

Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD

t<sup>o</sup>

H 33° C

L 25° C

VIJAYAWADA

t<sup>o</sup>

H 35° C

L 26° C

TIRUPATHI

t<sup>o</sup>

H 36° C

L 26° C

# Waqf (Amendment) Bill Sparks Intense Debate in Lok Sabha

Bill aims to reform waqf property administration

Opposition alleges interference in religious matters

Government emphasizes transparency and efficiency




TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, introduced by Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, led to a heated debate among members. The bill aims to reform the administration of waqf properties by enhancing transparency, technological integration, and streamlining the registration process. The proposed amendments include the inclusion of non-Muslim members in the Central Waqf Council and state waqf boards to promote diversity and address allegations of corruption. The bill also seeks to empower the government to determine ownership of disputed waqf proper-

ties, aiming to resolve long-standing legal disputes. Minister Rijiju justified the amendments as essential steps to eliminate corruption and enhance waqf property management. He stated that the bill is a “pro-Muslim reform” meant to empower the community through better governance of waqf assets. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also defended the bill, clarifying that it does not mandate the appointment of non-Muslim members to waqf boards and aims only to improve transparency. However, the bill faced strong opposition from various parties and organizations. Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge described it as “blatantly unconstitutional,” claim-

ing it undermines religious freedom and personal laws. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIM-PLB) expressed concerns that the bill could lead to the government seizing waqf properties and curtailing Muslim property rights. Critics argued that including non-Muslim members in waqf boards is an attempt to interfere in religious affairs and could set a negative precedent for similar interventions in other religious institutions. Despite opposition, the government is firm on its stance, asserting that the bill will modernize and streamline waqf property management across the country. The bill’s passage in the Lok Sabha remains uncertain as discussions continue.

# ED Challenges Closure Report in MUDA Case Involving Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah



ED files protest petition against Lokayukta police closure report

Allegations involve site allotment under controversial 50:50 scheme

Further investigation to be conducted into MUDA compensatory plots

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a protest petition before the Special Court for MPs and MLAs against the Lokayukta police’s closure report in the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment case involving Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his wife Parvathi, and others. The ED argued that it is an aggrieved party under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and has the right to contest the closure report. According to the agency, money laundering poses a significant threat to the integrity and sovereignty of financial systems, and the state is considered a victim of such offenses. The Lokayukta police had earlier submitted a final report to the High Court, stating that charges against Siddaramaiah, his wife Parvathi, his

brother-in-law, and the landowner Devaraju could not be proven due to a lack of evidence. However, the ED maintained that since money laundering and predicate offenses are interconnected, it should have a say in the investigation outcome. The case involves allegations that Parvathi received compensatory plots in a prime area of Mysuru under a 50:50 ratio scheme, which provides 50% of developed land in exchange for acquired undeveloped land. It is alleged that Parvathi lacked legal title over the 3.16 acres of land for which compensation was granted. The Lokayukta police noted that further investigation would be conducted into the compensatory plots allotted by MUDA between 2016 and 2024, with an additional report to be submitted to the High Court. The court will now decide whether to entertain the ED’s protest petition.

# BJP Holds Protests Demanding Withdrawal of Suspension of 18 Party MLAs



BJP calls suspension of MLAs “undemocratic” and “unjust”

Party leaders threaten intensified protests if demands are ignored

Allegations of Speaker acting under Congress influence

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The BJP staged a protest on Wednesday at the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, demanding the immediate withdrawal of the suspension of 18 party MLAs from the Karnataka Assembly. Led by party state president B Y Vijayendra, Leader of Opposition R Ashoka, and Leader of Opposition in Legislative Council Chavadi Narayanaswamy,

BJP leaders condemned Speaker U T Khader’s decision as “dictatorial” and “undemocratic.” The suspension, enforced on March 21, was a result of BJP MLAs allegedly showing “indiscipline” and “disrespecting” the Speaker during the last day of the budget session. The MLAs were forcefully removed from the Assembly by marshals after they protested against the 4% reservation for Muslims in public contracts and demanded a judicial probe into a purported “honey-trap” attempt involving Cooperation Minister K N Rajanna. R Ashoka accused the Speaker of acting in favor of Congress, suggesting that the suspension was an attempt to secure a ministerial position during the upcoming cabinet reshuffle. Vijayendra argued that barring the MLAs from legislative

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# Dy CM DKS Urges Rajnath Singh to Push for Bharat Ratna for Sri Shivakumara Swamiji

TPN Correspondent | Tumakuru

During the 118th birth anniversary celebration of Sri Shivakumara Swamiji of Siddaganga Mutt in Tumakuru on April 1st, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar urged Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to request Prime Minister Narendra Modi to confer the Bharat Ratna posthumously on the revered seer. Shivakumar emphasized that Sri Shivakumara Swamiji had shaped the lives of thousands by providing food, education, and shelter without discrimination, and deserved the nation’s high-



est civilian award. Suttur Mutt head, Sri Shivaratri Deshikendra Swamiji, supported the appeal and urged Singh to consider

the demand. Despite commending the contributions of the seer in his speech, Rajnath Singh did not respond

to Shivakumar’s request. Meanwhile, Union Minister of State for Railways V Somanna criticized Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for not responding to the Home Ministry’s communication about renaming Tumakuru railway station after the seer. Sri Shivakumara Swamiji was previously honored with the Karnataka Ratna in 2007 and the Padma Bhushan in 2015. The Karnataka government, under Siddaramaiah’s leadership, officially proposed the Bharat Ratna for the Swamiji in 2017, two years before his passing on January 21, 2019.

# SC to Hear Karnataka Govt’s Plea Against Bail to Actor Darshan on Renukaswamy Murder Case

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Supreme Court will hear on April 22 a plea by the Karnataka government challenging the Karnataka High Court’s decision to grant bail to Kannada actors Darshan Thoogudeepa, Pavithra Gowda, and 15 others in the Renukaswamy murder case. The decision was made by a bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan following an urgent mentioning by advocate Anil C Nishani. The accused were granted bail



by the high court on December 13, 2024. Actor Darshan, 47, was arrested on June 11, 2024, in connection with the murder of Renukaswamy, 33, whose body was found near a stormwater drain in Bengaluru on June 9, 2024. The police

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# Internal Tussle in Congress Over CM Post, Says BS Yediyurappa

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Former Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa alleged that internal conflicts within the Congress over the Chief Minister’s post are taking precedence over public welfare, as the party continues to grapple with leadership issues. Speaking ahead of the BJP’s day-and-night protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru, Yediyurappa accused the Congress of neglecting the people’s struggles amid rising prices.



He stated that the BJP’s satyagraha would demand the immediate rollback of what he called “anti-people price hikes.”

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## Siddaramaiah Camp Ministers Dr G, Rajanna Give D K Shivakumar the Cold Shoulder

- Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara skips key event
- Cooperation Minister K N Rajanna leaves without sharing dais
- BJP leaders present, but internal rift evident



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

In a sign of growing discord within the Karnataka government, Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara and Cooperation Minister K N Rajanna avoided sharing the dais with Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar during the 118th birth anniversary of Sri Shivakumara Swamiji at Siddaganga Mutt on wednesday. Although Parameshwara was listed as a chief guest, he did not attend the event. Rajanna, while visiting the Mutt and offering prayers, left without joining Shivakumar on

stage. The event was presided over by Shivakumar, but his colleagues' absence sent clear signals of discontent within the ruling party. Meanwhile, Shivakumar's loyalists, including former minister S R Srinivas, Kunigal MLA Dr Ranganath, and Nelamangala MLA N Srinivas, were present alongside him. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Minister of State for Railways V Somanna, and BJP MLAs B Suresh Gowda and G B Jyotiganesh also participated in the ceremony. The absence of key ministers from Siddaramaiah's camp at an important event on their home turf reflects simmering tensions between the two factions, particularly ahead of Siddaramaiah's scheduled meeting with high command leaders and Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi.

## New Timings for Govt Offices in North Karnataka Due to Summer Heat

TPN Correspondent | Karnataka  
The Karnataka government has issued an order adjusting working hours for government offices in certain northern districts, considering the scorching summer heat. The new timings, applicable from April to May, will be from 8 AM to 1.30 PM. This decision affects offices in Vijayapura and Bagalkote districts of Belagavi division and all districts within the Kalaburagi division. The move comes in response to a proposal from the Karnataka State Government Employees Association, Bengaluru, which highlighted the difficulties faced by employees

in performing their duties due to soaring temperatures during these months. According to the order, the government employees in these districts are expected to fulfill their duties without any interruption during the revised hours. Additionally, they must be prepared to work beyond these timings if required by the District Commissioners or Executive Officers of Zilla Panchayats in case of emergencies. The state government's decision aims to enhance productivity and ensure the well-being of employees by allowing them to avoid the most intense heat of the day.

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## BJP Holds Protests Demanding Withdrawal of Suspension of 18 Party MLAs

committee meetings and Assembly premises was unconstitutional. The BJP leaders warned of escalating their protest if the suspen-

sion is not revoked, stating that party MLAs and MLCs will boycott all legislature committee meetings until their demand is met.

## SC to Hear Karnataka Govt's Plea Against Bail to Actor Darshan on Renukaswamy Murder Case

alleged that Renukaswamy had sent obscene messages to Pavithra Gowda, sparking Darshan's anger and leading to the crime. A charge sheet filed by Bengaluru police on September 3, 2024, named Pavithra Gowda as the prime accused and Darshan as the second accused. The other 15 accused include Pawan K, Raghavendra, Nandish, Jagadish, Anukumar, Ravi Shankar, Dhan-

raj D, Vinay V, Nagaraju, Laxman, Deepak, Pradosh, Karthik, Keshavamurthy, and Nikhil Nayak. The Supreme Court had previously issued a notice to the accused on January 24, 2025, after the Karnataka government filed a petition challenging the high court's bail order. The court has now directed the accused to file their counter before the upcoming hearing.

## Internal Tussle in Congress Over CM Post, Says BS Yediyurappa

Yediyurappa urged citizens from all political backgrounds to join the protest, condemning the Congress for running a "Tughlaq Darbar" that disregards public welfare. The BJP leader criticized the government's decision to raise prices of essential commodities such as petrol, milk, bus fares, and electricity tariffs, claiming it has severely impacted lower and mid-

dle-class families. He also cited a steep increase in the cost of installing transformers for farmers from Rs 30,000 to Rs 2.5 lakh. Yediyurappa further attacked the Congress government over the reservation policy for Muslims in public contracts, questioning the fairness of such measures and urging the Chief Minister to ensure equal treatment for all citizens.

## BJP Launches State-Wide Protests Against Price Rise in Karnataka

- Vijayendra, Yediyurappa lead protests at Freedom Park
- Janakrosha Yatra scheduled to start from April 7
- BJP accuses government of deceiving the public



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The BJP on Wednesday launched state-wide protests in Karnataka against the Congress government, accusing it of failing to control the rising prices of essential commodities. The protests were held at district and taluk headquarters, with the party planning to continue demonstrations until April 13. In Bengaluru, BJP State President B.Y. Vijayendra and his father, B.S. Yediyurappa, led the protests at Freedom Park. Leaders of Opposition R. Asho-

ka and Chalavadi Narayanaswamy, along with several MLAs and former ministers, also participated. Addressing the gathering, Vijayendra alleged that the government was misleading the public and unfairly burdening the poor with rising costs. He pointed out the increased prices of petrol, diesel, milk, stamp duty, and medical expenses as evidence of the

government's negligence. The BJP has planned a 'Janakrosha Yatra' (Public Outrage March) starting on April 7 from Mysuru, to be flagged off by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi. The march will cover Mysuru and Chamara-janagar districts on the first day, followed by Mandya and Hassan on April 8, and Kodagu and Mangaluru on April 9. The first phase will conclude in Udupi and Chik-kamagaluru on April 10, with the second phase starting on April 13 to cover Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada districts. The BJP plans to conduct two-to-three-kilometre 'Padayatras' (foot marches) in each district as part of the movement, aiming to galvanize public support against the government's alleged failure in handling price hikes.

## Tamil Nadu-like Legal Battle if Governor Continues to Sit on Bills: Priyank Kharge

- Minister warns of Supreme Court approach if delays persist
- Governor seeks clarifications on key university bill
- Allegations of undue influence from Centre raised



TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru  
In a sign of deepening tensions between the Karnataka government and Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot, RDPR Minister Priyank Kharge warned that the state may be compelled to launch a 'Tamil Nadu-like' legal battle if the Governor continues to delay assent to bills passed by the legislature. The Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University Bill, which aims to replace the Governor as the chancellor of the university,

has been sent back for clarifications. Kharge emphasized that if the Governor remains unconvinced, the government would approach the Supreme Court, similar to the legal route taken by Tamil Nadu.

Speaking to reporters, Kharge accused the Governor of operating under the influence of the Centre, likening the situation to those in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, where he claimed the Governor's office was being used as a political tool. He further stated that the bill in question underwent proper legislative process, including discussion and voting. Kharge questioned whether it was appropriate for the Governor to override the legislature's decisions based on external directives, describing it as a "murder of democracy." The confrontation between the Karnataka government and the Governor appears to be escalating, with the possibility of a protracted legal battle looming if the deadlock persists.

## Karnataka HC Grants Six Weeks for Bike Taxi Aggregators to Halt Operations



- Ola, Uber, and Rapido given six weeks to cease services
- State government instructed to ensure compliance
- Petitioners sought registration of bikes as transport vehicles

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The Karnataka High Court has granted Ola, Uber, and Rapido six weeks to discontinue their bike taxi operations in the state. The order was issued on Wednesday by Justice B M Shyam Prasad while disposing of a batch of petitions filed by the companies, including Uber India Systems Private Limited and ANI Technologies Private Limited, seeking directions to the state government to register motorcycles as transport vehicles. The court made it clear that until the state government notifies the necessary guidelines

under Section 93 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and related rules, the petitioners cannot continue operating as bike taxi aggregators. The Transport Department has also been barred from registering motorcycles as transport vehicles until the guidelines are officially notified. The companies had been operating bike taxis based on an interim order from the court during the pendency of their petitions. However, the court has now provided them with a six-week period to conclude their services. After this period, the state government is mandated to ensure that all bike taxi operations cease completely. The court dismissed the petitioners' request for a stay on the order until they file an appeal, stating that the six-week window is already a reasonable period for them to wind up their services.

## SC/STs Continue to Suffer in Karnataka as Funds Vanish

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

Despite massive investments in SCP-TSP schemes intended to uplift Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Karnataka's marginalized communities remain trapped in poverty. Financial mismanagement and misuse of funds are alleged to be rampant, with officials exploiting systemic weaknesses for personal gain. Former IRS officer and Congress MLC Sudham Das stated that while the intent behind these schemes is commendable, the implementation remains severely flawed. According to him, if funds allocated over the last 11 years were directly transferred to beneficiaries, each family could have been richer by at least Rs 17 lakh. However, ongoing financial irregularities have hindered meaningful progress. In Mandya taluk, whistleblowers have exposed blatant misuse of funds between 2020 and 2024 under both BJP and Congress administrations. Instances of over-invoicing and unnecessary purchases were reported,

including the procurement of eight television sets for Rs 93,000 each—despite the same models being available online for Rs 47,990—resulting in a misappropriation of Rs 3.63 lakh. Additionally, three water purifiers were purchased for Rs 4.43 lakh even though existing ones were functioning properly. Further investigation revealed that between 2020 and 2024, government hostels in Mandya taluk misused over Rs 2.1 crore. Sources claim that Rs 16,000 crore from SCP-TSP funds, allocated to various departments, has been diverted to meet Congress's five guarantees, leaving crucial welfare programs underfunded. Social Welfare Minister Dr. H C Mahadevappa declined to comment on the allegations. Meanwhile, former National Scheduled Caste Commission chairman H Hanumanthappa urged the government to take greater care in ensuring funds reach their intended beneficiaries. With missing audit trails and continued negligence, corruption within the SCP-TSP schemes remains unchecked.





- JDS claims exclusion from BJP’s protest against price hike
- HD Kumara swamy expresses outrage through tweets
- Coordination issues between BJP and JDS surface again

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
Tensions have escalated between BJP and JDS in Karnataka over a recent protest against the Congress government's price hike policies. With increasing prices of essential services and goods such as bus fares, metro tickets, electricity, milk, yogurt, and diesel, public frustration

## Rift Emerges Between BJP and JDS Over Price Hike Protest



continues to grow. The BJP recently staged a one-hour sit-in protest at Freedom Park in Bengaluru, opposing the state government's price hike policies. However, the JDS has alleged that it was not invited to participate in the protest, sparking dissatisfaction within the party. JDS Legislature Party leader Suresh Babu voiced his frustration, stating that despite extending

support to the BJP on various issues, the expected reciprocity was lacking. Adding to the discontent, JDS leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy suggested forming a coordination committee to bridge gaps between the two parties. Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy also expressed his displeasure through a series of tweets condemning the continuous price hikes under

the Congress government. The JDS, which has been distancing itself from BJP's protests and Sankalpa Yatras, sees the latest incident as another instance of being sidelined. While the BJP has been vocal against the government's policies, the JDS claims it has been left out of significant protests, sparking concerns over the alliance's effectiveness. The disagreement follows similar coordination issues experienced during previous protests and Sankalpa Yatras. The BJP's sit-in protest at Freedom Park has now opened up fresh debates about the opposition's unity and effectiveness in countering the state government's decisions. Coordination between the two parties remains a matter of concern as public resentment over rising prices continues to build.

## Murugesh Nirani Praises Basanagowda Yatnal’s Concern for North Karnataka

**TPN Correspondent | Bagalkot**

Speaking to the media after inaugurating the new building of The Jamkhandi Urban Cooperative Bank, former Minister Murugesh Nirani appreciated the concern shown by expelled BJP MLA Basanagowda Patil Yatnal for the development of North Karnataka.

Nirani, acknowledging Yatnal's dedication towards regional growth, stated, "Their hopes for the development of North Karnataka are commendable, but the way they have chosen to fight is not right." While noting the positive intent behind Yatnal's advoca-



cy, Nirani also expressed disappointment over his methods. "There is nothing to advise them because they do not listen to anyone, but being from the same part, I will say that their aspirations are valid, but the approach is misguided," he added. The remarks come amid ongoing political tensions, with Yatnal's aggressive stance on regional issues drawing both support and criticism from various quarters.

## Why Shouldn’t DK Shivakumar Become CM: MLC AH Vishwanath

**TPN Correspondent | Mysuru**  
MLC A H Vishwanath on Wednesday questioned the leadership of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, asserting that D K Shivakumar, who has also significantly contributed to the Congress party, deserves an opportunity to become the Chief Minister. Speaking to the media in Mysuru, Vishwanath stated that Siddaramaiah did not build the Congress party but joined an already established organization. Vishwanath claimed that several key schemes implemented in 2013 were devised by him, Ramesh Kumar, and C M Ibrahim, rather than Siddaramaiah. He suggested that Shivakumar's contributions were equally valuable and questioned why he should not be considered for the chief ministerial role. Turning his attention to the BJP, Vishwanath lambasted the party for its ineffective opposition, stating that it lacks the administrative skills necessary to govern and even fails to



question the ruling party effectively. He accused the BJP of being unable to hold the Congress government accountable for its policies and decisions. Vishwanath further criticized the current state budget, arguing that it lacks proper guidelines for guarantee schemes and shows no signs of financial discipline. He emphasized the importance of framing the budget based on caste surveys to ensure inclusivity and fairness. According to Vishwanath, the absence of a structured approach in financial planning is detrimental to the state's progress. He reiterated that without addressing these fundamental issues, both the ruling party and the opposition would continue to fall short of serving the public effectively.

## Diesel Price Hike Another ‘Reward’ From Congress: BJP

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
BJP State President B Y Vijayendra has sharply criticized the Siddaramaiah government over the recent diesel price hike of Rs 2-3 per litre, accusing it of displaying "insatiable greed" at the expense of the common man. Drawing parallels to the mythological Bakasura, Vijayendra alleged that the government is relentlessly exploiting the people's hard-earned money through constant price increases on essential commodities, including food. Expressing his outrage on X, he stated, "Hike after hike, betrayal after betrayal! The people of Karnataka trusted this government with a massive mandate, and in return, they are being crushed under the burden of skyrocketing costs. Is this the reward for their trust?" According to Vijayendra, the government's lack of empathy is evident through its repeated



price hikes, with no concern for the struggles faced by ordinary citizens. Highlighting the urgency of the issue, he declared that the BJP launched statewide protests to demand a rollback of the diesel price hike. "Enough is enough! BJP Karnataka was launched statewide protests! We will not stop until these inhumane price hikes are rolled back! Karnataka deserves better this exploitation must end!" he asserted. The BJP leader's announcement signals escalating tensions between the opposition party and the Congress government over the issue of price hikes, with protests expected to intensify in the coming days.

## Rift Emerges Between BJP Leaders Vijayendra and Ashok

- Disagreement over handling of suspended MLAs issue
- Ashok’s letter to Speaker draws criticism within BJP
- Vijayendra raises concerns with high command leaders

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
Factional tensions within the Karnataka BJP have resurfaced, with a fresh rift reportedly emerging between Leader of the Opposition B.Y. Vijayendra and senior BJP leader R. Ashok over the handling of the suspension of 18 MLAs. The conflict began when R. Ashok, in a controversial move, wrote a letter to Speaker UT Khader, requesting the withdrawal of the suspension of 18 BJP MLAs who were penalized for causing a disturbance near

the Speaker's chair during an assembly session. This action was perceived as a setback for the BJP, which had planned a large-scale protest to pressure the Congress government over the suspension issue. B.Y. Vijayendra, relieved that his position as the state president remains secure following the ousting of Basanagowda Patil Yatnal, reportedly brought Ashok's approach to the attention of the party high command. According to party insiders, Ashok's actions have been criticized as undermining



the BJP's protest strategy, causing friction within the leadership. Ashok's decision to reach out to the Speaker against party directives has been viewed as ineffective opposition leadership, with several party members expressing disappointment. Vijayendra has reportedly filed a complaint against Ashok's approach, further straining rela-

tions between the two leaders. Despite their public show of unity, the disagreement continues to brew beneath the surface, with many BJP members questioning Ashok's leadership and strategy in countering the Congress government. The situation reflects ongoing factionalism within the party, which could affect its ability to mount a cohesive opposition.

## R Ashoka Defends BJP Against JDS Criticism Over Protests

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
Leader of Opposition R Ashoka addressed criticism from JDS leaders regarding the BJP's decision to organize protests without involving them. Speaking at Freedom Park, Ashoka stated that it is unfair for the JDS to express dissatisfaction when BJP conducts protests independently, as the JDS has held numerous protests without including the BJP in the past. Ashoka emphasized

that JDS leaders have previously organized dozens of protests at the same venue without inviting BJP members. He argued that it is unreasonable for JDS leaders to complain about not being invited when they have done the same on several occasions. According to Ashoka, the BJP and JDS share an electoral alliance and collaborate within the legislative House, but not all protests require coordination. Dismissing allegations of arrogance from JDS leaders, Ashoka



stated that such remarks are unwarranted. He clarified that the alliance between the two parties is primarily for election purposes, and differences in

organizing protests should not be mistaken for a lack of unity. Ashoka reiterated that while BJP and JDS continue to work together strategically within the House, both parties maintain the freedom to conduct independent protests against the government. He added that the nature of the alliance should not be misunderstood, and separate protests do not undermine their partnership in electoral matters.

## CPM Congress Aims to Unite Left Forces Against Fascism and Imperialism

**TPN Correspondent | Madurai**  
The CPM's 24th Party Congress commenced at Tamukkam ground in Madurai on Wednesday with a strong call to combat the Hindutva agenda and neo-liberal fascism. CPM Polit Bureau Coordinator Prakash Karat, in his inaugural address, described the congress as the most significant forum of the party, held in a city rich with Tamil literary heritage and a long history of working-class movements. Karat stated that the congress's primary task is to devise political strategies

to guide the party's work. He emphasized the need to understand the current political situation, the nature of the state, the ruling party, and the prevailing balance of class forces. According to Karat, the BJP government, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, represents a Hindutva-corporate nexus aligned with American imperialism. He accused the BJP of establishing dominance not only through electoral means but through ideological, cultural, and social spheres, along with authoritarian attacks on democracy. Karat reiterated the CPM's

commitment to fight against neo-liberal policies and Hindutva communalism. He highlighted rising inequality, youth unemployment, labor exploitation, and the worsening condition of farmers due to the ongoing agrarian crisis. The congress also witnessed speeches from CPM Polit Bureau Member Manik Sarkar and Central Committee Member K Balakrishnan. They emphasized the need to counter pro-corporate economic policies and isolate forces indulging in hatred politics. Leaders from various Left parties, including CPI National Secretary

### Prakash Karat inaugurates 24th Party Congress



D Raja, CPI(ML) General Secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, and others, called for uniting all secular and democratic forces to defeat the BJP-RSS. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Polit Bureau Member Brinda Karat, and delegates from across the nation participated in the event.



# Arena Productions to Stage The Kite Runner

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
Bengaluru-based theatre group Arena Productions is set to bring Khaled Hosseini's acclaimed novel The Kite Runner to life on stage. Directed by Tahera, the play will premiere on April 5 at Good Shepherd Auditorium, Museum Road, with shows at 3 PM and 7 PM.  
The adaptation is based on American playwright Matthew Spangler's theatrical version of the novel. Set against the backdrop of the Soviet Afghan War

and the rise of the Taliban, The Kite Runner follows the complex friendship between Amir, a wealthy boy, and Hassan, his father's servant's son. The story explores themes of friendship, redemption, love, faith, the class divide, and oppression.  
Tahera, who read the book 15 years ago, was deeply moved by its narrative. She believes the novel's emotional depth and powerful themes make it well-suited for the stage. "It's a beautiful story about two friends and how their lives

change over time," she shares.  
The play will feature actors Syed Saad, Subharathi Kundu, and Sheiraphi Silda Thangkhiew in key roles.  
Arena Productions has previously adapted classic works such as Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird and Anton Chekhov's The Seagull.  
With its compelling storytelling and emotional intensity, The Kite Runner promises to be a powerful theatrical experience. Tickets for the show are available online.



## Battling Fake News in Digital Age



**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
International Fact-Checking Day, observed on April 2, highlights the growing concern of fake news and the urgent need for public awareness in identifying misinformation. Experts stress that fake news spreads rapidly, particularly during elections, crises, and

major social events, misleading the public and influencing opinions. Raghavendra D L, a fact-checker at Naanu Gauri, explains that fake news does not follow a specific pattern but spikes around political events, with false claims about government schemes frequently circulating in Karnataka. Sensitive topics like the Farmers' Protests and re-

ligious gatherings, such as Kumbh Mela, have been targeted with AI-generated images and misleading narratives. Ekta Sharma, chief editor of Check4Spam, warns that financial misinformation is on the rise, leading to scams that exploit public fears.  
Additionally, The Media Triangle, an organization that conducts media literacy

workshops, points out that fake news thrives in situations where urgency is created, such as during elections or health crises. Social media influencers often contribute to misinformation by sharing unverified content for engagement, further complicating the issue. Fact-checking methods like Google Reverse Image Search allow users to verify images and videos by comparing them with existing online content. Cross-checking information with reputable news sources, being cautious of sensationalist headlines, and verifying the date and context of shared media are essential steps in combating fake news. Many old images and videos are often repurposed to misrepresent current events, misleading audiences.

As misinformation continues to be a significant issue, media literacy and responsible news consumption are crucial to ensuring that accurate information reaches the public. Encouraging people to verify sources and think critically before sharing information can play a vital role in curbing the spread of false narratives in the digital age.

## Bengaluru Initiative Aids Poor in Social Schemes

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
A new initiative in Bengaluru, Windows of Opportunities, is helping underprivileged individuals register for government social protection schemes at no cost.



Launched in December, the project has facilitated ₹3.7 crore in benefits to over 1,000 beneficiaries out of 19,000 registered so far. It provides access to 32 schemes covering health, pensions, banking, and scholarships.

Conceptualized by Rotary Bangalore Midtown (RBM) and implemented by Swasti, the initiative bridges the gap between marginalized communities and unclaimed government benefits. RBM president Palani Loganathan highlights that many deserving individuals miss out on assistance due to a lack of awareness.

To reach beneficiaries, registration kiosks have been set up at Victoria and Vani Vilas

Hospitals, where representatives inform visitors about available schemes.

Every 30 minutes, announcements are made, and those interested provide details such as Aadhaar number, ration card, and marital status. A proprietary software determines eligibility, and representatives assist with necessary documentation corrections.

The initiative also extends to Bommanahalli, where representatives go door-to-door, collaborating with local offices, self-help groups, and schools. Loganathan encourages Bengaleans to spread the word and direct their domestic workers, drivers, and security guards to these kiosks. The kiosks operate from Monday to Saturday.

## Rising Demand for Rental Coolers, Acs



**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
With Bengaluru's summer heat intensifying, the demand for rental air conditioners (ACs) and air coolers is soaring. Young professionals, students, short-term tech workers, and small businesses are increasingly opting for rentals instead of purchasing, making it a cost-effective and hassle-free choice. Several rental vendors have already run out of stock, as inquiries began as early as February. The affordability of renting is a major factor—where a new air cooler costs upwards of ₹5,000, monthly rental rates range from ₹790 to ₹1,200. Similarly, while pur-

chasing a 1-tonne AC starts at ₹25,000, rental rates for various models range from ₹800 to ₹3,000 per month, sometimes including installation and servicing. Vendors report that the rental period has been increasing yearly as Bengaluru's summers become hotter. Rentit4me, a rental marketplace, notes that while customers previously rented ACs for three months before extending, they now directly opt for six-month rentals, with lower rates for longer durations. Banking professional Anusha Murthy, who rented a portable AC for her 1BHK apartment in BTM Layout, finds it convenient, considering Bengaluru's relatively mod-

erate climate. Rental agencies across the city are witnessing a surge in orders. RentX in Doddabanaswadi has dispatched over 100 units across Bengaluru and is nearly out of stock. S N S Cool System in R T Nagar has fulfilled 15 AC rental orders and is receiving about 10 inquiries daily. Rentomojo's J P Nagar branch has run out of coolers, with only a few ACs left, while Rentzy in R T Nagar, which focuses on long-term rentals, is handling 150 inquiries daily. With a 40% increase in demand since last year, vendors are struggling to meet the surge, highlighting the city's growing preference for temporary cooling solutions.

## Bengaluru Waste Firm Secures ₹6 Crore Funding

**TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru**  
Bengaluru-based waste management company Hasiiru Dala Innovations (HDI) has raised ₹6 crore in a pre-Series A equity funding round to expand its sustainable operations. The investment was led by Rainmatter Fintech Investments, with Next Bharat Ventures IFSC, a Suzuki-backed alternative investment firm, making its first direct portfolio investment in HDI. The company focuses on inclusive circularity by integrating waste pickers and informal waste workers into the formal economy, transforming them into Green Collar professionals and entrepreneurs. With this fresh infusion of capital, HDI plans

to scale its plastics circularity business, increase recycling capacity, and improve operational efficiency.  
Additionally, the funding will support the expansion of its Bio-gas plant in partnership with Carbon Masters, furthering its commitment to waste-to-energy solutions. HDI has been at the forefront of sustainable initiatives, including the introduction of a portable refilling water station in 2022 as an alternative to single-use plastic water bottles. This move aligned with its broader goal of reducing environmental impact while creating economic opportunities for marginalized waste workers. The company's model plays a crucial role in advancing circular economy

principles by ensuring that waste is effectively managed and converted into valuable resources. With Bengaluru facing mounting waste management challenges, HDI's efforts contribute to a cleaner, more sustainable urban environment. The latest funding round is expected to enhance its capabilities, allowing the organization to refine its processes, expand its reach, and reinforce its mission of sustainable waste management.  
By integrating technology, innovation, and social impact, HDI continues to lead the way in transforming waste into opportunity, creating a significant impact on both the environment and the livelihoods of waste workers.





# ORR Bengaluru to Get Major Upgrade

TPN Correspondent | Bengaluru

The 22.7 km stretch of Bengaluru's Outer Ring Road (ORR), running from K.R. Puram to Central Silk Board, is set to undergo a significant transformation. The redevelopment project, aimed at improving infrastructure and easing traffic congestion, will include a white-topped main carriage-way, uniform service roads, well-equipped footpaths, and upgraded public utilities. Additionally, air-conditioned bus shelters will be installed along the route to enhance the commuting experience for passengers.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has allocated ₹400 crore for the project in its latest budget. To ensure the efficient execution of the revamp, the project will

be handled by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), which the government plans to constitute soon. This SPV will oversee not only the ORR project but also other large-scale infrastructure initiatives, including tunnel roads.

The introduction of a white-topped road—concrete layering over asphalt—is expected to enhance the durability of the ORR while reducing maintenance costs. Service roads along the stretch will be made uniform and better integrated with the main road to ensure smooth vehicular movement. Pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, including wider footpaths, will also be incorporated into the design to promote walkability in the area. Public transport users will benefit from the planned installation of air-conditioned bus shelters,

which will provide comfort and convenience, especially during Bengaluru's extreme weather conditions. The initiative aligns with the city's broader efforts to improve public transport infrastructure and encourage more people to opt for buses over private vehicles, potentially reducing traffic congestion.

The ORR has long been a crucial corridor for Bengaluru's IT hubs, connecting major tech parks and residential areas. However, it has also been notorious for severe traffic congestion, particularly during peak hours. The planned revamp is expected to significantly ease bottlenecks, enhance road quality, and create a more commuter-friendly environment.

According to officials, work on the project is likely to commence within the next four months. Once completed, the



revamped ORR is expected to set a benchmark for urban road infrastructure in Bengaluru, improving the overall commuting experience for thousands of daily travelers.



## Karnataka HC Upholds Bengaluru Metro Fare Hike

TPN Correspondent | Bangalore

The Karnataka High Court has refused to interfere with the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited's (BMRCL) decision to increase metro fares, stating that fare-related matters fall under the domain of experts and not the judiciary. On Tuesday, the court dismissed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition challenging the fare hike.

The petition, filed by Bengaluru resident Sanath Kumar Shetty and others, argued that the revised fare structure was irrational as it did not adhere to a station-to-station pricing model. The petitioners contended that the hike violated

Section 33 of the Metro Rail (Operation and Maintenance) Act, 2002, and amounted to a breach of promise as it exceeded the 'promised' fare limits.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice N.V. Anjaria and Justice K.V. Aravind ruled against the petition, stating that fare determination involves technical and financial considerations best handled by relevant authorities. The court emphasized that pricing decisions require expertise and policy evaluation, which do not fall within the purview of judicial review.

BMRCL had earlier justified the fare increase, citing rising operational costs, maintenance expenses, and the need

for financial sustainability. Officials maintained that the revision was necessary to ensure the long-term viability of metro services and improve infrastructure for commuters.

The metro fare hike has sparked debates in Bengaluru, with commuters expressing concerns over affordability. However, experts argue that periodic fare adjustments are essential for sustaining public transport systems.

With the court's ruling, the revised fares will remain in effect, and further challenges to the pricing policy will have to be addressed through administrative channels rather than legal proceedings.

## Five Killed in Buldhana Highway Crash

TPN Correspondent | Maharashtra

A tragic accident on the Khamgaon-Shegaon highway in Maharashtra's Buldhana district claimed the lives of five people on Wednesday morning. According to police reports, the crash involved a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) bus and a Bolero SUV. The impact was severe, and moments later, a private bus also collided with the two vehicles, further worsening the situation.

The accident occurred in the early hours, causing chaos on the busy highway. Eyewitnesses reported that the MSRTC bus, traveling at high speed, crashed into the Bolero, leading to an immediate pile-up. The private bus, unable to stop in time, rammed into the already damaged vehicles, increasing the scale of destruction. Police officials and emergency response teams rushed to the site to provide aid and assess the damage.

Among the five deceased, some were passengers of the SUV, while others were inside the buses. Several injured individuals were quickly transported to nearby hospitals for treatment.



ment. Authorities have not yet released the names of the victims, but families are being informed. Efforts are also underway to extricate the driver of the private bus, who remains trapped inside the mangled front section of the vehicle.

The accident disrupted traffic on the highway, leading to long delays as officials worked to clear the wreckage. Local police have launched an investigation to determine the exact cause of the collision, with initial reports suggesting that overspeeding and low visibility may have been contributing factors. Road safety concerns continue to be a pressing issue in the region, with frequent

accidents reported on major highways. Authorities have urged drivers to exercise caution and adhere to speed limits to prevent such tragedies. Meanwhile, government agencies are being called upon to improve road infrastructure and implement stricter safety regulations.

As rescue operations continue, officials are ensuring that those injured receive timely medical care, while families of the deceased are being provided with necessary support. The incident has once again highlighted the need for enhanced traffic monitoring and preventive measures to reduce road fatalities in Maharashtra.

## Kerala HC Stays Action Against Parents

TPN Correspondent | Kerala

The Kerala High Court has granted interim relief to the parents of two minor girls who died in the Walayar case, ordering a halt on all coercive actions, including arrest, against them. The court issued the ruling on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, in response to petitions filed by the parents challenging the charge sheet submitted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which had named them as accused in the case.

Justice C. Jayachandran, who presided over the hearing, ruled that the parents would not be required to appear before the CBI Special Court in Ernakulam until their petitions are fully heard and decided. This order provides temporary protection to the parents, who have been contesting the accusations brought against them.

The Walayar case has been one of Kerala's most controversial child abuse and death investigations. The two sisters were found dead under suspicious circumstances, sparking



widespread public outrage and demands for a fair and thorough investigation. Initially handled by the Kerala police, the case was later handed over to the CBI after allegations of lapses in the initial probe. The CBI's charge sheet, which implicates the parents, has added a new layer of complexity to the already sensitive case.

The court's decision ensures that the parents will not face immediate legal action while the matter is under judicial scrutiny.

Meanwhile, the case continues to draw significant public attention, with human rights activists and legal experts closely monitoring developments.

ments. Many have raised concerns over the CBI's findings, questioning whether justice is truly being served in a case that has already seen multiple twists and setbacks.

As the legal battle unfolds, the High Court's stay on coercive measures provides the parents with temporary relief. However, with the final hearing still pending, the outcome of their petitions will be crucial in determining the next course of action in this long-drawn legal struggle. The case remains one of the most debated in Kerala, with continued calls for transparency, accountability, and justice for the deceased sisters.

## Kolkata Hosts Boiparay Boi Utsab Festival

TPN Correspondent | Kolkata

Kolkata, known for its deep literary culture, is hosting the Boiparay Boi Utsab, a grand literary festival at College Square Ground from April 1 to 7. This festival, set in the city's famous book hub, promises to be a paradise for book lovers, offering a diverse collection of Bengali and English publications. The event features 55 stalls and brings together 70 publishers, creating a vibrant space for literature enthusiasts, writers, and publishers to celebrate Kolkata's rich literary heritage.

The Boiparay Boi Utsab is designed to cater to a wide audience, including avid readers, students, and aspiring writers. With books spanning multiple genres, the festival provides a platform for discovering new works, engaging with authors, and exploring literary trends. Visitors can browse through an extensive range of books, from contemporary fiction and classic literature to academic and children's books, ensuring

something for every kind of reader.

Publishers participating in the event include some of Bengal's most renowned names, alongside emerging independent publishers looking to reach a broader audience. The stalls not only showcase books but also serve as a hub for literary discussions, book launches, and interactive sessions with authors. This year's festival places special emphasis on Bengali literature, reflecting the city's strong cultural and linguistic identity while also promoting English-language works to attract a wider readership.

College Square Ground, located in the heart of Kolkata, has long been associated with books and intellectual pursuits, making it the perfect venue for such an event. The Boiparay Boi Utsab aligns with the city's tradition of nurturing literary



discussions and fostering a love for reading among all age groups.

Beyond book sales, the festival aims to create an engaging atmosphere for literature enthusiasts to exchange ideas, discover new authors, and support the publishing industry. As digital media continues to grow, events like these play a crucial role in keeping the culture of reading alive. With an impressive lineup of publishers and an extensive collection of books, the Boiparay Boi Utsab is set to be a literary celebration that captures the essence of Kolkata's love for books.



# A Visionary and Founder of RSS – Dr. Keshav Baliram Hegdewar

This article serves as a heartfelt tribute to Dr. Hegdewar, paying profound respect to his contributions and legacy. It emphasizes the considerable impact he had on society and the principles he advocated, honoring his vision and commitment to the community. Through this recognition, we not only celebrate his accomplishments but also acknowledge the lasting influence he continues to have on future generations. For the country's longevity and general well-being, RSS is a doctor's prescription.

## Commemorating Dr. Keshav Baliram Hegdewar on His Birth Anniversary

Today, we pay tribute to Dr. Keshav Baliram Hegdewar, an extraordinary visionary and statesman often regarded as an unsung Bharat Ratna. His unwavering dedication to nation-building, cultural preservation, and social reform played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Dr. Keshav Baliram Hegdewar (April 1, 1889 – June 21, 1940), known as “Doctorji,” was an Indian physician and a prominent Hindutva activist who founded the RSS in Nagpur in 1925, driven by the ideals of Hindu nationalism. His great-great-grandfather migrated from Kandakurthi, Nizamabad in Telangana to Nagpur. Hegdewar's ideology was influenced by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's Hindutva, as well as the teachings of Samarth Ramdas and Lokmanya Tilak. He frequently quoted Tukaram in his letters.

Established on Vijayadashami, the RSS aimed to foster cultural unity, spiritual revival, discipline, and national consciousness among Indians, viewing these as essential for India's independence. Hegdewar deliberately chose the term ‘Rashtriya’ to emphasize Bharat's identity, believing that India's ancient civilization deserved restoration after centuries of foreign rule. He envisioned the RSS as a platform for cultivating individuals of strong character and unwavering commitment to the nation.

## Strong Nationalism Rooted in Cultural Heritage

Dr. Hegdewar believed that nationhood is not merely political but deeply civilizational. He emphasized reviving and strengthening India's cultural identity, ensuring that people remained connected to their roots. He saw Bharat as a great civilization (Vishwa Guru) and envisioned a society that took pride in its heritage while embracing modernity. As the founder of the RSS, Dr. Hegdewar dreamed of an India that was self-reliant and culturally vibrant. He firmly believed that the strength of a nation lies in its society. Thus, he devoted his life to nurturing a disciplined, patriotic, and service-oriented citizenry. Understanding that social fragmentation and disunity were major challenges, he sought to unify Hindus across caste, regional, and linguistic lines under a common national identity.

## Organizing Society for National Strength

Hegdewar saw social fragmentation as one of India's greatest weaknesses. His goal was to unify all sections of Hindu society, cutting across caste, region, and language, to foster a shared national consciousness. He believed that an organized, disciplined, and service-minded society was essential for Bharat's strength. He envisioned a nation of individuals with high moral standards, discipline, and a spirit of selfless service. To achieve this, he developed the Shakha system, which promoted physical fitness, ideological clarity, and leadership skills.

## Selfless Service and Social Transformation

Dr. Hegdewar strongly believed in Seva (selfless service) as a cornerstone of nation-building. Under his leadership, the RSS engaged in social service, disaster relief, rural development, and tribal welfare. What began as a modest initiative has now evolved into the world's largest NGO. Today, the RSS runs over 150,000 social service projects and operates 73,117 daily Shakhas, with approximately 60 lakh volunteers actively contributing to society.

## Character Building and Discipline

Hegdewar's vision centered on building strong individuals with high moral character, discipline, and a sense of national duty. The Shakha system was designed to instill these values through structured training in physical fitness, leadership, and ideological clarity. He emphasized a “nation-first” mindset, where personal ambitions took a backseat to national progress.

## National Security and Awareness

He firmly believed that a nation must remain vigilant and prepared to defend itself against potential threats. To this end, he promoted martial and physical training to develop strength and



**Dr. Buragadda Srinadh**  
*Author, Former National consultant for NRHM, Ministry of Health, Govt of India*

resilience among the younger generation. His vision underscored the importance of self-reliance in defense, economic stability, and effective governance. He aimed to ensure that India would never again fall under foreign domination, advocating for a robust framework that empowered the nation to stand independently and confidently in the face of external challenges.

## Political Non-Alignment but Ideological Influence

Despite his strong nationalist ideology, Dr. Hegdewar chose not to involve the RSS directly in political activities. However, he was deeply committed to fostering socially aware individuals capable of effecting meaningful change in governance. His vision laid the groundwork for subsequent political movements, influencing the leadership trajectory in India. The RSS has played a significant role in shaping India's political landscape, contributing to the rise of two prime ministers, two presidents, and numerous chief ministers across various states. This influence is largely credited to Dr. Hegdewar's foundational work and vision. Through its extensive grassroots network, the RSS has nurtured leaders who have left an indelible mark on India's governance and development.

## Legacy of Dr. Hegdewar

Dr. Keshav Baliram Hegdewar's contributions to nation-building, cultural revival, and social unity continue to inspire generations. His legacy lives on through the RSS and its countless initiatives that uphold his vision of a disciplined, united, and service-oriented Bharat. As we commemorate his birth anniversary, we honor a man whose unwavering dedication helped

shape the nation's path toward self-reliance and cultural resurgence.

In the last hundred years, various ideological movements and political parties have appeared, flourished, and eventually disappeared around the world, including in India. As we progress through time, each new generation experiences significant advancements in technology and knowledge that can make certain ideologies outdated, contributing to their decline. However, amid this continuous transformation, the ideology of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), founded by Dr. K.B. Hegdewar, has demonstrated remarkable resilience and flexibility in adapting to changing circumstances. It's important to note that although many young people and educated elites often overlook traditional ideologies, there is a contradiction in the increasing acceptance of RSS principles among these demographics. This rise in recognition indicates that RSS ideology is not just a historical artifact but a vital foundational structure that contributes to the nation's long-term viability. By adapting to modern values while upholding essential traditional beliefs, the RSS has succeeded in maintaining its relevance in today's socio-political environment, showcasing its important role in shaping the future of India. This article serves as a heartfelt tribute to Dr. Hegdewar, paying profound respect to his contributions and legacy. It emphasizes the considerable impact he had on society and the principles he advocated, honoring his vision and commitment to the community. Through this recognition, we not only celebrate his accomplishments but also acknowledge the lasting influence he continues to have on future generations.



# Delimitation Row: It's Not Just A North vs South Story

Delimitation, the process of reallocating seats in Parliament and state assemblies based on population, has remained dormant for the last 50 years, with its last freeze occurring in 2000 due to a constitutional amendment. The exercise, scheduled for 2026, is now in limbo, awaiting the completion of the Census, which was delayed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 22, 2025, a significant meeting in Chennai brought together Chief Ministers from Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Kerala, and Punjab, along with leaders from regional parties. These leaders—MK Stalin (Tamil Nadu), Revanth Reddy (Telangana), Pinarayi Vijayan (Kerala), Bhagwant Mann (Punjab), and others—agreed to propose that the upcoming delimitation exercise either be delayed again or conducted in a manner that ensures fairness. Notably absent from the meeting was Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu, whose earlier stance against delimitation in 2000 raised questions about his current position.

The key takeaway from the Chennai meeting is that the delimitation issue cannot be reduced to a simple North-South divide. A straightforward approach based on population numbers would disadvantage states like those in the South, which have successfully stabilized their populations through family planning initiatives. This could dilute the political strength of these states in Parliament. Leaders from states like Punjab, too, are concerned about the potential erosion of their political representation, fearing their states might align with smaller, less populated neighbors like Haryana.

The BJP has labeled the push for delimitation a political move, suggesting it is a distraction from the government's governance challenges. Despite repeated assurances from Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the concerns voiced at the meeting remain unresolved. The leaders from the meeting are planning to convene again in Hyderabad to continue the discussions.

In the next year, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala, Assam, and West Bengal will hold assembly elections, which adds a layer of political significance to Stalin's involvement in the delimitation discussions. The move is seen as a way for Stalin to strengthen his national political profile, especially as he prepares for the future leadership transition of the DMK to his son, Udhayanidhi.

As for the delimitation process itself, there are two primary options: it could proceed based on the 2011 Census or await the results of a new Census, with no clear timeline in sight. Some leaders suggest freezing the exercise for another 25 years, allowing other states time to stabilize their populations. Alternatively, delimitation could occur for state assemblies without affecting the balance in the national Parliament.

Several proposals have emerged from the Chennai meeting to create a more equitable formula, including considering states' fiscal contributions and development levels or increasing the Southern states' representation in the Lok Sabha. Another option includes strengthening the Rajya Sabha to balance the Lower House's composition.

Ultimately, the BJP-led government must work collaboratively with all stakeholders to find a solution that respects India's federal structure. Unilateral actions will only deepen distrust and disrupt the delicate balance of power between the center and states.



# Indian Army Urges Pakistan to Honor Ceasefire

The Indian Army has called on the Pakistan Army to adhere to the 2021 ceasefire agreement following a recent skirmish along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch, Jammu and Kashmir. On Wednesday, a spokesperson from the Army's Jammu-based unit reiterated the importance of maintaining peace and respecting the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMO) understanding established between the two nations in 2021. The statement comes after reports of ceasefire violations in the Poonch sector, where Pakistani forces allegedly engaged in unprovoked firing. In response, the Indian Army emphasized its commitment to peace along the LoC while also reaffirming its readiness to protect national security if provoked. The 2021 DGMO agreement was a significant diplomatic break-



through between India and Pakistan, aimed at reducing border tensions by ensuring both sides strictly observe the ceasefire. Since its implementation, there has been a considerable decline in cross-border firing incidents,

bringing relief to civilians living along the LoC. However, sporadic skirmishes and alleged violations have continued to threaten the fragile peace in the region. India's latest appeal to Pakistan underscores the need for con-

tinued adherence to the agreement to prevent escalation and ensure stability in the border areas. Defense experts believe that sustained dialogue and mutual trust between the two nations' military leadership are essential to maintaining long-term peace along the LoC. While the Indian Army remains committed to upholding the agreement, officials have also made it clear that any aggression will be met with a firm response. Meanwhile, security forces remain on high alert, closely monitoring movements along the border to prevent any further escalation. The situation along the LoC remains tense, but diplomatic and military efforts are expected to continue in order to uphold the principles of the 2021 ceasefire understanding and ensure a peaceful environment in the region.



## India, Chile to Begin Talks on Economic Pact

India and Chile have agreed to commence negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), marking a significant step toward strengthening bilateral trade and economic cooperation. The announcement came following a high-level meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chilean President Gabriel Boric Font, who is currently on an official visit to India. Describing Chile as India's key partner in Latin America, Modi highlighted the growing ties between the two nations and emphasized Chile's role as the "gateway to Antarctica". He stated that discussions will focus on critical minerals, supply chain resilience, and economic diversification, ensuring mutual benefits for both countries. Modi further outlined key areas of collaboration, particularly in agriculture and food security, where India and Chile will leverage each other's expertise to enhance production and distribution capabilities. Given Chile's vast natural resources, cooperation in critical minerals is expected to be a focal point of the agreement, strengthening India's supply chains for industries such as renewable energy, electric vehicles, and electronics manufacturing. Additionally, Modi stressed the growing defense cooperation between the two nations, describing it as a reflection of deep mutual trust. He proposed the development of joint defense industrial manufacturing and supply chains, ensuring that both countries benefit from enhanced military production and technology sharing. Beyond trade and defense, security cooperation was also a key topic of discussion. Modi emphasized the need for collaborative efforts to combat organized crime, drug trafficking, and terrorism, signaling deeper engagement between Indian and Chilean law enforcement agencies. The India-Chile CEPA is expected to significantly boost bilateral trade and investment, offering new market opportunities and strengthening economic ties between the two nations. Both leaders expressed optimism about the agreement, viewing it as a milestone in India-Chile relations that will foster long-term growth and stability. As negotiations begin, the partnership between India and Chile is poised to expand across multiple sectors, enhancing diplomatic and economic cooperation on a global scale.

## Savitri Jindal Becomes India's Richest Woman



Savitri Jindal, the matriarch of the OP Jindal Group, has been named India's richest woman in the Forbes Billionaire List 2025, with a net worth of \$35.5 billion. She is now India's third wealthiest individual, trailing only Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, and remains the only woman in India's top 10 billionaires. Jindal chairs the Jindal Group, a vast conglomerate with interests in steel, power, cement, and infrastructure. The company was founded by her late husband, Om Prakash Jindal, who passed away in a 2005 helicopter crash. Following his death, the business was divided among their four sons, each overseeing different sectors. Her son Sajjan Jindal, based in Mumbai, leads JSW Steel, JSW Cement, and JSW Paints, and took JSW Infrastructure public in 2023. In 2024, he expanded into the electric vehicle sector, acquiring a 35% stake in MG Motor India, a subsidiary of China's SAIC Motor. Savitri Jindal's wealth surge highlights the continued expansion of the Jindal Group, which has played a pivotal role in India's industrial growth. Despite inheriting the business under tragic circumstances, she has successfully steered the company's growth and diversification, cementing her status as one of India's most influential business leaders.

## India Seeks to Rebuild Ties with China

In a significant diplomatic move, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri has emphasized the opportunity to rebuild relations between India and China, despite past challenges. Speaking at an event hosted by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi on Tuesday night to mark 75 years of diplomatic ties, Misri acknowledged the complex history between the two nations but stressed the need for a stable and cooperative future. Highlighting the importance of peace and tranquility along the border, Misri underscored that resolving military tensions in Eastern Ladakh is crucial for the smooth development of bilateral relations. He noted that while some border issues have been addressed, lasting progress requires mutual respect, sensitivity, and shared interests—a three-fold principle that India believes is essential for rebuilding trust. Acknowledging the difficulties ahead, Misri affirmed India's commitment to walking the challenging path toward normalization. He also cited recent engagements, including the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, as positive steps toward restoring a stable and



predictable partnership. Misri outlined several areas of renewed cooperation, including joint efforts on river management, direct air connectivity, and the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. These initiatives, he said, are part of a broader effort to turn recent diplomatic "promising beginnings" into tangible benefits for both nations. China's Ambassador to India, Xu Feihong, echoed similar sentiments, emphasizing the need to repair and strengthen ties between the two countries. Both leaders acknowledged that

a healthy bilateral relationship between India and China is not just important for their respective nations but also plays a critical role in global stability and progress. As geopolitical shifts continue to reshape Asia's power dynamics, India's willingness to engage in dialogue with China marks a significant diplomatic development. While past tensions remain a challenge, both nations appear to be moving cautiously toward rebuilding cooperation through strategic diplomacy and confidence-building measures.

# India, Nepal Sign MoUs for Development Projects

India and Nepal have signed 10 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to support high-impact community development projects across Nepal, with financial assistance from India amounting to Nepalese Rs. 625 million. The agreements, inked on April 1, 2025, focus on advancing infrastructure and services in the education, health, and cultural sectors of the Himalayan nation. According to a statement released by the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, these MoUs aim to enhance Nepal's public infrastructure and strengthen bilateral ties between the two neighboring countries. The projects funded under these agreements will support schools, hospitals, and cultural institutions, contributing to long-term socio-economic development in Nepal. India has been a key partner in Nepal's growth, providing assistance in various sectors through grants, infrastructure development, and humanitarian aid. Over the years, several such agreements have been implemented to improve essential services, particularly in rural and underserved communities. The latest MoUs reflect India's continued commitment to fostering stronger people-to-people ties and promoting sustainable development in Nepal.

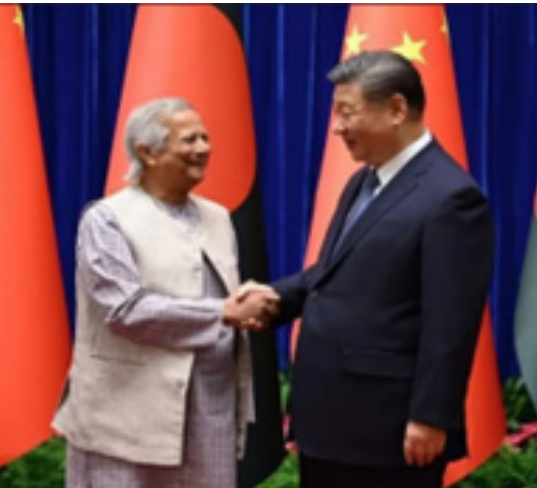


Officials from both sides expressed optimism about the impact of these projects. Nepalese authorities welcomed the initiative, highlighting the positive role of Indian assistance in uplifting local communities and strengthening regional cooperation. Meanwhile, Indian officials emphasized the shared historical, cultural, and economic ties

between the two nations, reiterating India's support for Nepal's development agenda. The newly signed agreements will facilitate the construction and renovation of schools, healthcare centers, and heritage sites, ensuring better access to education, medical facilities, and cultural preservation efforts. These initiatives are expected

to improve the quality of life for thousands of Nepalese citizens while reinforcing the deep-rooted friendship between India and Nepal. With these MoUs in place, both countries look forward to efficient execution and timely completion of the projects, further solidifying their strategic and developmental partnership in the region.





## "Break Up Bangladesh": Tripura Ex-Royal On "Extension Of China" Remark

TPN Correspondent | China

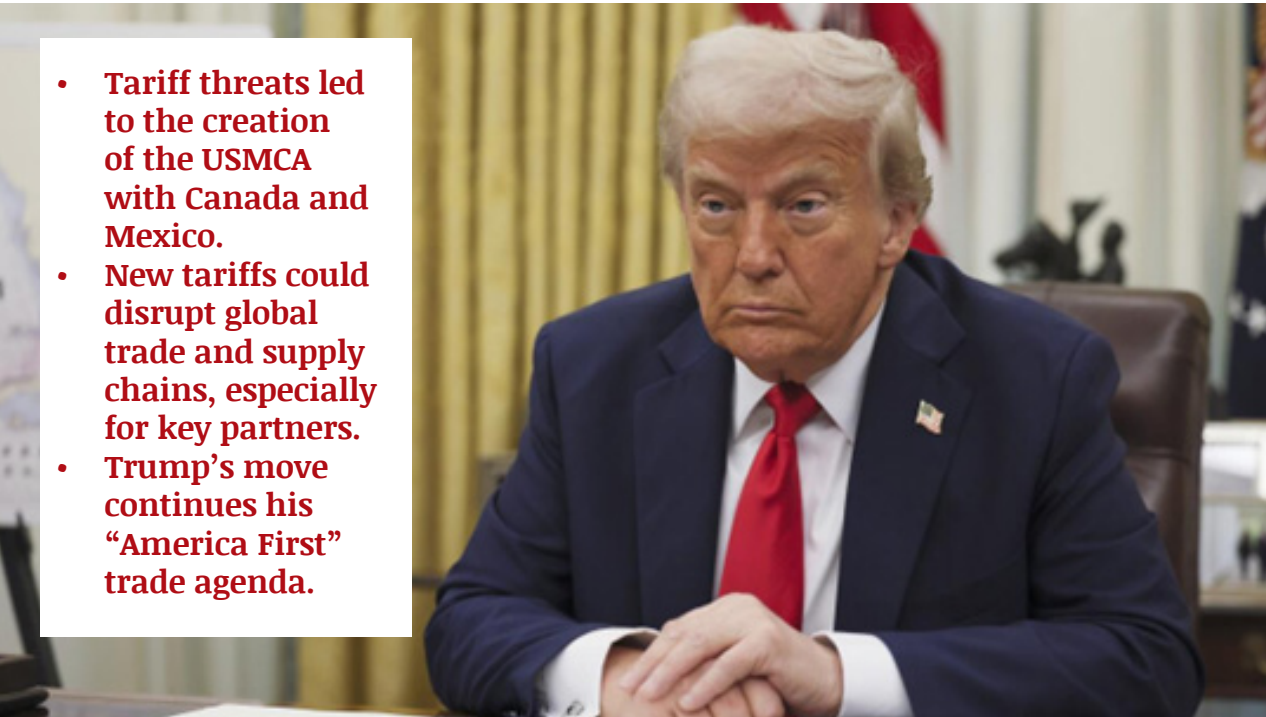
Bangladesh's interim government adviser, Muhammad Yunus, sparked controversy during a recent four-day visit to Beijing by subtly urging China to "extend" its influence in the region, leveraging the landlocked status of India's northeastern "seven sister states." In a video that surfaced on social media upon his return, Yunus suggested that Bangladesh, as the "guardian of the ocean" for India's northeast, could serve as a strategic base for China. He framed this as an economic opportunity, encouraging Beijing to build infrastructure, market goods, and export through Bangladesh, indirectly pressuring India's isolated states.

"The seven states of India... are completely landlocked. They have no way to reach the ocean. We are the only guardian of the region," Yunus stated, adding that this "opens up a huge possibility for China." Defence analysts criticized the remarks as provocative, while Sanjeev Sanyal, a member of PM Modi's economic advisory council, questioned their intent on X, asking, "What exactly is the significance of 7 Indian states being landlocked?"

During his Beijing visit, Yunus held talks with Xi Jinping, securing agreements to deepen China-Bangladesh ties. These include Chinese investment in modernizing Mongla Port with \$400 million, expanding the China Economic and Industrial Zone in Chattogram with \$350 million, and \$150 million for technical assistance. Yunus also sought a 50-year partnership on river water management, praising China as a "master" in the field. Bangladesh requested aid for managing the Teesta River, shared with India, shifting away from previous direct cooperation with New Delhi, and signed a hydrological data-sharing deal for the Yarlung Zangbo-Jamuna River.

The remarks and agreements signal a strategic pivot toward China, raising eyebrows in India. While Yunus thanked Beijing for enhancing maritime and economic collaboration, his comments about India's northeast have drawn scrutiny. As of April 1, 2025, this development underscores Bangladesh's balancing act between its powerful neighbors, with Yunus seemingly testing New Delhi's patience while courting Chinese investment to bolster Dhaka's regional clout.

# Donald Trump's global trade war: A timeline



- **Tariff threats led to the creation of the USMCA with Canada and Mexico.**
- **New tariffs could disrupt global trade and supply chains, especially for key partners.**
- **Trump's move continues his "America First" trade agenda.**

TPN Correspondent | Washington

U.S. President Donald Trump's highly anticipated reciprocal tariffs are set to take effect on April 2, 2025. These tariffs, which will apply to all countries, are expected to significantly impact major trade partners such as India, China, and the European Union. Trump, a known advocate for protectionist policies, is no stranger to using tariffs as a tool in international trade negotiations. During his first term, he initiated a trade war, primarily targeting China. He imposed tariffs on a wide range of Chinese goods, aiming to reduce

the U.S. trade deficit with China and push Beijing into negotiating more favorable trade terms. In response, China imposed its own retaliatory tariffs on U.S. products, ranging from agricultural goods to automobiles, escalating tensions between the two largest economies in the world. The tariffs also played a key role in reshaping North American trade relations. Trump used the threat of additional tariffs to pressure Canada and Mexico into renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), ultimately leading to the creation of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) in 2020. The deal was touted as a

victory for Trump, as it included provisions meant to address U.S. concerns over labor, intellectual property, and trade imbalances.

With the implementation of the new reciprocal tariffs, Trump is signaling his continued commitment to an "America First" trade policy. These tariffs are expected to further complicate global trade dynamics, as countries like India, China, and the EU may face additional costs and retaliatory measures. As trade negotiations intensify in the coming months, businesses and governments worldwide will be closely monitoring the potential ripple effects on global supply chains and markets.



## Consequences to be 'catastrophic': Russia after Trump's Iran bombing threat

TPN Correspondent ,Israel

Russia has issued a stern warning following U.S. President Donald Trump's recent threat to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities unless the country agrees to a deal over its nuclear program. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov condemned the threat, emphasizing the "catastrophic" consequences of any military action against Iran's nuclear infrastructure.

In an interview with International Affairs on Tuesday, Ryabkov stated, "Threats are indeed being heard, ultimatums are also being heard," referring to the heightened rhetoric coming from Washington. He went on to express Russia's strong opposition, saying, "We consider such methods inappropriate, we condemn them, and we see them as an attempt to impose the U.S. will on Iran."

This warning comes as tensions between the U.S. and Iran continue to escalate. Trump's administration has taken a hard-line stance against Iran's nuclear ambitions, demanding that Tehran agree to new terms that would curb its nuclear activities. Iran, however, has resisted U.S. pressure, maintaining that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes and rejecting calls for further concessions.

# Obama Tried To Block Kamala Harris' Nomination After Biden's Exit: Book

TPN Correspondent | Washinton

Barack Obama played a crucial, behind-the-scenes role in preventing Kamala Harris from becoming the Democratic nominee after Joe Biden withdrew from the 2024 race, according to an upcoming book. Co-authored by Jonathan Allen, FIGHT: Inside the Wildest Battle for the White House, the book reveals Obama's reluctance to support both Biden's continuation in office and Harris as his successor.

Sources close to Obama suggest that the former president did not believe Biden should run again and actively worked to block Harris from assuming the nomination. Despite Harris gaining support from key party figures, Obama pushed for an open convention instead of automatically endorsing her. Allen recounts that Obama "did not think that she was



the best choice for Democrats" and was working "behind the scenes for a long time" to have a mini-primary or open convention to prevent Harris's automatic ascension. Obama's skepticism extended be-

yond the formal endorsement. When Biden "passed the baton" to Harris, Obama spoke with her but delayed offering his endorsement. His hesitation was apparent to Democratic insiders, including

Representative James Clyburn, who quickly endorsed Harris to avoid being drawn into Obama's potential efforts to push for the open convention route.

Despite Obama's initial resistance, both Barack and Michelle Obama eventually endorsed Harris five days after Biden's exit. In a video call, Obama expressed his support, saying, "We couldn't be more excited for her – or more thrilled to endorse Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee for President of the United States."

In the 2024 election, however, Harris faced a tough challenge. Donald Trump ultimately won the presidency, defeating Harris with 312 electoral votes to her 226, while also securing the popular vote with approximately 49.8% compared to Harris's 48.3%.

# "Living In Hell": Monks Clear Rubble From Quake-Hit Myanmar Monastery



TPN Correspondent | Mandalay

Bare-handed monks are slowly clearing the rubble of a historic Buddhist monastery in Mandalay, Myanmar, a heartbreaking reminder of the powerful earthquake that struck the city five days ago. The Thahtay Kyaung Monastery, which housed centuries-old buildings, now lies in ruins.

"Some of these buildings have been around longer than I have," said Wayama, a grey-haired monk, reflecting on the destruction. "It makes me sad to see them destroyed."

Wayama's young colleagues, dressed in simple crimson cloths, worked tirelessly to remove debris. In pairs, they gathered bricks and broken materials, using large pieces of fabric to carry the rubble

aside and clear paths for walking. Despite the destruction at the monastery, Wayama's concern extended to the city as a whole. "Many buildings that have stood for over 100 years were destroyed here," he said. "It's not just the monastery; I want everyone to be okay."

The deadly earthquake, which has already claimed nearly 3,000 lives, left a devastating impact on the Southeast Asian country, home to over 50 million people. With infrastructure already weakened by years of civil conflict, relief efforts are struggling to cope with the scale of the disaster, and the death toll is expected to rise.

At the time of the quake, Nyo Nyo San, a resident of Mandalay, was inside the monastery. Initially, she thought the tremors were

nothing more than minor quakes she had experienced before. However, the shaking intensified, and bricks began falling. "I felt like I was living in hell," she recalled, running outside to escape.

Mandalay, with over 1.7 million residents, is one of the worst-hit areas. Many people are still sleeping in makeshift tents, unsure of when they will return to their homes. Infrastructure already damaged by years of civil unrest has now suffered further destruction.

Nyo Nyo San plans to return to her village, but with roads and bridges, including the Sagaing bridge, damaged, she faces uncertainty. "I hope to go home the day after tomorrow," she said, as the region continues to grapple with the aftermath of the disaster.





Two days of consecutive losses came to an end. Domestic stock markets closed with huge gains on Wednesday. They partially recovered yesterday's losses. US President Donald Trump's clarity on tariffs and positive signals from global markets led to positive sentiment in the market sectors. Investors bought attractive shares. Finance, auto, pharma, IT, manufacturing and healthcare stocks saw demand. Overall, Nifty rose by 166 points and Sensex by 592 points. Nifty has strong support at 23000.

The BSE Sensex, which closed at 76,024 in the previous session, opened at 76,146 on Wednesday. It touched an intraday low of 76,064. It reached an intraday high of 76,680. It finally closed at 76,617 with a gain of 592 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 23,192, touched a low of 23,158 and a high of 23,350. It closed at 23,332, up 166 points. The Nifty Bank fell 520 points to settle at 51,348.

In the Nifty50, 29 companies gained and 18 lost. Tata Consumer, Titan, IndusInd Bank, Maruti, and Tech Mahindra rose. BEL, UltraTech Sem, Nestle India, Power Grid, and LT lost the most. Finance, pharma, IT, auto, manufacturing, healthcare, PSU bank, private bank, metal, media, infra, and energy sector indices were strong.



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Market breadth turned unfavorable for buyers on the NSE. A total of 2977 shares were traded, of which 2148 gained. 757 lost. 29 shares reached 52-week highs and 43 companies reached 52-week lows. 247 shares touched the upper circuit and 26 shares touched the lower circuit.

The rupee weakened slightly against the dollar and settled at 85.51. PNB Housing Finance's affordable segment loan book value crossed Rs.5000 crore. Bharat Dynamics' turnover crossed Rs.3300 crore in fy2024-25. Jefferies has selected Bharti Airtel as its top pick in the telecom sector. Morgan Stanley has given an underweight rating to MCX with a target price of Rs.3400. Macquarie has selected IRCTC, AB Capital and Delhivari as rising stars with a potential to grow by 65% in the next three years. NBCC has received two orders worth Rs 215 crore. Tata Consumer shares rose by 7% today after Goldman Sachs upgraded them from neutral to buy. Kalyan Jewellers shares rose by 9% today. Central Bank of India shares fell by 10% after QIP. RBI has given permission to Shriram Finance to acquire 100% stake in Shriram Overseas Investments. Morgan Stanley has given an overweight rating to Coal India with a target price of Rs 525. Maruti Suzuki production increased by 17% in March. ICICI Mutual Funds bought 5.95 lakh shares

# markets Rebound Strongly as Global Cues Turn Positive

in Galaxy Surfactants. GPT Infra received an order worth Rs 481 crore from CAO Construction.

**Kalyan Jewellers India Ltd.**  
Kalyan Jewellers is one of India's largest jewellery retail chains,



known for its extensive collection of gold, diamond, and other precious ornaments. With a strong presence across India and the Middle East, the company has been expanding its showroom network aggressively. It caters to a wide range of customers, from traditional to contemporary jewellery buyers. Kalyan's recent financial performance has been strong, driven by festive and wedding season demand, along with growing traction in its online and regional showroom sales.

**Polycab India Ltd.**



Polycab India is a leader in the Indian electrical industry, specializing in manufacturing wires, cables, and electrical accessories. It has a well-diversified product portfolio catering to both industrial and household segments. The company has

been focusing on innovation and expansion, launching new energy-efficient cables and solutions.

With the government's focus on infrastructure, electrification, and smart city projects, Polycab has benefited from increased demand for high-quality electrical products. Additionally, its entry into the fast-moving electrical goods (FMEG) segment, which includes fans, lighting, and switches, has further strengthened its market position.

**TVS Motor Company Ltd.**

TVS Motor is one of India's leading two-wheeler manufacturers, offering a wide range of motorcycles, scooters, and electric vehicles (EVs).



The company has a strong domestic presence and is expanding its global footprint, particularly in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

TVS has been at the forefront of electric mobility in India, launching the TVS iQube electric scooter, which has gained significant market traction. With increasing demand for EVs and sustainable mobility solutions, the company has been investing heavily in research and development.

**Shoppers Stop Ltd.**

Shoppers Stop is a leading Indian retail chain specializing in fashion, beauty, and lifestyle products. It operates department stores across major cities, offering premium and international brands alongside its



in-house labels.

The company has been focusing on digital transformation, enhancing its e-commerce platform to cater to the rising demand for online shopping. Strategic partnerships with leading global fashion brands and the expansion of its beauty segment have contributed to its recent growth.

**United Spirits Ltd. (Diageo India)**

United Spirits, a subsidiary of global beverage giant Diageo, is India's leading alcoholic beverage company. It has a strong portfolio of premium and mass-market liquor brands, including McDowell's, Royal Challenge, Signature, and Johnnie Walker.



The company has been shifting its focus toward premiumization, emphasizing higher-margin products over low-cost liquor. This strategy aligns with evolving consumer preferences, as more Indians opt for premium whiskey, vodka, and rum brands.

## Nestle India Shares Fall 3.67% After BoFA Downgrade

Shares of FMCG giant Nestle India were under pressure on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, as the stock slipped by up to 3.67%, reaching an intraday low of ₹2,150. This decline brought the stock close to its 52-week low of ₹2,115, making it the top loser on the 30-share BSE Sensex at the time of reporting.

The drop in Nestle's stock price came after global brokerage firm BoFA Securities downgraded the stock to "Underperform" from its previous rating of "Neutral." Despite the downgrade, BoFA maintained a target price of ₹2,140 for the stock.

BoFA analysts expressed concerns over Nestle India's high valuations relative to its growth outlook and the performance of its peer group. The stock's current price-earnings (PE) ratio stands at 63.07, which the analysts believe is expensive considering the broader market dynamics. The downgrade raised questions about the company's future earnings potential, which led to the significant fall in its share price.

Nestle India, known for its popular brands such as Maggi, Nescafé, and KitKat, has long been considered a stable performer in the FMCG sector. However, the recent downgrade highlights growing concerns about its premium valuation amidst pressures on growth. With the stock now nearing its 52-week low, investors are re-evaluating the company's ability to sustain its market performance.

As the market continues to react to the BoFA downgrade, Nestle India's ability to navigate changing consumer preferences and improve its growth trajectory will be crucial to restoring investor confidence. The company's next quarterly results and any forward-looking statements could further influence its stock performance in the near term.



## Paytm's Stock Rises 3% After Partnership with GHMC for Property Tax Collection

Shares of One 97 Communications, the parent company of Paytm, rose nearly 3% on Wednesday following the announcement of a strategic partnership with the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). The collaboration will see the deployment of 400 card machines for property tax collection, boosting the company's market visibility and operational reach.

Paytm's stock surged by as much as 2.7% during the day, reaching ₹822.7 per share. The gains were slightly pared by the afternoon, with the stock trading 2.36% higher at ₹820 per share by 1:03 PM, outperforming the Nifty 50 index, which rose by just 0.41% during the same period. Over the past month, Paytm's shares have increased by over 25% from their lows of ₹651 in early March, signaling



ing investor optimism around the company's new initiatives.

This positive movement marks the second consecutive day of gains for Paytm's stock, following a period of sluggish performance. Despite the recent gains, the stock has fallen by 19.5% year-to-date, compared to a relatively modest 1.61% decline in the benchmark Nifty 50. The company currently holds a market capitalization of ₹52,340.3 crore.

The partnership with GHMC is a significant step for Paytm, as it expands

its presence in digital payment solutions for government services. The initiative to deploy card machines for property tax payments aims to enhance convenience for taxpayers while supporting the broader adoption of digital payment methods in public administration. This move comes at a time when Paytm is looking to diversify its revenue streams beyond its traditional payment platform and extend its reach within government and municipal services.

As the company continues to implement new strategies and strengthen its business operations, Paytm's stock performance will be closely watched by investors, with hopes that the partnership with GHMC could help boost its financial growth and market position in the coming months.

## Bharat Electronics Shares Drop 6% Following Missed Revenue Guidance

Shares of Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a Navratna defense PSU, experienced a significant decline on Wednesday, April 2, 2025. The stock fell by 6%, reaching an intraday low of ₹274.50 per share on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE).

The sharp fall in BEL's share price came after the company announced that it had missed its revenue guidance for the financial year 2025 (FY25). BEL reported a provisional and unaudited turnover of approximately ₹23,000 crore for FY25, marking a 16% growth compared to ₹19,820 crore in the previous financial year. While the company achieved growth, it still fell short of its projected targets, which led to investor concerns.

Despite the missed revenue target, BEL's export sales showed positive growth. The company reported export sales of around \$106 million for FY25, a 14% increase from \$92.98 million in FY24. However, this did little to quell investor disappointment, as the overall financial performance fell short of expectations.

The revenue shortfall has raised questions about BEL's ability to meet its growth projections, and investors reacted negatively to the news, causing the stock to experience pressure throughout the trading session. BEL's performance is closely watched due to its role in India's defense sector, and any signs of weakness can have a ripple effect on investor sentiment.




As the defense sector faces ongoing challenges, including changing government policies and global supply chain disruptions, BEL's ability to maintain consistent growth remains a critical factor. The market will continue to closely monitor the company's next moves, as it works to address the gaps in its financial performance for the fiscal year.



# Heated Seat Argument in Delhi Metro

Another dramatic incident from the Delhi Metro has gone viral, this time featuring a heated argument between a man and a group of women over a seat. The incident took place on the Blue Line near Janakpuri West, where a man, seemingly engrossed in his own world with earphones in and a backpack on, refused to give up his seat for a female passenger. When bystanders urged him to “be the bigger person” and offer his seat, he responded sarcastically, further fueling the tension inside the metro coach. The woman at the center of the dispute did not hold back either, mocking the man in return, escalating the confrontation even more. Despite repeated requests from those around, the man remained firm, refusing to vacate his seat. The intense back-and-forth was captured on camera by one of the women involved, who could be heard expressing frustration, saying, “You’ve caused a commotion in the entire coach.” She also urged him to “try being quiet for once” and “show some manners.” The video, now making rounds on social media, has sparked a debate on gender equality, with netizens divided over the issue. Some argue that chivalry should still be upheld, while others emphasize that equality means both men and women should be treated the same when it comes to public seating. Many online users pointed out that Delhi Metro already designates special seats for women, and outside those, seating should be on a first-come, first-served basis. The incident highlights an ongoing societal debate on gender expectations and etiquette in shared public spaces, with opinions continuing to pour in from all sides as the video garners widespread attention.



## SP Leader’s ‘Blue Drum’ Gift Stirs Political Storm



In a dramatic turn of events, Samajwadi Party leader Deepak Ranjan sparked a political controversy by presenting a blue drum to Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak at an event in Lucknow. The unusual gift, which has since gone viral on social media, was a pointed reference to the shocking Meerut murder case. The case, which left the country in shock, involved the brutal killing of Merchant Navy officer Saurabh Rajput by his wife, Muskan Rastogi, and her lover, Sahil Shukla. To cover up the crime, the duo dismembered his body and concealed it in a blue drum filled with cement. Since then, the blue drum has become an infamous symbol associated with the gruesome crime, flooding social media with memes and discussions. By handing over the drum, Ranjan was taking a jibe at the Uttar Pradesh government’s handling of law and order, triggering a fresh debate. The exchange took place at the ‘Lantrani Hasya Utsav’ in Lucknow and quickly became the talk of the town. As the image of the gifting moment circulated online, political reactions poured in, with many questioning the gesture’s intent and its impact on public discourse. Meanwhile, the chilling details of the case continue to haunt people, with reports indicating that sales of blue drums have declined in places like Aligarh and Meerut due to their new association with fear and crime. Shopkeepers have even pleaded with customers to separate the object from the heinous act, arguing that the real culprits are in jail. As political tensions rise, the incident further highlights how crime, politics, and social narratives intertwine in unexpected ways.

## Alchemist’s Bold Menu: Butterflies, Pig Blood & More

A viral video has shed light on the daring and unconventional menu of Alchemist, a two-Michelin-starred restaurant in Copenhagen. A woman documented her five-hour, \$700 dining experience, sharing jaw-dropping details of a meal that included edible butterflies, lamb brain mousse, jellyfish, and desserts shaped like coffins and blood drops. The video, now circulating widely on social media, has sparked fascination and controversy alike. The meal began with crunchy oxidized apple juice, followed by a series of meticulously crafted appetizers. Among them was a puffed gluten ball topped with langoustine, caviar, and cream, as well as edible butterflies presented on nettle leaves—intended to highlight the potential of insects as sustainable protein sources. Other courses included fluffy dumplings with a cotton candy-like texture, a delicate jellyfish dish in herb broth, and an eye-shaped gel inspired by George Orwell’s 1984, filled with caviar and razor clams. One particularly striking dish



featured chicken feet served in a small cage, symbolizing the inhumane conditions of caged farming. Later, a deboned chicken foot was presented alongside a fragrant Tom Yum broth. The meal’s dramatic conclusion came with a pig and deer blood dessert, described as having a slightly metallic taste. While some praised the restaurant’s artistry and innovation, others found the concept unsettling. One social media user commented, “People will eat anything if you convince them it’s trendy,” while another remarked, “This is what they serve in hell.” The bold and experimental approach of Alchemist continues to push culinary boundaries, leaving diners—and the internet—both intrigued and divided.

## Elon Musk Sparks Debate Over Netflix’s Adolescence

Netflix’s latest hit, *Adolescence*, has been dominating the streaming platform, gaining massive viewership worldwide. The four-episode series follows 13-year-old Jamie Miller, accused of murdering his classmate, Katie, and explores his emotional turmoil and inner conflicts. While the show has received widespread praise, it has also sparked controversy, with billionaire Elon Musk weighing in on the debate. Musk reacted to a post on X by social media user Ian Miles Cheong, who claimed that *Adolescence* was loosely inspired by real-life crimes like the Southport murder. The post accused the show of “race-swapping” the actual killer from a Black migrant to a white boy and portraying him as radicalized by online right-wing influences, calling it “anti-white propaganda.” However, many social media users rejected this claim, arguing that the show is entirely fictional. One user pointed out, “Adolescence was announced in March 2024, and filming started in July 2024. The Southport murders also happened in July 2024. There’s no way this show is based on that case.” Others emphasized that the series critiques the harmful effects of social media on young minds rather than making any racial statements. Co-creator Jack Thorne also addressed the controversy in an interview, stating, “Nothing is further from the truth. We’re not making a point about race with this. We’re making a point about masculinity and the problems young boys face.” He reinforced that *Adolescence* is not based on a single real-life case but rather explores broader themes of toxic masculinity and social media influence.





## Rishabh Pant’s ₹27 Crore IPL Struggles

Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) captain Rishabh Pant is under fire after another disappointing batting performance in IPL 2025, putting owner Sanjiv Goenka’s ₹27 crore investment into question. In LSG’s recent match against Punjab Kings at Ekana Cricket Stadium, Pant managed only 2 runs off 5 balls. Despite a decent total of 171/7, LSG suffered a crushing 8-wicket defeat as Punjab chased the target with 22 balls to spare. This loss marked LSG’s second defeat in three matches, amplifying concerns over Pant’s form and leadership. Pant’s poor performances—0 (6) vs. Delhi Capitals, 15 (15) vs. Sunrisers Hyderabad, and 2 (5) vs. Punjab Kings—have led to criticism from fans and analysts. Many now question whether Nicholas Pooran would have been a better choice as captain. Considering his hefty price tag, Pant’s lack of significant contributions has become a major talking point. Goenka, who previously faced backlash for his fallout with ex-LSG captain KL Rahul, looked visibly disappointed as his team faltered again. Last season, Goenka’s public outburst after a heavy defeat to SRH led to Rahul’s departure. Rahul later joined Delhi Capitals for ₹14 crore and later admitted that the incident affected the entire LSG squad. With the tournament still in its early stages, Pant has time to turn things around. However, if his struggles continue, questions about LSG’s decision-making and Goenka’s high-stakes gamble will only intensify.



Gujarat Titans (GT) secured a commanding eight-wicket victory over Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) in their IPL 2025 clash. Opting to bowl first, GT's bowling attack, led by Mohammed Siraj (3/19), dismantled RCB's batting lineup, restricting them to 169/8.

Virat Kohli (7) departed early, while Phil Salt, Rajat Patidar, and Devdutt Padikkal followed, leaving RCB struggling at 42/4. Liam Livingstone (54 off 40) and Jitesh Sharma (33) provided some resistance, with Tim David's quickfire 32 helping RCB cross 150.

GT's chase was smooth, with their top order efficiently pacing the innings. The slow and gripping pitch didn't deter their batsmen, who comfortably secured the win. This victory strengthens GT's position in the IPL 2025 standings, while RCB will need to reassess their strategy for upcoming matches.



### BCCI Announces 2025 Home Season; Guwahati to Host Maiden Test

The BCCI has unveiled the Indian men's team's 2025 home season schedule, featuring series against West Indies and South Africa. The season begins on October 2 with a two-match Test series against West Indies in Ahmedabad and Kolkata. India will then host South Africa for an all-format series, starting with a historic Test in Guwahati from November 22, marking the city's first-ever Test match. The tour includes three ODIs in Ranchi, Raipur, and Vizag, followed by a five-match T20I series in December. BCCI's statement highlighted the season's exciting encounters across formats. Fans can look forward to high-intensity cricket as Team India gears up for these major home fixtures.



## Dream Sports Championship Welcomes Norwich City FC to National Finals

The Dream Sports Championship Football 2025 National Finals will kick off in Goa on April 8, featuring an international challenge as Norwich City FC's Youth Team joins the tournament. Organized by the Dream Sports Foundation (DSF), the event will see eight boys' and eight girls' teams competing, with AIFF-nominated state teams debuting in the girls' category. Matches will be held at SAG Benaulim and Utorda, with the grand finale at Raia Foot-

ball Ground. DSF's Dream Again initiative will host coaching workshops led by Norwich City coaches. Seven Indian youth teams, including Punjab FC, Reliance Foundation Young Champs, and Mohun Bagan Super Giant, have qualified. AIFF scouts and football fans will closely watch the event, which offers young talent a platform to shine. DSF aims to boost grassroots football and promote inclusivity in the sport.

## Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini Felicitates Asian Wrestling Championship Medalists



Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini met Asian Wrestling Championship 2025 medalists, including gold winner Manisha Bhanwala, silver medalist Reetika Hooda, and bronze winner Muskan Nandal, along with coach Mandeep. Olympic medalist Yogeshwar Dutt was also present at the event. CM Saini congratulated the athletes, wishing them a bright future. On his official X handle, he wrote, "May the blessings of

Mata Rani always remain with you all." Manisha Bhanwala secured India's first women's freestyle wrestling gold since 2021, making a stunning comeback to defeat DPR Korea's Ok J Kim 8-7. Reetika Hooda won silver in the 76kg category, while Muskan Nandal clinched bronze in 59kg. Other Indian wrestlers, including Antim Panghal and Sunil Kumar, also bagged medals, bringing glory to the nation at the continental meet in Amman, Jordan.

## Hockey India Names 40-Member Core Group for Sr Women's Coaching Camp

Hockey India has announced a 40-member core group for the ongoing Senior Women's National Coaching Camp at SAI, Bengaluru. The camp, which began on March 23, initially featured 65 players, but has now been trimmed based on performances in the 15th Senior Women's National Championship and training sessions. While 28 players retained their spots, 12 new faces, including goalkeeper Samiksha Saxena and

forward Dipimonika Toppo, have been added. The squad features experienced names like Savita, Nikki Pradhan, Neha, and Navneet Kaur. Chief Coach Harendra Singh praised the selection process, stating, "We have identified some great talent, and I am excited to see how these young players develop." The camp aims to refine the squad as India prepares for upcoming international competitions.



## Barcelona & Real Madrid Legends Set for 'Legends Faceoff' in Mumbai



Football icons will reignite the legendary FC Barcelona vs. Real Madrid rivalry in the 'Legends Faceoff' at DY Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai, on April 6. Barcelona's Carles Puyol and Real Madrid's Luis Figo will captain their respective squads in this highly anticipated clash. Xavi Hernandez, Rivaldo, Patrick Kluivert, and Michael Owen are among the stars set to feature. Organized by The Sports Front, the event promises an unforgettable experience for Indian football fans. "This match will be special," said Puyol, while Figo called it a "privilege" to bring this historic rivalry to India. With football's growing popularity in the country, the Legends Faceoff aims to offer fans a thrilling spectacle. Excitement is at an all-time high as Mumbai prepares to witness football greatness on Indian soil.





## Nani Calls HIT 3 His Most Intense Action Film Yet



Natural Star Nani has raised excitement for his upcoming film HIT 3, calling it his “massiest action film.” The film has already created a buzz with its teaser and a chartbuster song. Nani’s character, Arjun Sarkaar, has become a hot topic since the teaser dropped.

Adding to the anticipation, Nani revealed that HIT 3 will be “violent and brutal,” promising to shock audiences. Unlike the previous HIT films, this installment will focus not just on who committed the crime but how it was done, bringing a fresh take to the fran-

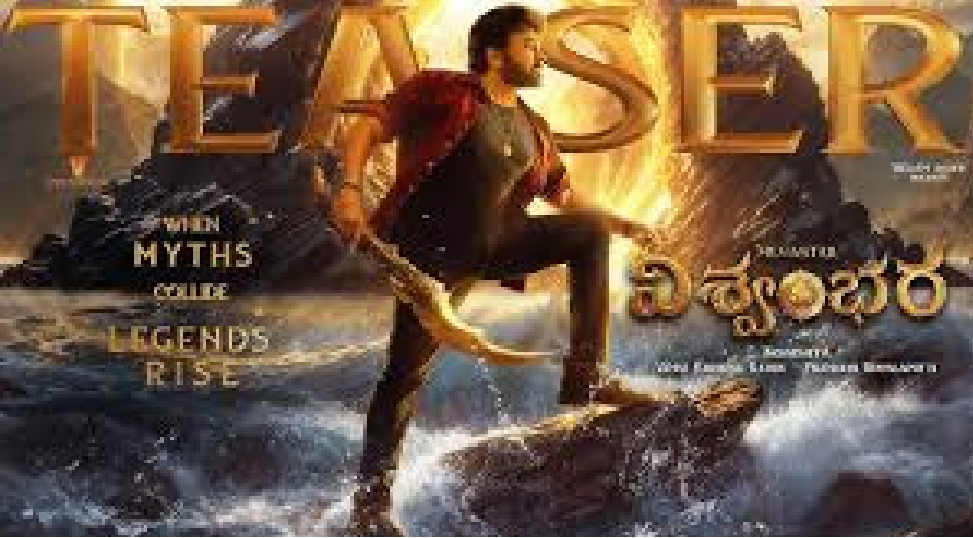
chise. Directed by Sailesh Kolanu, the film presents Nani like never before, with the team confident that this intense action thriller will be loved by all. Produced by Prashanthi Tirpineni, HIT 3 is all set to hit theaters on May 1st, 2025.

## Uncertainty Looms Over Chiranjeevi’s Vishwambhara

Megastar Chiranjeevi’s highly anticipated socio-fantasy film Vishwambhara, directed by Vasishtha and co-starring Trisha Krishnan, is facing delays with no confirmed release date.

Originally planned for a January release, the film was later pushed to May, but the makers have yet to make an official announcement. The lack of updates on social media has left fans anxious, especially with #Mega157 already generating buzz.

Sources suggest that the delay is due to VFX issues, causing setbacks in post-production. UV Creations, the film’s producer, has



remained tight-lipped about the situation. Fans are now hoping for a major update on Srirama Navami, which could clarify the film’s status.

Until then, Vishwambhara remains in limbo, keeping fans eagerly waiting for any news on its final release date.

## The Paradise Glimpse Costs a Whopping ₹1 Crore

Young director Srikanth Odela, who shot to fame with Dasara, is following the same promotional strategy for his upcoming film The Paradise starring Nani. Just like he did before Dasara, Srikanth released a glimpse of The Paradise, creating significant buzz among fans and industry insiders.

The teaser, titled Ra Truth Ra Language, showcases raw content and provides insight into Nani’s intense character, narrated through a gripping female voice-over. The glimpse has sparked widespread discussion, making it a trending topic. Reports suggest that the makers spent a staggering ₹1 crore on the glimpse alone.



With Dasara elevating Nani to the ₹100 crore club, Srikanth Odela is aiming to take The Paradise to the next level with grand production values and a powerful narrative. Fans are now eagerly awaiting more updates on this highly anticipated film.

## Divya Bharathi Breaks Silence on GV Prakash Dating Rumors



Actress Divya Bharathi has finally addressed rumors linking her to music director-turned-actor GV Prakash. The speculation began after their strong on-screen chemistry in Bachelor and Kingston, especially following GV Prakash’s divorce announcement from singer Saindhavi. Many assumed Divya was involved in his personal life. GV Prakash had previously dismissed these claims, calling Divya a good friend. Now, the actress has issued her first and final statement on the matter via Instagram. She clarified, “My name has been dragged into a personal family matter that has absolutely nothing to do with me. I have no connection to GV’s family issues. To be blunt, I would never date an actor, and certainly not a married man.” With this firm response, Divya Bharathi aims to shut down all speculation, making it clear that she is not involved in GV Prakash’s personal affairs.

## Dragon Fame Kayadu Lohar’s Rising Popularity

Kayadu Lohar, popularly known as the Dragon beauty, is making waves in the South Indian film industry. With her stellar performance in Dragon alongside Pradeep Ranganathan, Kayadu has gained immense popularity, especially among the youth. Before Dragon, her career was progressing at a moderate pace, but post its success, her demand skyrocketed. Now, she is bagging offers in both Telugu and Tamil cinema. She recently secured a crucial role in director Anudeep KV and actor Vishwak Sen’s upcoming project. Given Anudeep’s previous success with Jathi Ratnalu and Vishwak Sen’s mass appeal, this film is expected to be a major boost for her career. Beyond films, Kayadu is also making an impact on social media, where her posts frequently go viral. With her growing fan base and strategic career choices, Kayadu Lohar is emerging as one of the most promising talents in South cinema.

