatia and Vijay Varma, who had been dating for two years. Sources suggest their busy schedules and personal differences led to the split, though neither has confirmed it. An alleged reason for the breakup is Ta-

mannaah's desire to settle down, as she reportedly grew impatient with the relationship's pace. Speculation also suggests that her controlling nature created tension, causing frequent disagreements. The couple met on the sets of Lust Stories 2, where their on-screen chemistry

blossomed into a real-life romance. Despite the breakup, both actors remain focused on their careers, with Tamannaah working on Odela 2 and Vijay starring in Ul Jalool Ishq. Fans continue to await an official statement from the duo to address the rumors.

Yami Gautam Opens Up About Turning Down a Big-Budget Film



Bollywood actress Yami Gautam has revealed that she turned down a big-budget film due to her preference for content-driven cinema. In a recent interview, Yami shared that she prioritizes scripts that resonate with her, emphasizing that every professional decision is a conscious one. While she did not disclose the film's title, she explained, "I value the time I spend on projects that truly connect with me." Yami also expressed gratitude for the respect and appreciation she receives for her work, rather than just the film's scale. She further highlighted her instinctive approach to script selection, aiming for versatility and avoiding comfort in repeating past roles.