



**Weather Forecast**

**HYDERABAD**

**H 33° C**  
**L 25° C**

**VIJAYAWADA**

**H 35° C**  
**L 26° C**

**TIRUPATHI**

**H 36° C**  
**L 26° C**



# Trump to China: Tariff-ied and Isolated

- 125% slapped on China, 10% for others with a 90-day pause
- US targets Beijing alone as allies show restraint, markets cheer reversal
- US imposes 125% tariff on all Chinese goods, effective immediately
- 90-day pause on reciprocal tariffs for 75 other nations
- Wall Street surges as Trump softens stance on allies

TPN Correspondent | Washington

In a dramatic policy pivot, former US President Donald Trump has announced a steep 125% tariff on all Chinese imports, isolating Beijing from the rest of the world while pausing tariffs on 75 other nations for 90 days. The announcement, made via his social media platform Truth Social, marks a sharp escalation in Trump's ongoing trade confrontation with China and a rollback of earlier punitive duties on other countries. "Based on the lack of respect that China has shown to the World's Markets, I am hereby raising the Tariff charged to China by the United States of America to 125%, effective immediately," Trump wrote, adding that the US will no longer tolerate what he called "decades of robbery and currency manip-

ulation." Trump's move follows a backlash from global partners after his April 2 "Liberation Day" tariff announcement, which imposed duties on countries that maintained levies on US goods. While the initial move alienated key allies, Wednesday's announcement appears to aim at damage control — extending an olive branch to cooperative nations and zeroing in on China as the primary adversary. In his post, Trump praised the 75 nations that refrained from retaliation and engaged in negotiations with US officials. "More than 75 countries have called representatives of the United States to negotiate solutions. They respected my strong suggestions and did not retaliate," he said, noting that these countries will now face a reduced 10% tariff during the 90-day review period.

The US stock markets responded positively to the announcement. The S&P 500 surged 6% to 5,281.44, snapping a week-long losing streak triggered by the original reciprocal tariff rollout. Trump's latest move aims to realign global sentiment, which had started shifting toward China amid rising tensions with Washington. Analysts believe the tariff pause on most countries could now reverse that trend, pushing nations back into closer trade alignment with the US and isolating Beijing further. As the world's two largest economies lock horns again, all eyes will be on how China's leadership responds, particularly President Xi Jinping, who has so far matched Trump's aggression in trade matters. But with allies now back in Washington's corner, Beijing may find itself more cornered than before.

## NIA's First Statement After Tahawwur Rana Extradition

26/11 Mumbai attacks accused Tahawwur Rana extradited from the US to India

NIA says years of sustained efforts led to the extradition

US courts, including Supreme Court, rejected all of Rana's appeals

Rana accused of conspiring with David Headley and Pakistan-based terror groups



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Tahawwur Hussain Rana, one of the key conspirators in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, has been extradited to India from the United States and landed in Delhi on Wednesday. This marks a major development in India's pursuit of justice for the victims of the deadly attacks that killed 166 people and injured over 238. The National Investigation Agency (NIA), in its first official statement after the extradition, said that Rana's return to India is the result of "sustained and concerted efforts to bring the key conspirator behind the 2008 mayhem to justice." Rana, who was held in judicial custody in the US, had faced extradition proceedings initiated under the India-US Extradition Treaty. The process reached its final stage after the US District Court for the Central District of California ordered his extradition on May 16, 2023. Following the ruling, Rana filed multiple appeals—including in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, the US Supreme Court, and various petitions such as writs of certiorari and habeas corpus—all of which were dismissed. With full cooperation from the US Department of Justice, the extradition process culminated in Rana being flown to India on a special aircraft. The NIA, along with Indian intelligence agencies, the National Security Guard (NSG), Ministry of External Affairs, and Ministry of Home Affairs, worked in tandem to bring him back. Rana is accused of collaborating with David Coleman Headley alias Daood Gilani, as well as Pakistan-based terror groups including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Harkat-ul-Jihadi Islami (HUJI), in orchestrating the 26/11 attacks. The attacks targeted prominent locations in Mumbai including the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, and Nariman House. This extradition is considered a critical breakthrough in India's ongoing efforts to bring all perpetrators of the 26/11 attacks to justice.

## China warns Trump over tariffs

TPN Correspondent | International Desk

Amid renewed trade tensions, China has issued a strong warning to the United States, following President Donald Trump's announcement to raise tariffs on Chinese goods to 125 percent. Beijing stated on Thursday that it does not seek confrontation but will not hesitate to respond if pushed. Speaking to reporters, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said the new US tariffs "seriously damage the rules-based multilateral trading system" and threaten the stability of the global economic order. "This is a blatant act that goes against the will of the world and goes against the



Beijing says it won't sit back if US raises tariffs to 125%

whole world," Lin remarked, as quoted by Reuters. China clarified its stance, saying it is not interested in a fight, but made it clear it will not fear or tolerate repeated tariff threats from Washington. Lin added, "The US cause doesn't win the support of the people and will end in failure." "The Chinese government will not sit back and let the legitimate rights and interests of its people be deprived," he said, warning that Beijing will act firmly if provoked. The escalation signals another round of trade friction between the world's two largest economies, potentially disrupting global markets once again.

## PM Modi's 50th visit to Varanasi Today

To inaugurate and lay foundation stones worth ₹3884 crore

Public meeting at Mehdiaganj; over 50,000 people expected

Focus on major NH-31 underpass tunnel, colleges, flyovers, water schemes

TPN Correspondent | Varanasi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit his Lok Sabha constituency Varanasi for the 50th time on April 11, marking yet another milestone in his engagement with the holy city. The PM will land at the Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport at around 10 am and is expected to stay for approximately two and a half hours. Soon after arrival, he will head directly to Mehdiaganj Gram Panchayat for a public meeting, which

is being organised by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). According to BJP Kashi Zone president Dilip Patel, over 50,000 people have been invited to attend the event. "The Prime Minister of India and the famous Parliamentarian of Varanasi is arriving in his Lok Sabha Constituency this time for the 50th time," Patel stated. He further added that the PM would reach Mehdiaganj from Babatpur Airport after completing formalities. During his upcoming visit, the Prime Minister



is set to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for various development projects amounting to ₹3,884 crore. These initiatives span across critical infrastructure and civic development sectors, aimed at boosting con-

nectivity, education, and public amenities in the region. Among the key highlights is a major underpass tunnel on NH-31,



# How to apply for Ayushman Bharat in Delhi

- Registrations begin for senior citizens under Delhi's new AB-PMJAY rollout
- Delhi opens Ayushman Bharat registration from April 10
- Citizens aged 70+ eligible regardless of income
- Aadhaar-based e-KYC mandatory for application

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Rekha Gupta-led Delhi government has begun registration for the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) scheme starting April 10, providing access to cashless healthcare benefits for citizens above 70 years of age, irrespective of income. This rollout marks Delhi's formal integration into the Centre's flagship health insurance scheme. Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh announced the launch, stating that this move will extend ₹5 lakh annual financial cover per family for hospitalization to the city's economically weaker sections. He emphasized that the age as per Aadhaar card will be the sole criterion for senior citizens



applying in this phase. As part of the agreement signed with the National Health Authority (NHA),

Delhi joins 35 other states and UTs already implementing the scheme. **Step-by-step guide to apply for**

- AB-PMJAY in Delhi:**
1. Visit [mera.pmjay.gov.in](http://mera.pmjay.gov.in)
  2. Click on PMJAY for 70+ to be redi-

3. Enter your mobile number and the captcha code
  4. Verify using the OTP received on your mobile
  5. Select Delhi as your state
  6. Check eligibility — if eligible, your name will appear
  7. Click 'Apply' under the Action column
  8. Authenticate your Aadhaar via OTP sent to your Aadhaar-linked mobile
  9. Complete registration — a distinct Ayushman card will be issued
- This move follows the MoU signed on April 5 between the Delhi Government and the NHA. The agreement was signed by LS Changsan, Additional Secretary (MoHFW) and CEO of NHA, and Dr SB Deepak Kumar, Secretary, Delhi Health Department. Reacting to the development, CM Rekha Gupta said that the card distribution will begin from April 10, 2025, benefiting around 6.54 lakh families in Delhi. "The people of Delhi will now be able to avail benefits which they were deprived of for 11 years due to the inaction of the previous government," she said.

## City's power demand hits season's peak at 5,462 MW

Ashish Sood warns of potential 9,000 MW load



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

As temperatures continue to rise in the national capital, Delhi's electricity consumption has begun to soar, hitting the highest mark of the year so far. On Wednesday, the city's peak power demand reached 5,462 megawatts (MW) at 3:27 pm, according to the State Load Dispatch Centre (SLDC). This is a significant increase from Tuesday's peak of 5,029 MW. Delhi Power Minister Ashish Sood said that the power demand could touch an unprecedented 9,000 MW this season, urging all stakeholders to prepare accordingly. "In line with our focus on reliability, we've asked the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) to review all power purchase agreements to enhance procurement efficiency," he stated. To ensure that the rising demand does not disrupt electricity supply across the city, the Delhi government has initiated proactive measures. Sood announced the establishment of a joint control room in collaboration with Delhi Transco Limited and power distribution companies (discoms). This facility will allow real-time monitoring

of power load and quick responses during peak usage periods. Power distribution company BSES, which supplies electricity to nearly two crore residents in the capital, said it is fully prepared to handle the summer surge. The company has secured 2,100 MW of green energy, which includes 888 MW from solar, 546 MW from hydro, 500 MW from wind, and 40 MW from waste-to-energy sources. Additionally, around 197 MW will be sourced from rooftop solar panels installed by consumers in the BSES network. To strengthen supply capabilities, BSES has also entered long-term power purchase agreements and has plans to avail up to 500 MW through power banking arrangements. It is also leveraging cutting-edge technologies — including AI, machine learning, and real-time weather data from IMD-POSOCO — for demand forecasting and supply optimisation. As power demand is expected to climb further in the coming weeks, the city's infrastructure is being closely monitored to avoid outages and ensure a smooth electricity supply through the peak summer season.

## Delhi to revamp 1,400km roads in 2 years

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Delhi's Public Works Department (PWD) will repave and re-strengthen 1,400 kilometres of arterial roads within the next two years, announced PWD Minister Parvesh Verma on Wednesday. Speaking at a press conference, Verma said over ₹3,000 crore has been earmarked in this year's budget for the project. "We've allocated funds to upgrade over 400 km this year but aim to cover 600 km. The rest will be taken up next year. Our goal is to make all major roads in Delhi like new within two years," Verma said. According to the minister, the contractors responsible for redeveloped roads will also handle maintenance for five years. Any potholes during the first 2.5 years must be repaired free of charge. Verma also warned of penalties for prolonged delays in repairs and stressed the need for long-lasting



road quality. Work is already underway on around 250 km of arterial roads. Key stretches include parts of Ring Road, Outer Ring Road, Vikas Marg, Noida Link Road, Rani Jhansi Marg, Boulevard Road, Mehrauli-Mahipalpur Road, Mehrauli-Badarpur Road, Ravi Das Marg, Guru Govalkar Marg, and Kanjhawala Road.

**PWD minister says 600km to be redone this year alone**

Officials expect these works to be completed by July. However, officials cited weather and pollution-related restrictions as major challenges. "We get only 3-4 workable months a year due to monsoons, winters, and pollution-related bans. Bitumen doesn't work well in cold or wet conditions," said a senior PWD official. Due to high traffic volume, work can only be carried out at night. "Heavy vehicles are allowed entry after 11pm, and actual work starts around 1am. It must wrap up by 4-5am before morning traffic picks up. Work is also delayed due to permissions and VIP movement," the official added. The department has also identified 7,000 potholes and 200,000 square metres of patchwork across the city, with plans to complete all patching by the end of April.

## Centre clears ₹1,878 crore Zirakpur bypass

Bypass to ease traffic between Zirakpur and Chandigarh in two years

TPN Correspondent | Chandigarh

After over a decade of delays, the long-awaited Zirakpur bypass project has finally received the green signal. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the construction of the six-lane bypass on Wednesday. The 19.2-kilometre stretch, to be built at a cost of ₹1,878.31 crore under the PM Gati Shakti Master Plan, will connect National Highway-7 (Zirakpur-Patiala) with NH-5 (Zirakpur-Parwanoo), covering parts of Punjab and Haryana. The aim is to decongest the heavily trafficked Zirakpur-Chandigarh road by rerouting Himachal Pradesh-bound vehicles coming from Delhi, Haryana, Patiala and Mohali. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said this project is part of a larger plan to create a full Ring Road network to ease traffic in and around Chandigarh, Mohali, and Panchkula. Major traffic points such as Zirakpur-Patiala light point, Big Bazaar junction, Airport Road, and K-Area point are expected to benefit from the reduced congestion. The bypass will start from the Patiala-Zirakpur light point on NH-7, pass landmarks like McDonald's on the Ambala-Zirakpur road, and move through Peer Muchalla, Sanauli, Gazipur, Nagla, and Panchkula before merging with NH-5 at the Old Panchkula light point between Sectors 20 and 21.



From Panchkula's side, it will offer signal-free travel between Chandimandir Western Command headquarters and Mohali airport, eliminating the need to pass through Zirakpur. Though originally launched in 2013, the project was halted in 2014 due to legal disputes over land compensation. It was revived in November 2024 after the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) invited fresh bids. Construction is expected to be completed within two years after work is allotted. NHAI officials noted that rapid urbanisation in Zirakpur, Mohali, Panchkula, and surrounding areas like Dera Bassi, Kharar, Morinda, New Chandigarh, and Pinjore has significantly increased traffic in the region. The bypass is seen as a vital step in resolving the growing congestion.

In September 2024, during a Unified Metro Transportation Authority (UMTA) meeting chaired by UT Administrator Gulab Chand Kataria, NHAI presented the plan as a solution to Tricity's traffic troubles. New link to PGIMER from HP To further ease access for patients from Himachal Pradesh to PGIMER in Chandigarh, a four-lane road from Majri Chowk in Mullanpur to Baddi via Siswan is also being planned. At present, the Baddi-New Chandigarh route is a single road that often sees jams, especially with emergency hospital traffic. Both road projects form part of a broader strategy to decongest the Tricity area and improve connectivity across the region.

1st Page Cont..

## PM Modi's 50th visit to Varanasi Today

considered the most significant component of the visit. Additional projects include the upgradation of the airport area and its surroundings, establishment of new educational institutions such as a government degree college and a polytechnic, as well as the development of parks, drinking water schemes, a police hostel, and a new flyover in Maruwadi. These efforts underline the government's focus on holistic

regional development. PM Modi is expected to address the public at around 12:30 PM, with a speech likely to last around 20 minutes. The BJP has placed special emphasis on this visit, treating it as a significant milestone in the Prime Minister's relationship with Varanasi. Following the Varanasi leg of his tour, the PM is expected to head to Madhya Pradesh for another set of engagements.



# Rana Extradition a Diplomatic Win : Shah

Modi govt achieves what previous regimes couldn’t, says Home Minister

**TPN Correspondent | New Delhi**  
Union Home Minister Amit Shah has termed the extradition of Tahawwur Rana, a key accused in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, as a "big success" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government's diplomatic efforts. Without naming the Congress, Shah took a veiled swipe, stating that earlier governments under whose rule the attacks occurred failed to bring Rana back. "It is the responsibility of the Indian government to bring back all those who have misbehaved with the land and people of India under the law of the country. The return of Tahawwur Rana is a big success of the Modi government's diplomacy," read a post from Shah's office on social media platform X. Rana, a Pakistani-Canadian national, was convicted in the United States for supporting Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the terror group behind the 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed more than 174 people. He had filed an emergency plea with US Chief Justice John Roberts to halt his extradition, but it was denied by the Supreme



Court of the United States on April 7. The ruling stated, "The application for stay addressed to The Chief Justice and referred to the Court is denied." Rana is expected to stand trial in India for his alleged role in the attacks. A criminal conspiracy case against him was initially registered by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Delhi. The ongoing extradition pertains to this case. However, officials clarified that it remains to be seen whether the Mumbai Police will be able to seek his custo-

dy. "Only after examining the grounds of extradition will it be clear whether custody can be sought by the Mumbai Crime Branch," said a source. As of now, the Mumbai Police has not received any official intimation about Rana's possible transfer to the city for questioning or legal proceedings. Rana's extradition marks a major milestone for Indian authorities, who have long pursued his return for trial over one of the deadliest terror attacks in the country's history.

# Delhi govt cancels over 190 AAP appointments

**TPN Correspondent | New Delhi**  
In a sweeping move following the change in administration, the Delhi government has annulled at least 194 appointments made by the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) regime to various boards, committees, academies, and departments. The decision was formalised through an order issued by the services department on April 4. According to officials, these were largely political nominations — a routine reshuffling after a new government takes charge. The order states that appointments to at least 22 bodies, including high-profile institutions like the Delhi Jal Board, Animal Welfare Board, Delhi Haj Committee, Hindi Academy, Urdu Academy, Punjabi Academy, Sanskrit Academy, and Sahitya Kala Parishad, stand cancelled with immediate effect. "These appointments typically help a government implement its policies and vision. While some roles are reserved for subject experts, many are political, held by MLAs or their close associates," a senior official explained. "Once the administration changes, such positions are naturally reconstituted." The order, signed by Deputy Secretary (Services) Bhairab



Dutt, directs all departments under the Delhi government to carry out a similar review of appointments in their respective jurisdictions. Among those removed are notable AAP figures including former MLA Vinay Mishra, who was vice-chairman of the Delhi Jal Board; Preeti Tomar, wife of AAP leader Jitendra Tomar; and current MLA Ajay Dutt. Former MLAs Abdul Rehman and Haji Yunus, associated with the Haj Committee, were also removed. The order also names Gopal Rai, who served as chairperson of the Delhi Agriculture Marketing Board, and Gulab Singh, vice-chairperson of the Delhi Village Development

Board. Sanjeev Jha, who was vice-chairperson of the Maitili Bhojpuri Academy, also figures among the terminated appointees. Even environmental bodies like the Delhi Biodiversity Council and the CAMPA steering committee have seen their AAP-linked members removed. A senior official remarked that such institutions had become platforms for political placements under the previous regime, benefiting the party's own leaders. The government has now asked all departments to submit fresh proposals for reconstituting these bodies in line with the new administration's priorities.

# Parents continue protest against hike in school fees

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Parents across the national capital intensified their protests against the steep hike in private school fees on Wednesday, staging demonstrations outside prominent institutions like Indraprastha International School and Delhi Public School in Dwarka. The aggrieved parents demanded immediate government intervention and called for strict action against schools that had allegedly increased fees without requisite approvals. Speaking to reporters, a parent named Saurabh alleged that students were being denied access to classrooms due to pending dues. "My child is in Class 11 and for the last 21 days, students have been sitting in the library when they arrive at school because the demanded fees haven't been paid. Our demand is that the government should take over this school," he said. Another parent highlighted the in-

- Students made to sit in libraries over unpaid fees
- Political blame game intensifies in Delhi

consistent treatment of students. "My daughter sits in the classroom, but my son is made to sit in the library, even though both have paid the same fees. The school is demanding unapproved fees, and the matter is in court. We need a swift resolution," she added. On April 8, Delhi Education Minister Ashish Sood stated that action would be taken against private schools that raised fees without obtaining prior clearance. He cited the Supreme Court's ruling in the 2004 Modern School case, which mandates that any hike in school fees must be approved by the Directorate of Education. However, he blamed the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government for weakening the legal safeguards.

"The AAP government got this order dismissed in 2024 in the Delhi High Court," Sood said. He also announced that Chief Minister Rekha Gupta would lead investigations into any corrupt practices or under-the-table payments related to these fee hikes. Meanwhile, Delhi Assembly Leader of Opposition Atishi condemned the fee surges and alleged political collusion. "Parents across Delhi are panicking as private schools increase their fees by 30%, 40%, 50%, or even up to 80%. In the unbearable summer heat, parents are protesting outside school gates. Just yesterday, a woman fainted during a protest, but the school management did not respond," she said.



Atishi further alleged that on April 6, BJP Minister Ashish Sood held a meeting at his residence with private school owners. "They were assured that no strict action would be taken against them. Once the protests cool down, the government will formalize

the hike," she claimed. With legal, political, and social tensions mounting, parents are now pinning hopes on judicial clarity and decisive governmental measures to ensure fairness and transparency in school fee structures.

# Congress Bats for Quota in Private Education

“Those who cannot work for the party should take rest,” says Mallikarjun Kharge at AICC session



TPN Correspondent | Ahmedabad

In a significant move aimed at reinforcing its pro-social justice image, the Indian National Congress has pitched for extending reservation for OBCs, SCs, and STs to private educational institutions. The call came through the 'Nyay Path' resolution adopted at the AICC session in Ahmedabad, which also served as a platform for the party to launch a comprehensive attack

on the BJP-led central government. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, in a fiery address, accused the BJP government of systematically weakening constitutional institutions and promoting inequality. "We are fighting the second war of independence," he said, adding that unlike the past when injustice and communalism came from foreign rulers, the current government is driving them internally. He called on non-performing party workers to step aside, stating, "Those who cannot work for the party should take rest." The resolution accused the BJP government of policy failures in economy and foreign affairs and betrayal of farmers. It reiterated the party's commitment to a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP), MSP at 50% above cost, and decisive action to alleviate farmer debt. Highlighting the Congress's economic track record between 2004 and 2014, the resolution noted an average GDP growth of 8% per annum and the upliftment of 27 crore people from poverty. On foreign policy, the party accused the BJP government of prioritizing "individual branding

and vested interests" over national interest. It alleged that India was publicly insulted during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US, and raised concerns over reciprocal tariffs and the treatment of Indian migrants. The Congress called for inclusive, bipartisan consultations before concluding any major trade negotiations with the US. The resolution also flagged the occupation of Indian territory by China in Eastern Ladakh and the construction of the world's largest dam on the Brahmaputra, warning of severe repercussions for Assam and the Northeast. It voiced concern over radicalisation in Bangladesh and reiterated support for a two-state solution in the Middle East. Domestically, the Congress lashed out at the government for unemployment, inflation, weakening of PSUs, and economic inequality. It noted that nearly 30 lakh government jobs lie vacant and slammed the rising wealth disparity, with the richest 10% owning 70% of the country's wealth. It termed the hike in LPG cylinder prices and excise duty on fuel as burdens

on the common man, calling it a "loot" by an "extortionist government". The party also accused the BJP of discriminating against non-BJP ruled states and misusing institutions like the Election Commission. Rahul Gandhi, in his speech, lashed out at the RSS and BJP for attempting to control institutions and accused them of caste and religious discrimination. He cited the example of BJP leaders "purifying" a temple after a visit by Dalit leader Tika Ram Jolly and called the Waqf Bill an attack on constitutional freedoms. The party vowed to strengthen its organisation across states, especially Gujarat, and adopted a resolution titled 'New Gujarat, New Congress'. Leaders like DK Shivakumar, Sachin Pilot, and Bhupinder Singh Hooda expressed optimism about reviving the party from the grassroots level. As Congress prepares for upcoming elections, the session highlighted its intent to challenge the BJP with a renewed focus on justice, inclusion, and constitutional values.



# ‘Beti Badhao’ the next step for empowerment: CM Rekha Gupta

## DU shaped women leaders like Sucheta Kriplani and me, says CM

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Wednesday emphasized the need to move beyond the stages of protecting and educating girls, urging the country to now focus on enabling and uplifting them. Speaking at “Samanvay: Celebrating a 100 Years Legacy” at Indraprastha College for Women, Gupta launched a new call to action – ‘Beti Badhao’ – as the next chapter in the journey of women empowerment. “We have completed the journey from ‘Beti Bachao’ to ‘Beti Padhao’; now it’s time for ‘Beti Badhao’. Our mothers protected and educated us – now it’s our responsibility to help the next generation of girls to rise and

shine,” the Chief Minister said, drawing cheers from the audience. Reflecting on her own student leadership journey, Gupta spoke of her time as the Delhi University Students’ Union (DUSU) president. “DU introduced a common admission form for all colleges in 1996 when I was DUSU president. This culture at DU – where students, teachers, and administrators work together – has made it one of the finest institutions in the country and the world,” she said. She also paid tribute to the university’s long-standing contribution to nurturing women leaders. “From Sucheta Kriplani, the first woman chief minister of India, to me standing here as CM – this is DU’s journey,” Gupta stated, highlighting the insti-

tution’s historic role in shaping leadership among women. Encouraging the students in attendance to be confident and self-reliant, she added, “I request all girl students here to pledge to fight for themselves. Tum toh dariya ho, apna hunar jaanti ho, jis aur nikal jaaogi, raste bana logi,” she said, evoking a strong emotional response from the crowd. The event marked a celebration of Indraprastha College’s century-long contribution to women’s education and empowerment, with CM Gupta’s address underscoring the need for continued progress and leadership among young women.



## Fish market row erupts in CR Park

### Vendors say market came before temple; police probe video of threats

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Fish and meat sellers in Chittaranjan Park’s Market No. 1 continued business as usual on Wednesday under police watch, a day after a video surfaced showing two unidentified men allegedly threatening them for operating near a Kali temple. Speaking to media, vendors claimed the market existed before the temple and that they had even helped fund its construction. “My father started this shop in 1984. Fish is part of Bengali culture, and we’ve never had any issues till now,” said Dibyendu Das, a fish vendor. The two men, reportedly in saffron kurtas, allegedly confronted the sellers about 15 days ago. According to vendor Joy Deep Das, “They told us to move or they’d gather 100 people and chant Hanuman Chalisa outside our market.” He added that the shops

have valid licenses and have never faced such objections before. The incident has triggered concern in the local community. Sanjeev Bhat-tacharya, priest at the Kali temple, condemned the threats. Ashok Bose, vice president of the East Bengal Displaced Person (EBDP) Association — the top RWA body in CR Park — said outsiders instigated the incident. “Residents are disturbed and have expressed their disapproval on our community groups,” he said. The Delhi Police has since deployed plainclothes personnel to maintain order. A senior officer said the video appears “dated” and that an investigation is underway to identify the men involved. “We have not received a formal complaint yet, so no FIR has been filed,” said DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan. The controversy has also sparked political tension. Trinamool Congress



MP Mahua Moitra and the Aam Aadmi Party alleged links between the men and the BJP. The BJP denied the allegations and demanded immediate action against the accused. The market, developed by the Delhi Development Authority and managed by the municipal corporation, remains a cultural and commercial hub for the Bengali community in Delhi. Vendors maintain that such threats are unjustified and say they will continue their work peacefully.

## Elderly couple killed by speeding car in Swaroop Nagar

TPN Correspondent | North West Delhi

An elderly couple lost their lives after being hit by a speeding car while crossing the GT Karnal Road in Delhi’s Swaroop Nagar area on Wednesday morning. The tragic incident occurred around 8am under a foot overbridge as they attempted to cross the main carriageway towards Libaspur. Police identified the victims as Somdutt Nath (66) and Rampyari Nath (65), residents of Sindhi Colony in Swaroop Nagar. The couple was reportedly on their way to get their

Aadhaar card details updated when the accident occurred. According to officials, the driver of the Hyundai Creta, identified as Prince Giri, transported the injured couple to Fortis Hospital in Shalimar Bagh but left shortly after admitting them. The woman was declared dead on arrival, while her husband succumbed to injuries during treatment. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer-North), Nidhin Valsan, stated, “Our preliminary inquiry revealed that the couple was brought to the hospital by Prince Giri. There were no eyewitnesses at the hospital or at the

scene when police arrived. A case has been registered.” Giri, who was reportedly on his way to work from Narela, has not yet been arrested. Officials confirmed that he was driving at high speed when the accident occurred. Police retrieved the Aadhaar cards of the couple from their belongings and established their identity. Further investigation into the exact sequence of events is underway, and efforts are being made to question the driver and determine potential negligence or criminal liability.

## Air India Express pilot dies after flight from Srinagar to Delhi

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A pilot of Air India Express tragically passed away in Delhi on Wednesday shortly after operating a flight from Srinagar, airline sources confirmed. The pilot, who was in his late 30s, reportedly fell ill soon after landing at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi. Despite being rushed to a nearby hospital, he could not be saved and was declared dead. According to an airline spokesperson, the pilot’s death was due to a medical condition.



The exact cause has not been officially disclosed. “We deeply regret the loss of a valued colleague due to a medical condition. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and loved ones. We are extending all possible assistance to them as we all cope with this tremendous loss,” the airline said in an official statement issued on Thursday. While the identity of the pilot and further medical details remain undisclosed, the airline has urged the public and media to refrain from speculation. “We request all concerned to respect privacy at this time and avoid unnecessary speculation while we commit to assisting the relevant authorities in due process,” the statement added. The sudden loss has left the airline community in mourning, and colleagues have expressed shock over the untimely demise of the young pilot.

## Fire breaks out at grocery shop in Begampur market

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A fire broke out at a grocery shop in the Begampur main market area of Delhi on Thursday, prompting a swift response from the Delhi Fire Services. According to officials, nine fire tenders were rushed to the scene to control the flames. The incident caused panic among nearby shopkeepers and residents, but no casualties have been reported so far. The exact cause of the fire remains unknown and is currently under investigation. Firefighters managed to bring the blaze under control after several hours of operation.



“Teams reached the spot quickly and took immediate steps to douse the fire. Thankfully, there have been no reports of injuries or loss of life,” a Delhi Fire Services official said. Visuals from the site show

thick smoke billowing from the shop as fire personnel battled the flames. Authorities are continuing their inquiry to determine what triggered the fire. Further details are awaited.



# Grenade Attack on BJP Leader's House

## Two Arrested Accused Sent to Six-Day Police Remand



**TPN Correspondent | Jalandhar**  
The Jalandhar court on Wednesday remanded two individuals, arrested in connection with the grenade attack at BJP leader Manoranjan Kalia's residence, to six days of police custody. The two accused—Ravinder Kumar of Garha and his cousin Satish Kumar alias Kaka of Bhargo Camp—were presented in court under heavy security. Authorities have also seized the e-rickshaw used in the attack, reportedly owned by Satish. Police sources said the attack appears to be part of a larger conspiracy allegedly masterminded by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in collaboration with the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. Zeeshan Akhtar, a key figure in the gang and also wanted for the murder of former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique, along with

Pakistani gangster Shahzad Bhatti, are believed to be the principal conspirators aiming to incite communal tensions in Punjab. Two additional suspects have reportedly been detained in New Delhi, although senior officials have neither confirmed nor denied this development. "The accused arrested on Tuesday have been taken into police remand for six days. They will be grilled further for their contacts with the key conspirators," said Jalandhar Police Commissioner Dhanpreet Kaur Randhawa. Authorities have not ruled out possible links between the arrested duo and Pakistan-based Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) mastermind Harwinder Singh alias Rinda and gangster Happy Passia. Police say this latest attack points to a new trend—

handlers hiring trained professionals from outside Punjab rather than relying on local, untrained youth. Punjab has witnessed 16 grenade attacks in the past seven months, most of which targeted police installations. This, however, marks the first attack on a politician's residence. Notably, a grenade thrown at YouTuber Rozer Sandhu's home in March failed to explode, as revealed in a video showing the attacker being guided via video call on how to remove the pin. Meanwhile, former Punjab minister Bikram Majithia visited Kalia and called for a probe by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) into the rising grenade attacks in the state. "It is a serious law and order situation. The NIA or another central agency must investigate all 16 such attacks," he said.

## 'She Invited Trouble': Allahabad HC Grants Bail In Rape Case



**TPN Correspondent | Uttar Pradesh**

The Allahabad High Court, while granting bail to a man accused of rape, held the survivor "responsible" for the incident, stating that she "herself invited trouble." The order was passed by Justice Sanjay Kumar Singh, who commented on the woman's decision-making and her actions leading up to the alleged assault. According to the survivor's complaint, she met the accused at a bar in Delhi, where she consumed alcohol along with three of her female friends. She stated that the man insisted she accompany him to his house. As she was intoxicated and required support, she agreed to go with him to rest. However, instead of taking her to his residence in Noida as expected, the man allegedly took her to a relative's apartment in Gurgaon, where she claimed he raped her twice. Justice Singh observed that even if the

allegations are accepted as true, it appears the woman was equally responsible for the situation. "This Court is of the view that even if the allegation of the victim is accepted as true, then it can also be concluded that she herself invited trouble and was also responsible for the same," the judge stated. The court also referred to the survivor's medical examination, where the hymen was found torn, but the doctor did not give a definitive opinion on sexual assault. Justice Singh emphasized that the woman, an MA student, was capable of understanding "the morality and significance of her act," as outlined in her First Information Report (FIR). The controversial remarks have drawn attention, especially as the case continues to be under legal scrutiny. The High Court's comments have sparked debates on the framing of responsibility in sexual assault cases.

## Father Kills Daughter... Was Angry She Fled With Boyfriend To Delhi

**TPN Correspondent | Patna**

In a shocking incident from Bihar's Samastipur district, a 25-year-old woman was allegedly murdered by her father after she eloped with her boyfriend to Delhi. The accused, Mukesh Singh, has been arrested by police. The victim, Sakshi, had reportedly fled her home on March 4 with a man from another caste, who lived nearby and attended the same college. Her maternal uncle, Vipin Kumar, said Singh convinced her to return home a week ago. However, she went missing again a few days later. Singh initially claimed she had left the house again, but his wife grew suspicious and alerted the police. During their investigation, officers noticed a foul smell from a locked bathroom in their residence. Upon breaking it open, they found Sakshi's body.



Police said Singh, believed to be an ex-serviceman, confessed to the crime during questioning. He had also reportedly gone to the man's village intending to kill him, but the latter was not present. Authorities recovered the body on April 9, two days after the alleged murder. Further investigation is underway.

## "Hang Soon": Brother Of 26/11 Hero Tukaram Omble On Tahawwur Rana

**TPN Correspondent | Mumbai**

Eknath Omble, brother of Ashok Chakra awardee and 26/11 hero Tukaram Omble, on Thursday welcomed the extradition of Mumbai terror accused Tahawwur Rana, urging the central government to hang him without delay. Calling it a "big day" for the country, Eknath said, "Many innocent people and policemen were killed. It was a painful night. Rana was the closest ally of David Headley... they all should have been hanged earlier. I request the government to hang him as soon as possible." Tukaram Omble, a sub-inspector in Mumbai Police, was posthumously awarded India's highest peacetime

gallantry honour for his unmatched courage during the 2008 Mumbai attacks. Armed only with a baton, he confronted terrorist Ajmal Kasab, held on to his rifle, and enabled his capture, sacrificing his own life. The central government has appointed Advocate Narender Mann as the Special Public Prosecutor in the National Investigation Agency's case (RC-04/2009/NIA/DLI) against Tahawwur Rana and David Headley, the lat-



ter currently serving a sentence in a US prison. Rana, a Pakistani-Canadian national, was convicted in the US for aiding Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and providing support for the 26/11 attacks that killed over 174 people. After years of pursuit, his extradition was cleared following a US Supreme Court ruling. Upon his arrival in India, the NIA will take custody of Rana. His extradition is being seen as a key step toward justice in the 26/11 case. Eknath Omble further said, "He should be punished so strictly that it serves as a warning to those in Pakistan who support terrorism. We tolerated the delay in Kasab's punishment because it exposed Pakistan's true face before the world."

## Invest UP plans new offices in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru

**TPN Correspondent | Lucknow**

The Uttar Pradesh government is set to undertake a comprehensive revamp of Invest UP, the state's primary investment promotion and facilitation agency, with plans to expand its presence nationally and make it a model agency for industrial investment support. This move follows recent controversy involving a senior official of the agency, after which the then CEO Abhishek Prakash was suspended. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath chaired a high-level meeting on Tuesday, where a roadmap to strengthen Invest UP was discussed, including structural improvements and geographical expansion. Invest UP, launched in August 2020 to replace Udyog Bandhu, has served as the nodal agency in UP's push towards becoming a trillion-dollar economy. The new revamp plan includes increasing manpower, setting up a dedicated industry chasing cell, and establishing liaison offices in key cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru. Officials said the industry chasing cell will streamline investor engagement, help with Detailed Project Reports, facilitate land allocation, and organise visits to project sites. It



will also assist in sourcing skilled labour and financial support, eliminating delays often faced by businesses. The new Delhi office is expected to help Invest UP liaise with central ministries, trade bodies, and foreign embassies, while the Mumbai office will provide linkages to financial institutions, private equity firms, and multinational corporations. Bengaluru, the hub of India's startup and tech scene, will help attract technology firms, R&D units, and innovation-driven industries. The revamped Invest UP is expected to follow best practices from models such as Gujarat's INDEXTb, Andhra Pradesh's APEDB, and global agencies from Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, and the US. The state aims to build an investor-friendly mechanism that rivals international standards. Notably, Invest India — the central government's investment promotion arm — has already launched its first overseas office in Singapore, a model that UP is likely to emulate in future phases.

## Hot Weather Grips North India

### IMD Warns of Upcoming Heatwave

**TPN Correspondent | Chandigarh**

The early onset of intense summer heat has taken hold in Punjab, Haryana, and Chandigarh, with meteorological experts warning of a looming heatwave. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has advised residents to take precautions, especially children and the elderly, as temperatures soar unusually high for this time of year. Chandigarh has already recorded higher temperatures in the first week of April compared to the same period last year. Speaking to ANI, Surendra Pal, Director of the Chandigarh Meteorological Center and a senior meteorologist, stated, "Last year, this kind of heat was felt after April 15, but this time, the mercury has risen in early April itself." Though a brief spell of relatively pleasant weather is expected, the region is bracing for heatwave conditions in the coming days. Pal added that while Western Disturbances may bring light relief, they

won't significantly lower the heat levels. The IMD has forecast that this year could be hotter than the last, with heatwave conditions likely in some areas of Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi, as well as Saurashtra and Kutch, particularly on April 9. Heatwave conditions are also predicted in isolated pockets of these regions on April 10 and again on April 15. The weather forecast suggests that Punjab will see partly cloudy skies with potential rain, thunderstorms, or duststorms on April 10, and similar cloudy conditions from April 11 to 13. Haryana is likely to witness light rain between April 10 and 11. Rajasthan is expected to experience partly cloudy skies today, with a chance of rain, thunderstorms, or duststorms on April 11 and 12. The IMD has urged the public to drink plenty of water, wear loose and light-colored clothing, limit exposure to the sun, and avoid going outside unless necessary.





# Bangladesh's New Regime Must Tread Carefully

The evolving political landscape in Bangladesh following the ouster of Sheikh Hasina has led to a perceptible strain in India-Bangladesh relations, particularly in light of recent diplomatic exchanges. At the BIM-STECS summit in Bangkok on April 4, a meeting between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladesh's Interim Adviser stirred controversy, echoing past instances where bilateral talks at the level of foreign ministers and secretaries have been followed by Bangladeshi press briefings emphasizing contentious issues. These post-meeting statements often highlight Bangladeshi demands while downplaying or outright rejecting Indian concerns, fostering a narrative of Dhaka "standing up" to New Delhi. This approach appears to be aligned with the growing anti-India sentiment reportedly prevailing in parts of Bangladesh's new political order. With the Jamaat-e-Islami allegedly exerting significant influence over the current regime, the country is



witnessing shifts that challenge its foundational secular ethos. These include calls for a revised constitution, efforts to push for an Islamic state, increased hostility toward minorities, renewed ties with Pakistan, and attacks on India's traditional diplomatic and cultural partnerships. Particularly telling was a

moment during a Clinton Foundation event in September 2024, when Prime Minister Yunus publicly introduced Mahfouz Alam as the mastermind behind the "revolution" that removed Sheikh Hasina, acknowledging the movement's orchestrated nature. Such statements — perceived as "loose talk" — risk further



damaging the fragile regional balance and may alienate important international partners. The new leadership in Dhaka must understand that diplomacy requires nuance and maturity, not theatrics or polarizing rhetoric. It is vital for the Yunus government to reassure both domestic and international observ-

ers that Bangladesh remains committed to regional cooperation, secular values, and peaceful coexistence. At a time when South Asia's stability is already under stress, any reckless political posturing or ideological regression could invite economic, diplomatic, and strategic consequences that Bangladesh can ill afford.

## India-China Tensions Demand Strategic Prudence

India's evolving relationship with China demands far more than diplomatic pleasantries, argues former National Security Advisor M.K. Narayanan in his analysis of the persistent geopolitical unease between the two Asian giants. Under President Xi Jinping, China has abandoned the relatively conciliatory approach of Deng Xiaoping and is instead leaning into a narrative of historical grievance, seeking to reassert its position as a dominant power with ambitions rooted in the past. This self-perception as a "wronged civilization" fuels aggressive maneuvers along its borders, especially with India, as Beijing increasingly invokes the outdated frontiers of the Qing Dynasty to justify present-day territorial claims. Incidents like the border clashes in Depsang (2013), Demchok (2016), Doklam (2017), and Galwan (2020) are not isolated acts but part of a larger strategic blueprint to pressure India into accepting a skewed status quo. Despite seemingly cordial exchanges between Indian and Chinese leaders, Narayanan warns that such diplomatic warmth must be treated with skepticism, particularly when it lacks substantive shifts in behavior from Beijing. While much of the world may interpret these symbolic gestures as signs of a thaw, India—having faced the brunt of China's assertiveness—must remain wary and not mis-

take sentiment for sincerity. The global community's surprise at recent bilateral overtures only underscores its detachment from the ground realities of Sino-Indian tensions. India, Narayanan suggests, should draw lessons from its past misreadings and adopt a pragmatic approach rooted in strategic preparedness rather than optimistic diplomacy. The relative calm during Hu Jintao's leadership, which hinted at a more balanced and stable relationship, now appears to have been a fleeting interlude rather than a long-term trajectory. In contrast, the current Chinese regime's assertive policies call for India to recalibrate its defense, diplomatic, and economic strategies. Multilateral coordination, military modernization, and internal resilience must become pillars of India's China policy, ensuring that any dialogue is backed by deterrence. Narayanan emphasizes that for genuine peace and cooperation to emerge, China must offer more than rhetorical goodwill—it must prove through consistent actions that it respects the sovereignty and strategic autonomy of its neighbors. Until then, India must proceed with caution, guided by historical experience and grounded in realism. As he aptly concludes, it will take far more than lofty words for the "Elephant and the Dragon" to truly dance in harmony on the world stage.



## From One Democracy to Another: A Cautionary Reflection

In this stirring open letter titled An Open Letter from India to America, author Omair Ahmad extends a heartfelt and sobering message across the Atlantic, blending empathy with caution as he reflects on the political descent of two of the world's largest democracies. Addressing Americans not as distant observers but as kin — as friends, colleagues, and kindred spirits — Ahmad draws parallels between India's current democratic backsliding and the turmoil gripping the United States. He writes not in judgment but in solidarity, recounting how India too believed its democracy was indestructible, rooted in its hard-won independence from colonialism and bolstered by decades of people-powered movements. Yet, this illusion crumbled as the country found itself spiraling into authoritarianism and exclusion, and now sees similar patterns emerging in America. The letter points out a harsh truth: that freedom for all inevitably threatens those who built their identity and privilege on the subjugation of others. Ah-

mad reminds readers that every time a society widens its promise of equality, it also disarms those who benefited from inequality — and in retaliation, these forces often cloak themselves in regressive symbols like masculine dominance, casteism, racial segregation, and fascism, which are not alien but interconnected through shared colonial legacies. He invokes the wisdom of Lincoln — "a house divided against itself cannot stand" — as both warning and lament, underscoring that the conflict is not one of policy but of moral foundations: between those who believe in justice and those who do not. The letter ends not with despair, but with an implicit call to remember the value of solidarity, to honor the difficult and incomplete journey of democracy, and to remain vigilant against the allure of exploitation disguised as power. In doing so, it becomes not just a message to America, but a mirror for India — and perhaps a guidepost for all democracies grappling with their contradictions.





## ‘Kasab Was Served Biryani’: Piyush Goyal Slams Congress

TPN Correspondent | Maharashtra

Union Minister Piyush Goyal has reignited a political controversy by claiming that 26/11 Mumbai terror attacker Ajmal Kasab was “served biryani” during the Congress regime. His remarks come amid the extradition of 26/11 plotter Tahawwur Rana to India from the United States.

Speaking at Mumbai’s Taj Palace Hotel, one of the sites attacked during the 2008 terror strike, Goyal accused the previous Congress-led UPA government of failing to take strong action against the terrorists. “During the Congress government, terrorists attacked this very hotel where we are standing. People died here. However, Congress did not do anything to punish the terrorists. The arrested terrorist Kasab was served biryani,” Goyal said.

Tahawwur Rana, 64, was brought to India on Thursday after the US Supreme Court rejected his final plea against extradition. He faces trial in India for his alleged involvement in planning the deadly attacks that killed over 170 people.

While Goyal’s biryani remark stirred headlines, it is worth noting that former public prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam had earlier clarified in 2015 that the story about Kasab being served biryani was fabricated. “Kasab never demanded biryani and was never served by the government. I concocted it just to break an emotional atmosphere which was taking shape in favour of Kasab during the trial,” Nikam had said.

Despite the clarification years ago, the narrative continues to be invoked in political debates. Goyal further said, “It is because of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s determination that such terrorists are being brought to justice. Those who harm our country will not be spared. Tahawwur Rana will now face trial and be punished under Indian law.” Rana’s extradition marks a significant step forward in India’s efforts to prosecute those involved in the 2008 attacks.

# CJI Khanna to hear pleas against Waqf Act on April 16

- 10 petitions to be heard by a three-judge Supreme Court bench
- Petitioners include AIMIM MP Owaisi, A Raja, Amanatullah Khan
- Act faces challenge for alleged violations of religious rights

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A bench led by Chief Justice of India Sanjay Khanna, along with Justices PV Sanjay Kumar and KV Viswanathan, will hear 10 petitions challenging the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 on April 16. The matter, listed as item 13, involves a range of petitioners including political leaders and religious organisations. The lead petition was filed by AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi, who called the Act “manifestly arbitrary” and alleged that it discriminates based on religion while violating the Shariat Act. Owaisi argued it strips the Muslim community of the right to manage its own religious institutions.

Among others who moved the top court are DMK MP A Raja, AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan, All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIM-PLB), Indian Union Muslim League, Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, Samastha Kerala Jem-iyathul Ulama, and NGO Association for Protection of Civil Rights.

The DMK, in its petition, stated that the Act was passed despite widespread opposition and without proper consideration of objections raised in the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC). The party emphasized the law prejudices the rights of 50 lakh Muslims in Tamil



Nadu and 20 crore Muslims across India.

In a press release, AIMPLB spokesperson SQR Ilyas said the amendments infringe upon Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution, which guarantee the freedom to manage religious

and charitable institutions. He accused the government of attempting to assume full control of Waqf properties, thus marginalizing the Muslim community.

The Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind termed the Act a “dangerous conspiracy” against religious freedom and a direct attack on the constitutional values of equality and religious rights. Similarly, Samastha Kerala Jamiath ul Ulama, a Sunni Muslim clerics’ body, labelled it a “blatant intrusion” into religious affairs.

AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan, in his plea, asked for the Act to be declared unconstitutional, citing violations of Articles 14, 15, 21, 25, 26, 29, 30 and 300-A of the Constitution.

The Centre has filed a caveat in the Supreme Court, seeking to be heard before any interim orders are passed on the matter.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, passed by Parliament and signed by President Droupadi Murmu, officially came into force on April 8, 2025, as per a notification from the Ministry of Minority Affairs. The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha with 288 votes in favour and 232 against, while the Rajya Sabha passed it with 128 votes supporting and 95 opposing.

Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had hailed the Waqf Bill as “another major solid step towards social justice.”

## STahawwur Rana Extradited, Arrested in Delhi

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

In a major development in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks case, Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a Pakistani-origin Canadian-American, was formally arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) upon his arrival in New Delhi following extradition from the United States. Rana was brought to India on Thursday evening aboard a special flight from Los Angeles. His transfer was executed under tight security, with National Security Guard (NSG) commandos and NIA officers escorting him. Heavy police deployment was witnessed both at the airport and around the NIA headquarters in Delhi to ensure maximum security during the high-profile transfer.

Rana is accused of aiding the 2008 Mumbai at-



tacks, which claimed over 160 lives and injured hundreds. Indian authorities had been pursuing his extradition for years, citing his alleged involvement in the conspiracy hatched by Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) operatives and his close links to David Headley, the Pakistani-American terrorist who had conducted reconnaissance

missions ahead of the attacks. The extradition marks a key milestone in India’s efforts to bring all conspirators of the Mumbai carnage to justice. The U.S. government had approved his extradition last year after prolonged legal proceedings in American courts, which examined the Indian evidence against him.

In an apparent attempt to deflect attention, Pakistan distanced itself from Rana just hours before his arrival in Delhi. The Pakistani government stated that Rana was not their citizen, asserting he had not renewed his Pakistani identity documents in over two decades and is currently a Canadian national. This move is being seen by observers as an effort to minimize diplomatic fallout amid renewed scrutiny over Islamabad’s role in cross-border terrorism.

## Centre Hikes Midday Meal Cost



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Centre to Bear ₹954 Crore Extra as PM-POSHAN Costs Rise Due to Inflation The Union government will bear an additional financial burden of ₹954 crore in the upcoming financial year 2025–26 due to a 9.5% hike in food material costs under the PM-POSHAN scheme, formerly known as the Midday Meal Scheme. The Ministry of Education announced this adjustment in response to rising food inflation, aiming to ensure continued nutritional support for schoolchildren.

Effective from May 1, 2025, the per-student per-day material cost for balvatika (anganwadi) and primary school children will increase from ₹6.19 to ₹6.78. For students in upper primary classes, the rate will go up from ₹9.29 to ₹10.17. This increase is expected to improve the quality of meals provided to children in government and government-aided schools across the country. The PM-POSHAN scheme plays a crucial role in addressing classroom hunger, improving nutritional levels among children, and encouraging school attendance, especially in underprivileged communities. The scheme covers over 11 crore children in more than 11 lakh schools and anganwadi

centres across India. The Education Ministry noted that the revision is done annually based on the Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW), ensuring that the scheme adapts to economic changes. The last major revision was implemented in 2022. The additional expenditure will be entirely borne by the Central government, without passing the burden onto states. This move reflects the Centre’s commitment to the welfare of schoolchildren and the continued success of one of the world’s largest school feeding programmes.

Experts have welcomed the hike, calling it necessary and timely, but many also argue that further enhancements in infrastructure, meal quality, and nutritional diversity are needed for long-term impact. Advocacy groups have also urged the government to consider increasing allocations for eggs, milk, and other protein-rich items. With this adjustment, the government aims to sustain its nutrition goals and uphold the constitutional right to education and health for children from economically weaker sections. Further guidelines on the revised cost structure and implementation procedures are expected to be issued to states and UTs before the new rates take effect.

## Opposition Slams DPDP Act Provision



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The controversial section, they argue, overrides a critical clause in the RTI Act—Section 8(1)(j)—which permits the disclosure of personal information if it is justified by larger public interest. The DPDP Act, which has already received Presidential assent, imposes a blanket prohibition on sharing personal data, even if it concerns public activity or interest. More alarmingly, the DPDP Act removes a vital proviso in the RTI Act that served as a transparency safeguard: “information which cannot be denied to Parliament or a State legislature shall not be denied to any person.” According to the INDIA bloc, this change effectively places government actions beyond public scrutiny.

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi condemned the provision as a “surreptitious, mischievous,

and malicious attempt” to weaken the RTI framework. “This is not just a technical amendment—it’s a direct attack on the citizen’s right to know and hold the government accountable,” he said.

The joint memorandum addressed to Union Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw urged an immediate rollback of the provision. Opposition leaders stressed that while protecting personal data is important, it should not come at the cost of weakening transparency laws that are essential in a democracy. Priyanka Chaturvedi added that the move could severely hamper journalistic investigations, whistleblower protections, and civil society efforts to expose corruption or misuse of power. “The RTI Act has been instrumental in empowering citizens. Diluting it, especially through another legislation, is both undemocratic and unacceptable,” she remarked.



## China being dragged into Ukraine war, says Zelensky

155 Chinese citizens reportedly fighting for Russia



TPN Correspondent | Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has alleged that Russia is deliberately trying to “drag China into the war” in Ukraine, claiming that over 150 Chinese nationals have been recruited to fight against Ukrainian forces. Zelensky stated that Kyiv has the names and passport details of 155 such individuals and accused Beijing of being aware of the recruitment process. “This is yet another indication that Moscow simply needs to drag out the fighting,” Zelensky told reporters in Kyiv. “Such an overt involvement of Chinese citizens in combat operations on the territory of Ukraine is a deliberate step towards expanding the war.” The statement follows Ukraine’s reported capture of two Chinese citizens in the eastern Donetsk region, a development that prompted fresh concerns about the extent of foreign fighters in Russia’s ranks. Kyiv says it is prepared to release the captured Chinese nationals in exchange for Ukrainian prisoners of war currently held in Russia. Zelensky clarified that he does not believe the Chinese government directly dispatched the fighters, but maintained that Chinese authorities were aware of the recruitment process—citing platforms like TikTok and other Chinese social media sites where Russian military recruiters allegedly promote enlistment. A senior Ukrainian official also shared with AFP a document containing the names and passport details of 168 Chinese citizens allegedly serving in the Russian army, adding that further investigations are underway to identify more. China, however, rejected Zelensky’s claims. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian called the accusations “absolutely groundless” and reiterated that Beijing advises its citizens to avoid armed conflicts of any kind. “The Ukrainian side should correctly view China’s efforts and constructive role in pushing for a political resolution to the Ukraine crisis,” Lin said. When asked about the development, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov declined to comment. Meanwhile, China continues to position itself as a neutral party in the ongoing conflict, though its political and economic alignment with Moscow has drawn criticism from the West. NATO has labeled Beijing a “decisive enabler” of Russia’s invasion. Zelensky also mentioned that Washington views the presence of Chinese fighters on Ukrainian soil as “unacceptable,” signaling rising concern within the US over China’s indirect involvement. He further revealed that Kyiv is prepared to spend up to \$50 billion on American military equipment and will be holding discussions with a US delegation next week. The controversy over Chinese nationals fighting for Russia adds a new dimension to the war and raises alarms about the global ramifications of prolonged conflict in Eastern Europe.

## India, UK fast-track FTA talks

Ministers reaffirm commitment to deeper trade and strategic ties during London dialogue

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

India and the United Kingdom have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening bilateral relations and accelerating negotiations towards a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and a Bilateral Investment Treaty. In a joint statement released on Wednesday, Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves emphasized that talks are “continuing at pace” with the goal of unlocking new opportunities for both economies. The statement was issued during Sitharaman’s six-day visit to the UK and Austria, during which she co-chaired the 13th India-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) in London alongside Reeves. “Both sides agree that a strong and robust UK-India relationship enhances the resilience of both economies, including through trade, macroeconomic cooperation, supply chain resilience and collaboration on global challenges, both bilaterally and multilaterally,” the joint statement read.



The India-UK FTA talks resumed earlier this year after an eight-month pause. Major sticking points in the negotiations include the UK’s planned Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), set to begin in 2026, and differences on the mobility of professionals. The UK side shared updates on its upcoming Industrial Strategy, with both countries seeing strong potential for collaboration in advanced manufactur-

ing, clean energy, life sciences, defence, financial services, and the creative sectors. The partnership aims to combine India’s growing manufacturing capacity with UK’s research and innovation ecosystem. In a boost to strategic ties, both countries also expressed anticipation for the signing of the India-UK Defence Industrial Roadmap, which will bolster collaboration across key industrial sectors and enhance supply

chain integration. In 2023-24, merchandise exports from India to the UK reached \$12.98 billion, marking a 13.3% annual rise. However, goods exports fell to \$8.4 billion, down 6.10%, according to Ministry of Commerce and Industry data. Given the backdrop of shifting global trade dynamics and protectionist measures, India is seeking to deepen partnerships that can help it navigate future uncertainties and attract fresh investments. The ministers also highlighted their cooperation in the G20 and global financial stability bodies such as the Financial Stability Board (FSB). They stressed the importance of working together on enhancing cross-border payments, climate-related financial risk management, and strengthening the non-bank financial intermediation (NBFi) framework. “We support the ongoing work... to ensure a resilient, inclusive, and stable international financial system,” the statement said, underlining the shared ambition to contribute to sustainable and equitable global economic growth.

## Panama Rejects US military Base Proposal

TPN Correspondent | Panama

Panama has firmly rejected the possibility of allowing the United States to reestablish military bases or defense sites within its territory, according to a statement made by Security Minister Frank Abrego during a joint appearance with US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth. “Panama made clear, through President Jose Raul Mulino, that we cannot accept military bases or defense sites,” Abrego declared, ending speculation over a poten-



tial renewed US military presence in the Central American country. The statement came during

Hegseth’s official visit to Panama, where broader regional security cooperation and migration control were on the agenda. While no formal proposal for a military base had been publicly disclosed by the US side, Abrego’s emphatic statement suggests Panama was responding to informal discussions or suggestions made behind closed doors. Panama had hosted significant US military infrastructure in the past, most notably the Panama Canal Zone and Howard Air Force Base, until the complete with-

drawal of American forces by the end of 1999 following the Torrijos-Carter Treaties. Since then, Panama has maintained a strong stance on sovereignty and neutrality regarding foreign military presence. Observers see the Panamanian position as a reaffirmation of its longstanding foreign policy principle of avoiding entanglement in military alliances or hosting foreign troops, especially in a region where US influence has historically drawn both cooperation and criticism.

## India Pulls Plug on Cargo Route for Bangladesh

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

In a significant policy shift, India has terminated the trans-shipment facility that allowed Bangladesh to export goods to third countries via Indian ports and airports. The decision, notified by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) on April 8, ends a trade route that had supported smooth cross-border flows since June 2020. The now-rescinded circular had permitted Bangladeshi cargo to pass through Indian Land Customs Stations (LCSS) en route to Indian exit points. However, the CBIC clarified that cargo already

in transit would be allowed to exit under the earlier procedure. The move comes amid rising trade tensions globally, with the US imposing fresh tariffs on countries including India and Bangladesh. Indian exporters, especially from the apparel sector, had been pressing for the withdrawal of the facility, citing reduced cargo space, rising freight costs, and airport congestion. “Now we will have more air capacity for our cargo,” said Ajay Sahai, Director General of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), welcoming the decision.



Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) Chairman Sudhir Sekhri said daily Bangladeshi truckloads caused delays and inflated air freight charges at Delhi’s IGI Airport. “This made Indian exports less competitive,” he said.

Think tank GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava warned the decision could disrupt regional trade logistics, particularly affecting landlocked nations like Nepal and Bhutan that depend on seamless movement through India and Bangladesh. Under WTO rules, members are obligated to ensure free and efficient transit for goods to and from landlocked countries — a point that may surface in future trade dialogues. The latest move reinforces India’s intent to protect its own exporters while recalibrating trade priorities in the face of shifting global trade dynamics.

## IIMA to open Dubai campus in partnership with UAE

New campus to offer one-year global MBA from Sep 2025

TPN Correspondent | Dubai

In a significant move toward expanding global education ties, the Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) has signed an MoU with the Government of the United Arab Emirates to establish an international campus in Dubai. The collaboration marks IIMA’s first overseas expansion and is aimed at providing world-class management education to working professionals and entrepreneurs across the globe. The MoU was formally exchanged in Mumbai by Professor Bharat Bhasker, Director of IIMA, and Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General of Dubai’s Department of Economy and Tourism. The event was attended by key dignitaries, including Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, and India’s Union Commerce and Industry Minister Shri Piyush Goyal. The Dubai campus will be developed



in two phases. Initially, the institute will function out of the Dubai International Academic City (DIAC), a major educational hub in the region. In

the second phase, land will be allocated for a permanent IIMA facility, which is expected to be completed by 2029.

The Dubai campus will be a full-time One-Year MBA program, designed specifically for global professionals seeking to enhance their leadership and management capabilities. The course is set to launch in September 2025 and will span five academic terms. The admission process will involve a rigorous two-stage evaluation based on GMAT or GRE scores obtained within the last five years. The program will employ IIMA’s signature case study method of teaching, known for its effectiveness in experiential learning and executive education. This initiative marks a new era for Indian higher education institutions venturing into the global academic space, with IIMA leading the charge by bringing its legacy and expertise to an international audience.



# Long-Term Investing: The Smart Path to Wealth Creation Amid Market Volatility"



## High-Growth Potential Sectors for the Future:



**1. Automobile Sector :** The shift towards electric vehicles (EVs) is driving tremendous growth. Innovation, government support, and rising environmental awareness are fueling this sector's rapid expansion.

**2. Pharmaceutical Sector :** With increasing awareness around health-



care, advancements in medical technology, and aging populations, the pharma industry is poised for consistent growth in the coming years.

**3. Information Technology (IT) Sector :** Digital transformation, AI, cloud computing, and cybersecurity are



creating strong tailwinds for IT companies globally. Demand for digital services is expected to grow exponentially.

**4. Metals Sector :** With rising infrastructure development and industrial growth, demand for metals like steel, copper, and aluminum is expected to remain strong.



## Auto Sector

**1. Tata Motors:** A leader in both commercial and passenger vehicles, Tata Motors has been riding high on strong domestic demand and the EV push. Its JLR (Jaguar Land Rover) arm continues to improve in profitability with growing sales in luxury electric vehicles.

**2. Mahindra & Mahindra:** M&M has gained significant traction in the SUV segment and agri-machinery. Its focus on electric mobility and rural demand gives it strong long-term potential.

**3. Hero MotoCorp:** Hero remains a key player in the two-wheeler market, especially in rural India. It's facing stiff competition in the EV space but is slowly ramping up electric offerings.

## Pharma Sector

**1. Sun Pharma:** India's largest pharma company continues to deliver stable growth driven by strong US generics sales and specialty drug launches. It has a robust pipeline in dermatology and oncology.

**2. Dr. Reddy's Laboratories:** Benefiting from its generics business, especially in the US and emerging markets. Its focus on biosimilars and APIs supports long-term growth.

**3. Divi's Laboratories:** A global leader in custom synthesis and APIs, Divi's is well-positioned due to global outsourcing trends. It's known for strong margins and consistent performance.

## IT Sector

**1. Infosys:** Despite short-term margin pressure due to global demand slowdown, Infosys maintains strong client relationships and is focusing on digital transformation and AI solutions.

**2. TCS (Tata Consultancy Services):** The IT bellwether continues to hold leadership in digital services. Long-term deal wins and strong client retention keep TCS a solid bet in IT.

**3. ITIMindtree:** After the merger, it's showing signs of synergy and growth potential, especially in cloud services and BFSI sector. Near-term volatility persists, but long-term outlook remains strong.

## Metal Sector

**1. Tata Steel:** It's under pressure due to weak steel prices globally, but cost optimization and domestic infrastructure demand may provide support. Watchful on European business drag.

**2. JSW Steel:** Aggressive expansion plans and better integration give JSW an edge. Domestic demand, especially from infra, supports its growth outlook.

**3. Hindalco:** Facing global headwinds in aluminum prices, but Novelis (its US arm) and downstream investments are helping improve margins. Long-term demand in EVs and packaging remains favorable.

Investing in the stock market is a smart way to build wealth, and it doesn't have to be complicated. Whether you invest a lump sum or follow a Systematic Investment Plan (SIP), the key to success lies in adopting a long-term perspective. Market volatility—frequent ups and downs—is a normal part of the investment journey. Short-term fluctuations should not cause panic. History shows that investors who remain patient and consistent over 3, 5, or even 10 years are more likely to enjoy significant returns. The power of compounding, combined with time, works in favor of long-term investors.



## Global Market Outlook:

At present, global markets are facing challenges due to political and eco-

nom ic instability, particularly in the United States. This uncertainty has led to increased volatility. However, such situations often present hidden opportunities for thoughtful and strategic investors.

Rather than reacting emotionally, it is wise to diversify investments across sectors. A well- diversified portfolio can help reduce risk and position you for future growth. Focused, long- term investing in high-potential sectors—such as automobiles, pharmaceuticals, IT, and metals—

can lead to solid financial gains over time. In conclusion, stock market investing is most rewarding for those who stay committed and look beyond short-term market movements. With patience, discipline, and the right strategy, long-term wealth creation is not just possible—it's highly probable.

## Aadhaar Act set for key amendments to align with DPDP Act, 2023

*New Aadhaar app launched with secure, minimal data sharing features*

### TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The central government is planning to amend the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 to bring it in line with the provisions of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023. The move aims to plug existing legal gaps, improve data privacy, and give citizens more control over their personal information, according to officials.

Union Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a video posted on X on Wednesday, said the government is focused on harmonizing the Aadhaar law with the DPDP Act by keeping "user interest at the centre." He emphasized the need for a new legal framework to streamline consent mechanisms and avoid repeated data sharing during authentication processes. "There are variety of programmes and uses where citizens are asked for consent again and again, asked to provide their data every time and at different places, for authentication. We need to have a legal framework to avoid this and ensure citizens get access to services easily," Vaishnaw said.

Officials said the amendment will focus on introducing data minimization and data erasure provisions that are currently mandated by the DPDP Act but not strictly adhered to by agencies using Aadhaar authentication. They also noted that the language of the Aadhaar Act will be made more specific to prevent the reuse of Aadhaar data for unintended purposes. The DPDP Act, passed by Parliament in August 2023, is yet to be fully implemented. Vaishnaw stated that the rules for the Act are nearly finalized and will be notified soon. In line with the upcoming amendments, the



government on Tuesday also launched a new Aadhaar mobile application that enables residents to share only essential data while availing services. The app includes face ID authentication and supports digital verification through QR codes or requesting applications, eliminating the need for physical Aadhaar card photocopies.

Tech policy experts welcomed the move. "Amending the Aadhaar Act to integrate DPDP's principles would be crucial to reducing misuse and improving consent-based data use," said Dhruv Garg, partner at the Indian Governance and Policy Project. He also recommended limiting Aadhaar usage where not necessary. In February this year, the government had expanded Aadhaar use by allowing private companies to perform Aadhaar authentication under the revised Aadhaar Authentication for Good Governance (Social Welfare, Innovation, Knowledge) Amendment Rules, 2025. This was aimed at easing access to services and preventing leakage of welfare benefits. Officials underscored that these combined measures will help prevent misuse of Aadhaar data and promote better privacy practices in both government and private sector usage.

## BlackRock Bets Big On Adani With \$250 Million Investment

BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, has become the biggest investor in a \$750 million private bond issuance by the Adani Group, acquiring nearly one-third of the offering. This marks BlackRock's first private placement in India's infrastructure sector and a major show of confidence amid ongoing scrutiny faced by the conglomerate.

Sources familiar with the matter said the bonds, issued by Renew Exim DMCC—a wholly owned offshore entity of the Adani family—carry a tenure of 3 to 5 years. The capital will primarily finance the acquisition of ITD Cementation and other infrastructure-led growth initiatives. The move comes even as Adani Group remains under the lens following a U.S. Department of Justice indictment last November in a bribery investigation. Despite this, BlackRock's participation signals it foresees no major operational risks for the group. "Infrastructure is one of the most exciting long-term investment opportunities," BlackRock



Chairman Larry Fink said earlier in January after the firm's \$12.5 billion acquisition of Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP). This deal significantly expanded BlackRock's global presence in ports, power, and digital infrastructure—sectors that align closely with Adani's long-term focus. Five other institutional investors, mostly American and European including funds managed by Sona Asset Management, also participated in the fundraising. The \$750 million issuance by Renew Exim is Adani Group's second major dollar bond transaction in 2024, following a \$200 million raise in February for its Australia

lian port operations. The recent capital raise is also the largest since the DOJ probe came to light, and signals renewed international investor interest. The acquisition of ITD Cementation, a construction and engineering firm involved in projects such as JNPT and Vizhinjam port, strengthens Adani's infrastructure portfolio. The group had initially purchased a 46.64% stake from the promoters and added another 20.81% through an open offer. Adani officials view BlackRock's involvement as a strong vote of confidence in the conglomerate's financial and operational strength, despite recent headwinds.

## Audi Expands EV Network To 6,500+ Points Across India

Audi India has significantly strengthened its electric vehicle infrastructure by expanding its 'Charge My Audi' initiative to over 6,500 charging points nationwide. This milestone was achieved under Phase II of the program, aiming to accelerate EV adoption among luxury car owners. The company has onboarded 16 new EV infrastructure partners to enhance accessibility and convenience. More than 75% of these locations are equipped with DC fast-charging capabilities, enabling quicker charging and catering to India's growing EV de-

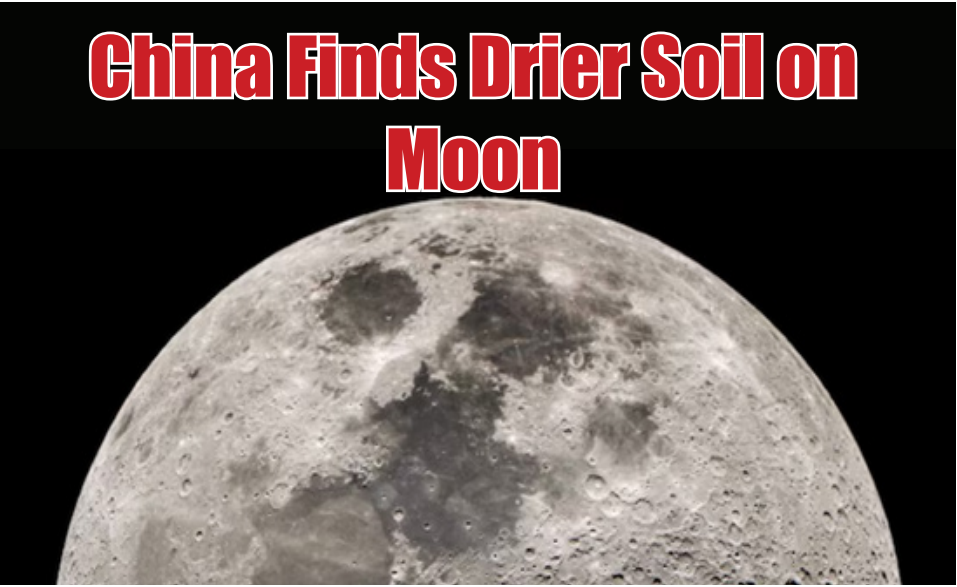
mand. The Phase-II rollout alone added over 5,500 new charging points, strategically positioned along highways, in urban centers, and at key commercial hubs. With this expansion, the 'Charge My Audi' network now spans across 28 states and union territories, covering over 850 cities and 4,700+ locations. Customers can locate and operate chargers using real-time features through the 'myAudi Connect' app, which includes route planning, charger availability, and start/stop func-

tions. Commenting on the development, Mr. Balbir Singh Dhillon, Head of Audi India, said, "With over 6,500 charging points and a focus on DC fast chargers, we are enhancing convenience, reducing charging times, and expanding accessibility for our customers. The second phase marks a major step forward in enhancing the EV ownership experience." As a value addition, Audi has also extended complimentary charging for all e-tron customers across its network until December 31, 2025. This

benefit is available through its CPO partners and can be accessed via the 'myAudi Connect' app. This latest push reinforces Audi's commitment to driving the shift toward sustainable mobility in India.







In a significant lunar discovery, Chinese scientists have revealed that soil from the far side of the moon is drier than previously thought, containing less than 1.5 micrograms of water per gram—significantly lower than levels recorded on the near side. This insight, based on samples collected by China’s Chang’e 6 mission, deepens our understanding of the moon’s complex composition and geological history. The research team, led by Sen Hu from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, meticulously analyzed five grams of lunar material retrieved from the South Pole-Aitken Basin, one of the oldest and largest impact craters in the solar system. Using advanced electron microscopy, they examined 578 individual particles, identifying a stark difference in water content compared to samples from the near side. This dryness raises new questions about the moon’s formation and the processes that have shaped its two faces over billions of years. Scientists emphasize that understanding the presence and distribution of water on the lunar surface is critical not only for unraveling the moon’s evolutionary

story but also for future space exploration and potential colonization, where water could be a vital in-situ resource. While these early findings are groundbreaking, researchers caution that they are based on a limited sample size and stress the need for further collection missions to develop a more comprehensive picture. China’s successful landing on the far side in 2024 marked a historic milestone in space exploration, as no other country had previously achieved such a feat. With countries like the U.S., India, and Russia also ramping up their lunar missions, the moon remains a focal point of international scientific rivalry and cooperation. As more data emerges from upcoming expeditions, including future Chinese missions, this discovery may influence the trajectory of lunar science, particularly regarding how water is stored and transported on the moon. For now, the findings suggest the moon’s far side may hold more secrets than previously believed, and only through deeper exploration can humanity hope to fully understand our celestial neighbor’s past—and its potential future.

## KFC’s Chicken-Flavored Toothpaste Sells Out



In one of the most unexpected brand collaborations to date, KFC has teamed up with Australian dental care company Hismile to launch a limited-edition fried chicken-flavored toothpaste, and, unsurprisingly, it has already sold out. Inspired by the fast-food giant’s iconic blend of 11 herbs and spices, the toothpaste was designed to offer an “irresistible” brushing experience that mimics the sensation of biting into a piece of hot, juicy Original Recipe KFC chicken—while still leaving users with a “fresh and clean” finish. The novelty product quickly captured public attention and social media buzz for its outrageous concept, merging fast food indulgence with daily hygiene in a way few expected. While the collaboration may sound like a stunt, it was very real and highly limited, turning the bizarre idea into an overnight cult favorite. KFC, known for its creative and often quirky marketing campaigns, described the product in a press release as both flavorful and functional, blending a unique senso-

ry experience with the utility of oral care. Though the toothpaste was not released for widespread sale, it became an instant viral hit, with fans rushing to get their hands on it before stocks vanished. Reactions online ranged from amused curiosity to disbelief, with many joking about brushing three times a day—or more—just for the taste. Though there’s no word yet on whether KFC and Hismile plan to restock or expand the product line, the overwhelming response suggests a growing appetite for oddball, experience-driven products that turn everyday routines into novelty moments. This isn’t KFC’s first foray into unconventional products; the brand has previously launched everything from chicken-scented candles to fashion collabs. However, this chicken-flavored toothpaste might just be its most bizarre—and successful—creation yet, proving once again that in the age of viral marketing, anything is possible, even brushing your teeth with fried chicken.

## Tamil Nadu Kids Go Viral Globally

A heartwarming video featuring students from a government school in Tamil Nadu has taken the internet by storm, amassing over 100 million views and capturing hearts worldwide. Shared by a teacher from Melur Panchayat Union Kindergarten and Middle School in Therkamoor, the video shows a group of young children—mostly girls and one boy—dancing and singing to the viral Thai song Anan Ta Pad Chaye. Dressed in school uniforms, the children deliver a pitch-perfect rendition of the song, dancing joyfully with infectious energy and enthusiasm. Their flawless timing and genuine happiness have made the video a viral sensation, with social media users praising both their talent and the cultural crossover. One of the standout



performers, a girl named Shivadarshini, has become a particularly beloved figure online, having already gained attention from a previous viral video shared by the same teacher. The clip highlights not just the global nature of internet trends, but also the ability of children to bring joy across borders through music and dance. The Thai

song itself has been trending for weeks on various platforms, with people from around the world jumping on the dance challenge. However, it’s this group of spirited schoolchildren who have truly stolen the spotlight, showing that talent and joy can shine from even the most unexpected corners. Their performance, filled with bright smiles and heartfelt energy, reflects the universal language of music and underscores the power of digital platforms to amplify voices and talents regardless of location. The teacher’s decision to share the video not only gave the children a chance to be seen and appreciated globally but also turned a simple classroom performance into a worldwide celebration of joy, rhythm, and innocence.

## Kareena Kapoor’s Bizarre Party Avatar

In a viral moment that’s baffled and amused the internet in equal measure, a Karachi party featured a bizarre digital cameo of Bollywood star Kareena Kapoor Khan—sort of. A poorly animated avatar of the actress was projected on a big screen, grooving awkwardly to loud rave music, supposedly to energize the crowd. Instead of glamming up the scene, the surreal spectacle left partygoers and netizens laughing, confused, and ultimately turning the odd creation into meme fodder. The creator behind the animated Kareena took to Instagram to explain that the track was inspired by the film Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham, particularly Kareena’s iconic character “Pooh.” Claiming the moment was meant to be “chaotic and iconic,” the creator added that he sampled one of her famous lines and wanted to add a unique visual twist for the show. However, the end



result—a glitchy, awkward rendition of Kareena’s likeness awkwardly dancing—missed the glam mark by miles. Social media reactions ranged from light-hearted roasting to genuine confusion, with users questioning both the animation quality and the concept itself. While some found it endearingly chaotic and praised the experimental effort, others couldn’t resist sharing the clip with captions like “Kareena.exe has stopped working.” The incident has sparked debates over digital creativity, celebrity deepfakes, and how far is too far when it comes to virtual appearances. Regardless of where opinions fall, the animated Kareena moment has certainly made its mark—albeit as a cautionary tale of how not to digitally resurrect a Bollywood icon at a rave.

## Underwater Pyramid Fuels Atlantis Theorie

A mysterious 90-foot underwater structure known as the Yonaguni Monument, located near Japan’s Ryukyu Islands, has reignited debate among scientists, archaeologists, and history enthusiasts about the origins of ancient

civilizations. Discovered in 1986, this vast stone formation lies 82 feet beneath the ocean and resembles a pyramid with sharply angled steps—features that many believe suggest it was crafted by human hands. What’s most puz-



zling is that geological tests date the monument to over 10,000 years old, a time that predates known human architectural achievements like the Egyptian pyramids or Stonehenge. If confirmed as man-made, this would drastically alter our understanding of when complex societies capable of such engineering feats first emerged—pushing the timeline back to well before the widely accepted start of agricultural civilizations. This has led some to liken Yonaguni to the mythical lost city of Atlantis. Yet, skepticism remains, with many experts

arguing the formation could be the result of natural tectonic activity rather than ancient construction. The controversy recently took center stage on the Joe Rogan Experience podcast, where author Graham Hancock and archaeologist Flint Dibble debated the site’s authenticity, further amplifying public interest. As debate swirls around its origins, the Yonaguni Monument continues to captivate imaginations worldwide, standing as either a naturally occurring wonder—or evidence of a forgotten chapter in human history.

## World’s Largest Snake Gathering in Canada

Every spring, a remarkable natural event unfolds in Manitoba, Canada, where the Narcisse Snake Dens become the site of the world’s largest snake congregation. Over 75,000 red-sided garter snakes emerge from limestone sinkholes after months of braving sub-zero temperatures underground. These dens, no bigger than a living room, offer insulation during the region’s frigid winters that can plunge as low as -45°C, making them ideal hibernation shelters. As the weather warms, the snakes surface in vast numbers for their annual mating ritual, forming dense, swirling masses that blanket the ground in a mesmerizing, if somewhat spine-tingling, spectacle. The sheer scale of the gathering attracts thousands of visitors and scientists every year, turning the quiet Canadian landscape into a temporary wildlife tourism hub. The snakes—largely harmless to humans—entwine in what’s known as “mating balls,” where dozens of males compete for a single female, creating a chaotic but fascinating sight. Beyond the visual spectacle, new scientific research has uncovered surprising complexity in their behavior. A study published in “Behavioural Ecology” in late 2023 revealed that some species of garter snakes, like Butler’s garter snakes, display social structures reminiscent of mammals, with groupings organized by age and sex. This challenges the longstanding belief that snakes are solitary creatures and opens new avenues



of research into reptilian social dynamics. The Narcisse Snake Dens not only serve as a critical ecological habitat but also as a living laboratory where scientists can study the interactions, communication, and survival strategies of garter snakes in large populations. For casual observers and researchers alike, this annual phenomenon is a rare and awe-inspiring example of nature’s intricacy—an event where biology, survival, and spectacle converge. As concerns about biodiversity and climate change grow, the Narcisse snake gathering also stands as a reminder of the importance of preserving such unique ecosystems for future generations.



# Dhoni Returns as CSK Captain After Gaikwad Injury Blow

Chennai Super Kings (CSK) have suffered a major setback ahead of their IPL 2025 campaign, as skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad has been ruled out of the tournament due to an elbow fracture. In a familiar turn of events, legendary former captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni will step in to lead the side once again.

CSK head coach Stephen Fleming confirmed the news during a press interaction on Thursday,

stating, “Ruturaj Gaikwad ruled out of IPL with fracture on elbow. MS Dhoni to take over as captain.” Gaikwad, who was appointed full-time captain for the 2025 season, sustained the injury during training. Dhoni’s return to captaincy brings both experience and calm to the squad as CSK aim for another strong season. Fans can now look forward to seeing “Captain Cool” back in action, steering the yellow brigade once more.



# Chandigarh Thrash Opponent in U20 NFC Opener



Chandigarh made a resounding start to the Swami Vivekananda U20 Men’s National Football Championship with a dominant win on the opening day. The team stormed to a 4-0 lead by half-time, effectively sealing the match early. Manveer Singh opened the tournament’s scoring in the 15th minute, capitalizing on a loose ball to tap in from close range. He doubled his tally in the 28th minute with

a clinical right-footed finish into the bottom corner. Sahil starred with a brilliant hat-trick, netting in the 39th, 43rd, and 64th minutes. His goals showcased composure and sharp finishing, including a smooth one-on-one and two quickfire close-range strikes. With this emphatic win, Chandigarh has set the tone for the tournament and sent a strong message to their rivals early on.

# Anand Backs Gukesh for Norway Chess Clash with Carlsen

Indian chess legend Viswanathan Anand has thrown his support behind teenage sensation Gukesh Dommaraju ahead of his much-anticipated showdown with world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen at Norway Chess 2025. The prestigious tournament will be held in Stavanger, Norway, from May 26 to June 6. Speaking at an event hosted by Norway Chess and the Sports Journalists Association of Mumbai (SJAM), Anand expressed confidence in Gukesh, the youngest world champion in chess history. “I expect a very exciting



battle. Gukesh will not lack motivation or determination to go after Magnus,” said Anand. “Magnus, too, is highly driven to face young talents. We have the

perfect storm here.” The face-off promises to be one of the most thrilling duels of the year, as Gukesh looks to challenge Carlsen’s dominance on the global stage.

# Rice Shines as Arsenal Stun Real Madrid 3-0



Arsenal took a commanding step toward the Champions League semifinals with a stunning 3-0 victory over defending champions Real Madrid at The Emirates on Tuesday. Declan Rice was the star of the night, netting two sensational free kicks to put the Gunners in control of the quarterfinal first leg.

The third goal came from Mikel Merino, who finished clinically to cap off Arsenal’s dominant performance. Real Madrid looked off the pace from the start, struggling to cope with the hosts’ intensity. One of the few early chances for Madrid nearly turned disastrous, as Eduardo Camavinga almost

scored an own goal after deflecting Antonio Rudiger’s clearance. Thomas Partey tested Thibault Courtois soon after, but the Belgian keeper denied him. With Rice’s brilliance and solid teamwork, Arsenal now carry strong momentum into the second leg at the Santiago Bernabéu.

# Rahul’s Masterclass Leads Delhi Capitals to Victory Over RCB



In a thrilling clash held at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bengaluru, the Delhi Capitals (DC) secured a dominant six-wicket win over Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in the 24th match of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025. KL Rahul, leading from the front, played a sensational captain’s knock to guide his team to a convincing victory. Winning the toss, RCB opted to bat first and managed to post a total of 163 for 7 in their allotted 20 overs. Though they started well, the middle-order couldn’t maintain the momentum, leading to a below-par finish. Delhi’s bowlers kept things tight, picking up wickets at regular intervals and denying RCB a late flourish. Chasing 164, Delhi Capitals made their intent clear from the start. KL Rahul an-

chored the innings with an unbeaten 93 off just 53 balls, laced with elegant boundaries and well-timed sixes. His knock was a perfect blend of aggression and composure, taking the pressure off the rest of the batting lineup. Rahul found support from the middle order, and the Capitals comfortably chased down the target in 17.5 overs, finishing at 169 for 4. With this win, Delhi Capitals continue their strong form in the tournament, while RCB are left to reconsider their game plans after another disappointing outing. KL Rahul was rightfully named Player of the Match for his stellar performance. The win has further cemented Delhi’s position on the points table as they continue their march towards the playoffs.

# Sindhu Advances, Lakshya Crashes Out in Asia Badminton Opener



PV Sindhu made a strong start at the Badminton Asia Championships, defeating Indonesia’s Ester Nurumi Wardoyo 21-15, 21-19 in 44 minutes. The world No. 17 will face Japan’s Akane Yamaguchi, seeded third, in the pre-quarterfinals. However, it was disappointment for India in the men’s singles. Lak-

shya Sen suffered a first-round exit, losing 18-21, 10-21 to Chinese Taipei’s Lee Chia Hao. HS Prannoy also bowed out, falling 16-21, 21-12, 11-21 to China’s Zu Guang Lu. Kiran George brought some cheer, progressing to the pre-quarters with a 21-16, 21-8 win over Kazakhstan’s Dmitriy Panarin.

In women’s singles, Aakarshi Kashyap, Anupama Upadhyaya, and Malvika Bansod were all ousted in the opening round. In men’s doubles, Hariharan Am-sakarunan and Ruban Kumar comfortably beat Sri Lanka’s Madhuka Dulanjana and Lahiru Weerasinghe 21-3, 21-12 to reach the Round of 16.





## Keerthy Suresh’s Bollywood Leap of Faith

Keerthy Suresh, known for her endearing screen presence and strong youth fanbase, has long focused on Tamil cinema while maintaining occasional appearances in Telugu films. Despite once being among the top names in Tollywood, she hasn’t scored a major hit since *Dasara*. Following that, Keerthy continued to prioritize Tamil projects, but her ambitions have now shifted towards Bollywood. Though her debut Hindi film *Baby John* failed to leave an impact at the box office, she’s determined to prove herself in the Hindi film industry. Buzz suggests she has signed an upcoming film opposite Rajkumar Rao. Like many South actresses—such as Ileana, Kajal Aggarwal, Tamannaah, and Shruti Haasan—who tried their luck in Bollywood with mixed results, Keerthy too faces the challenge of standing out in a competitive arena. Whether her graceful persona and talent will help her succeed where others struggled remains to be seen, but her resolve to make it big in Bollywood is



## Akhil & Zainab’s Sunset Serenade

Tollywood’s favorite couple, Akhil Akkineni and fiancée Zainab Ravdjee, lit up social media with a tender beachside moment that felt straight out of a romance film. Celebrating Akhil’s 31st birthday, the pair embraced under a golden sunset, their heartfelt hug capturing the essence of love and serenity. Dressed in coordinated yellow

tops and cream-toned bottoms, the duo stood barefoot against the backdrop of gentle waves, exuding intimacy and elegance. The candid photo, likely from a Maldives-esque getaway, instantly resonated with fans, sparking admiration across the internet. No filters, no captions—just raw emotion and an unspoken bond.



## Ajith’s Triple Act Misses the Mark

In *\*Good Bad Ugly\**, Ajith Kumar attempts a roaring comeback under the direction of die-hard fan Adhik Ravichandran, but the film ends up as a mixed bag. Riding high on fan anticipation and vintage Ajith vibes teased in trailers, the film delivers action-packed sequences and a stylized narrative, but falters when it comes to emotional depth and coherence. Adhik, who previously wowed audiences with *\*Mark Anthony\**, gives Ajith a platform to shine in multiple shades, but

the script feels stretched and uneven. Trisha Krishnan and the ensemble cast including Arjun Das, Sunil, and Prabhu add star power, yet their roles often feel underwritten. GV Prakash’s music elevates some moments, but overall, the film doesn’t quite land the punch it promises. Despite flashy

visuals and a fan-service approach, *\*Good Bad Ugly\** struggles to balance style and substance, resulting in a film that’s watchable but far from a blockbuster. Verdict: Ajith sparkles, but the story doesn’t.



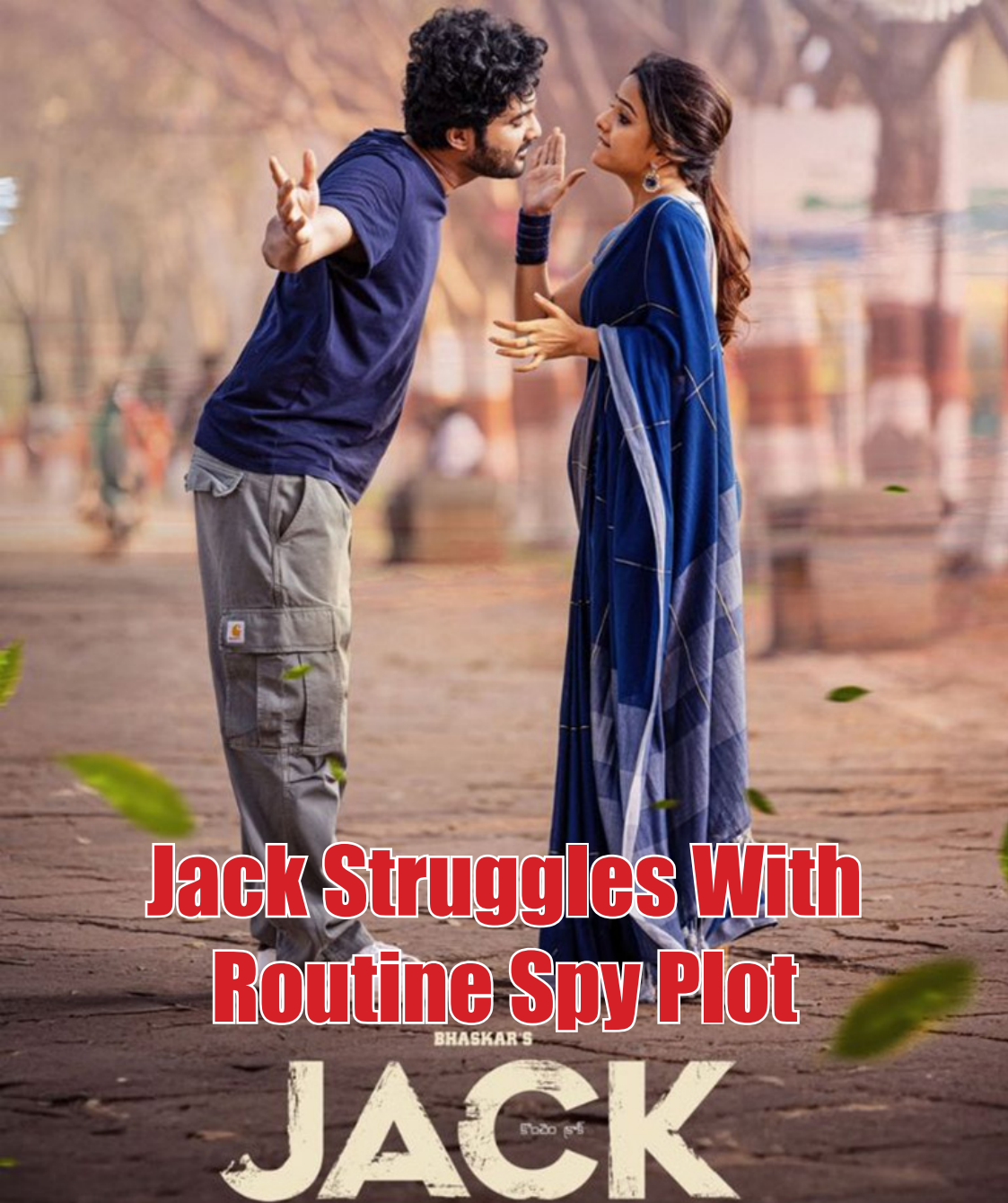
## Tabu, Vijay Sethupathi Join Forces

In a major announcement that thrilled cinema lovers, filmmaker Puri Jagannadh revealed his upcoming pan-Indian film starring powerhouse performers Tabu and Vijay Sethupathi. Taking to social media on April 10, Jagannadh shared a photo featuring himself, Tabu, and producer-actor Charmee Kaur, officially welcoming Tabu onboard. He described her as “electric” and “explosive,” calling her role in the film as dynamic as her presence.

The project, dubbed #PuriSethupathi, marks a high-profile collaboration and is produced under the banner of Puri Connects by Jagannadh, Charmee Kaur, and Vishu Reddy. With filming scheduled to begin in June, fans are eagerly awaiting further details. This marks a rare and exciting team-up between two of Indian cinema’s most versatile actors, promising a unique cinematic experience across languages and regions.



Siddhu Jonnalagadda, known for his quirky charm in *DJ Tillu* and *Tillu Square*, returns with *Jack*, directed by Bommarillu Bhaskar and co-starring Vaishnavi Chaitanya. Despite a trailer that promised Siddhu’s signature wit, the film fails to deliver, falling into the trap of a predictable spy thriller. The plot follows Pablo Neruda alias Jack, an aspiring RAW agent who takes matters into his own hands to stop a terrorist conspiracy across major Indian cities. Things take a twist when he mistakenly captures a real RAW officer (Prakash Raj), prompting a private investigation by his father involving a detective’s daughter (Vaishnavi), who also becomes his romantic interest. While the film attempts to blend patriotism, suspense, and romance, the weak screenplay and routine narrative make it an underwhelming watch, raising doubts about whether Siddhu’s charm alone is enough to carry such formulaic storytelling.



## Jack Struggles With Routine Spy Plot

BHASKAR'S

JACK



Upasana Konidela has revealed a charming behind-the-scenes routine from her life with Global Star Ram Charan: she carries a cooker wherever they travel to ensure he gets at least one Indian meal a day. Known for his spiritual discipline

and rooted lifestyle, Ram Charan insists on eating Indian food regardless of where in the world he is. In a recent interview, Upasana opened up about this unique travel ritual, saying, “My husband has to eat Indian food wherever we are in the world.

## Upasana’s Portable Kitchen for Ram Charan

One meal has to be Indian.” To avoid fire alarms in hotels, they even use the cooker inside the shower area, plugged in carefully for safe, home-cooked comfort food. Interestingly, this practice also inspired her mother-in-law to turn traditional Indian staples into ready-to-use mixes, now a small business venture she began in her 60s. For Ram Charan, it’s not just about taste—it’s about tradition, and Upasana ensures he never misses a bite of home, no matter the timezone.