



## AAP Leader Atishi's Request for AB-17 Mathura Road Bungalow Denied by PWD

Atishi still occupies AB-17 Mathura Road, allotted during her tenure.

PWD rejects allotment, prompting Atishi's new request.

Atishi's request highlights debate on government residence allocations.

TPN Correspondent | Delhi Atishi, the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Delhi Assembly, has faced a setback in her request to be allotted the AB-17 Mathura Road bungalow as her official residence. The Public Works Department (PWD) rejected her plea, leading the former Delhi chief minister and AAP leader to propose an alternative location. Atishi has now requested that she be allocated a bungalow on Ansari Road in Daryaganj instead.

Atishi currently resides in the AB-17 Mathura Road bungalow, which was initially allocated to her when she served as the Delhi chief minister. According to PWD

officials, she continues to occupy the property, even though it was meant for her tenure as chief minister.

The denial of her request for the Mathura Road bungalow has sparked a new round of discussions on the allocation of government residences. Atishi's proposal for a new bungalow on Ansari Road in Daryaganj indicates her continued need for official accommodation as LoP.

The situation highlights ongoing debates over the use and allotment of official residences to political leaders, particularly following their tenure in office. The PWD's refusal to reassign the Mathura Road bungalow underscores the complex process involved in the allocation of government properties to political figures, ensuring that such decisions align with policy and regulations.

As of now, Atishi remains in her current residence, with the PWD yet to address her new request for a bungalow on Ansari Road. The development adds to the ongoing conversation around the privileges and accommodations granted to public officeholders and leaders, especially in the context of their roles and changing positions within government.

## After Waqf Bill 'attack' on Muslims, RSS now targeting Christians: Rahul claims

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Rahul Gandhi has accused the RSS of shifting its focus to Christians following the controversial Waqf (Amendment) Bill. This comes after a now-withdrawn article published on the RSS mouthpiece, Organiser, that claimed the Catholic Church is the largest non-governmental landowner in India, surpassing the Waqf Board. Gandhi posted on social media that he had previously warned the Waqf Bill would initially target Muslims but could set a dangerous precedent for future attacks on other communities.

The article, titled "Who has more land in India? The Catholic Church vs Waqf Board Debate," was published on April 3 but is no longer available online. The piece alleged that the Catholic Church holds vast tracts of land, estimated to be around seven crore hectares, valued at approximately Rs 20,000 crore. This, according to the article, makes the Church



a significant player in India's real estate sector. It claimed that the Church's land holdings outpace those of the Waqf Board, which is responsible for managing

Islamic religious properties in India.

The article also detailed the Catholic Church's educational and health-care contributions, noting that as of 2012, it operated 2,457 hospital dispensaries, 240 medical colleges, 28 general colleges, and thousands of schools across India. Much of the land owned by the Church, the article claimed, was acquired during British colonial rule through large-scale land grants under the Indian Church Act of 1927.

In his response, Gandhi warned that the Constitution remains the only safeguard against such targeted actions, urging the nation to defend it. This article surfaces at a time when the BJP is claiming support from Catholic organizations like the Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) for the Waqf Bill, despite protests from Christian families in Kerala facing land claims by the Waqf Board.

## BJP to blame for fee hikes by private schools: Kejriwal

Accuses BJP of Allowing Arbitrary School Fee Hikes

Kejriwal claims BJP revived the "education mafia."

Parents allege fee hikes have been ongoing for years.

Protests held at DPS Dwarka over fee hikes and student promotion issue



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government of allowing private schools in Delhi to "arbitrarily hike" tuition fees by 20% to 82%. AAP pinned the blame on the BJP administration, alleging that the education system in the capital

was being manipulated by a so-called "education mafia." The party claimed that during its tenure, it had successfully prevented such fee hikes, but this practice had resumed after the BJP took charge.

AAP's national convener, Arvind Kejriwal, shared a news clipping on social media

about a fee hike at Delhi Public School, Dwarka, and remarked, "In 10 years, we didn't allow private schools in Delhi to hike their fees arbitrarily. We ended the education mafia. Within just a month of their [BJP's] government taking over, the education mafia has returned."

However, many parents dis-

agreed, citing that private schools had been hiking fees for years, even when AAP was in power. Aprajita Gautam, president of the Delhi Parents' Association, emphasized that over the past decade, parents had written numerous complaints to the Directorate of Education (DoE) regarding the annual fee hikes. "Where was AAP when this was happening?" she questioned, adding that private schools had been exploiting the lack of clear directives from the DoE in recent years.

Protests have broken out outside DPS, Dwarka, where several parents voiced concerns after 50 students were allegedly not promoted due to unpaid fees. Praveen Menon, a parent, expressed his frustration over the

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## Kangana Ranaut Criticizes Congress' Handling of Waqf Boards, Welcomes New Waqf Bill

Kangana blamed Congress for Waqf boards' land-grabbing.

Praised Modi for tackling Waqf corruption.

Visited Bhoot Nath temple, thanked Mandi voters.



TPN Correspondent | Shimla

BJP MP Kangana Ranaut on Saturday accused the Congress of showing leniency towards Waqf boards, leading to the violation of norms and large-scale land-grabbing. Addressing a Jan Sampark Abhiyan in the Majhvaad area of her Mandi constituency, the actor-politician praised

the passage of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill in Parliament, claiming it would address the issue of significant encroachments linked to Waqf boards.

Ranaut alleged that the formation of Waqf boards had been part of a conspiracy even before India's independence, and that this long-standing issue had

been causing harm to the country ever since. According to her, the new legislation would help combat the widespread encroachment of public lands under the guise of Waqf boards, which she described as involving massive land-grabbing activities.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, which was passed in Parliament after extensive debate, aims to bring Waqf boards under the purview of the law and curb misuse of the system. The Bill received approval in both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha, with significant majority support. In her address, Ranaut praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts to clean up the system,

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## Sitharaman Rejects 'One Nation, One Election' for 2024, Suggests Post-2034 Rollout

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, during a talk at SRM University in Kattankulathur, Tamil Nadu, on April 5, dismissed the possibility of implementing the 'One Nation, One Election' concept in the upcoming elections. She clarified that simultaneous elections would not be introduced before 2034.

Sitharaman pointed out that approximately ₹1 lakh crore was spent on the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, a cost that could be reduced through simultaneous elections. She explained that conducting elections for both the Lok Sabha and state assemblies at the same time could contribute around 1.5% growth to the nation's GDP, which translates to ₹4.50 lakh crore. This, she argued, highlights the tangible economic benefits of the 'One Nation, One Election' initiative.

The Finance Minister also accused certain political parties of spreading misinformation



tion and opposing the initiative without understanding its advantages. She noted that the idea of simultaneous elections was not new, having been practiced until the 1960s, and suggested that instead of opposing it blindly, political leaders should support the concept

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## India Delivers 442 Metric Tonnes of Food Aid to Earthquake-Hit Myanmar



- **Operation Brahma:** India’s humanitarian response to the disaster.
- **Indian Navy Ship delivers food supplies to Myanmar’s Thilawa Port.**
- **India sent relief materials within 24 hours of the quake.**

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

On Saturday, India delivered a substantial consignment of food aid to Myanmar, following the devastating 7.7 magnitude earthquake that struck the country on March 28. The earthquake, which had its epicenter near the capital, caused over 3,100 fatalities, leaving thousands more in need of immediate assistance. As part of its ongoing humanitarian efforts, India launched Operation Brahma to provide crucial support, including search and rescue operations, medical assistance, and disaster relief.

The aid, which weighed 442 metric tonnes, was delivered via the Indian Navy’s Landing Ship Tank (LST) INS Gharial and arrived at Thilawa Port, located about 400 kilometers south of Yangon in Myanmar. The consignment included essential supplies such as rice, cooking oil, noodles, and biscuits, aimed at meeting the immediate food needs of the affected population.

India has been at the forefront of providing humanitarian assistance

to Myanmar in the wake of this catastrophic disaster. Within 24 hours of the earthquake, India had already dispatched the first batch of Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief (HADR) materials, including emergency relief items and medical supplies. The delivery on Saturday marks another significant step in Operation Brahma, a mission focused on helping the country recover from the massive devastation.

The handover of the food aid was conducted by Indian Ambassador to Myanmar, Abhay Thakur, who handed the supplies over to U Soe Thein, the Chief Minister of Yangon, and his team. In a statement posted on social media platform X, the Indian Embassy in Yangon highlighted the efforts to meet the urgent needs of those affected by the earthquake.

“Meeting the needs of affected people. A large 442 T consignment of food aid (rice, cooking oil, noodles & biscuits) carried by @indiannavy landing ship tank INS Gharial arrived today at Thilawa Port & was handed over by @AmbAbhayThakur to CM Yangon U Soe Thein & team. #OperationBrahma,” the embassy posted.

This swift response underscores India’s commitment to assisting its neighbors in times of crisis, reinforcing its role as a key humanitarian partner in the region.

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## BJP to blame for fee hikes by private schools: Kejriwal

illegal fee hikes, stating that the issue had persisted for four years, despite earlier protests and even court appeals.

Education Minister Ashish Sood

## Kangana Ranaut Criticizes Congress’ Handling of Waqf Boards, Welcomes New Waqf Bill

asserting that no individual, community, or organization should be exempt from the law.

Ranaut also criticized Congress leaders from Himachal Pradesh for failing to represent the interests of the people in Parliament, leading to the state’s mounting debt. She emphasized that Congress had made inappropriate comments about Mandi district, referring to remarks made by Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete, which had stirred con-

did not comment on the issue, but sources from his office confirmed they were investigating the complaints related to the fee hikes at DPS, Dwarka.

troversy. Ranaut, who hails from Mandi, expressed her gratitude to the people of the district for electing her and promised to work for their welfare.

The BJP MP, who was recently fielded by her party for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, also visited the Bhoot Nath temple earlier during her visit. She concluded her speech by reaffirming her commitment to the people of Mandi as their “sister and daughter.”

## Sitharaman Rejects ‘One Nation, One Election’ for 2024, Suggests Post-2034 Rollout

for the country’s benefit.

Sitharaman further mentioned that the late DMK leader M. Karunanidhi had once supported the idea, but his son and current Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin, does not. Despite the opposition, Sitharaman emphasized that ‘One Nation, One Election’ was not a project driven by any individual but rather a plan

designed to benefit the entire nation.

She also reiterated that while President Droupadi Murmu had endorsed the idea earlier this year on Republic Day, the government was focused on laying the groundwork for simultaneous elections, which will only be possible post-2034.

## India’s 76-Year Journey in Developing Indigenous Trainer Aircraft

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The recent launch of the Hansa-3 basic trainer aircraft on April 4 marks a significant achievement in India’s aviation history. Developed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in collaboration with private industry, the Hansa-3 is the first such aircraft designed by a civilian agency and manufactured by the private sector. This milestone highlights the long and often challenging journey of developing indigenous trainer aircraft in India, which has spanned over 76 years.

India’s journey in aircraft production began soon after Independence when Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), a public sector undertaking, received government approval in 1948 to



design a basic trainer aircraft. The HT-2, India’s first indigenous trainer, made its maiden flight in 1951 and was inducted into service in 1953. It replaced earlier British-origin trainers and was used by the Indian Air Force (IAF), Navy, and civilian flying clubs until its retirement in 1990.

HAL’s subsequent projects included the HJT-16 Kiran, an intermediate jet-powered trainer designed to fill the IAF’s requirements for more advanced training. The Kiran entered pro-

duction in the late 1960s and was used for several decades, even in aerobatic teams like the Surya Kiran and Sagar Pawan.

The HPT-32 Deepak, introduced in the 1970s to replace the HT-2, faced significant challenges, including engine issues and multiple accidents. It was ultimately grounded in 2009 following a fatal crash, and the Swiss Pilatus PC-7 took its place.

In the 1990s, HAL developed the HJT-36 Sitara to replace the Kiran, but despite its ini-

tial promise, it faced critical design flaws that led to delays. After extensive modifications, it was renamed ‘Yashas’ and is undergoing further evaluation by the IAF.

More recently, the HTT-40 basic trainer was introduced to replace the HPT-32, and the IAF has placed an order for 70 units. Looking ahead, HAL is also working on the HLFT-42, a next-generation supersonic trainer for advanced combat training, aimed at replacing the BAE Hawk.

India’s journey in developing trainer aircraft is a testament to its evolving aviation capabilities, with each project contributing to the nation’s growing expertise in aircraft manufacturing.

## Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Flags Off Indian Ocean Ship SAGAR from Karwar Naval Base

TPN Correspondent| Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is set to flag off the Indian Ocean Ship SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) from the strategically important Karwar Naval Base in Karnataka on Saturday, April 5, 2025. This mission is part of India’s ongoing commitment to regional maritime security and fostering international cooperation.

The initiative, which will feature 44 personnel from nine different navies aboard, aims to strengthen ties with maritime neighbours and promote a secure and inclusive maritime environment in the Indian Ocean region. In addition to flagging off the ship, Singh will also inaugurate newly developed infrastructure at the Karwar naval base, which is undergoing expansion under the ambitious Project ‘Seabird’.

Project ‘Seabird’, a key initiative by the Indian Navy, focuses on enhancing the strategic capabilities of the naval base to accommodate growing security requirements in the Indian Ocean Region. The first phase of the project, completed in 2011, included facilities to accommodate 10 ships and associated infrastructure. Phase-IIA, approved by the Cabinet Committee on Securi-



ty, aims to accommodate 32 ships and submarines, along with various yardcraft, expanding the base’s operational capacity.

In a post shared on social media, the Office of the Raksha Mantri highlighted the significance of the IOS SAGAR mission, emphasizing its role in reinforcing India’s vision of Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security Across the Regions (MAHASAGAR). The mission’s primary objective is to continue cooperation with countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and ensure a secure and prosperous maritime environment.

The Karwar naval base, strategically

located on the western coast of India, has been crucial in strengthening the country’s maritime capabilities. As part of its expansion, it now boasts advanced operational infrastructure, including state-of-the-art facilities for ship repair, logistics, and storage, enhancing India’s maritime security.

In a previous visit in March 2024, Singh inaugurated several infrastructure projects at the Karwar base, underscoring India’s long-term security interests in the region. The expansion of the base is seen as a significant step toward strengthening India’s naval power and reinforcing its strategic position in the Indian Ocean.

## Justice Varma’s Cash Discovery: Delhi Police Commissioner and DCP Questioned by Probe Panel

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

A three-member committee of judges probing the discovery of cash at the residence of Justice Yashwant Varma recorded statements from top Delhi Police officials on Friday. The committee questioned Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora for approximately two hours and Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Devesh Kumar Mahala for around four hours at the Haryana state guest house in Chanakyapuri, sources said.

Arora appeared before the panel, which was formed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna, at around 5:30 pm and left after around two hours, around 7:30 pm. Prior to Arora’s statement, the panel recorded the statement of DCP Mahala, who had arrived at around 3:00 pm and departed around 7:30 pm. Additionally, the committee also gathered information from the Additional DCP (New Delhi district) and ACP (Chanakyapuri) during the course of the day.

The investigation centers around the

discovery of a significant amount of cash at the residence of Justice Varma, which has raised concerns within the judicial and law enforcement communities. The committee’s role is to probe the incident and determine if there was any breach of protocol or misconduct involved.

The questioning of high-ranking police officials is seen as an essential part of the investigation to understand how the cash came to be at Justice Varma’s residence and whether there were any

lapses on the part of the authorities involved. The committee is expected to review the statements of these officials in detail as it continues its inquiry.

The probe has garnered widespread attention, as it directly involves a sitting judge of the Supreme Court. The committee, appointed by the CJI, will likely submit a detailed report after concluding its investigation, which could have far-reaching implications for the police and judiciary.





## Delhi Signs MoU with Centre to Implement Ayushman Bharat Health Scheme

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

In a significant step towards improving healthcare accessibility in the national capital, the BJP-led Delhi government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Centre on Saturday to roll out the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) in the city. With this agreement, Delhi becomes the 35th state or Union Territory to implement the health insurance scheme, leaving West Bengal as the only state yet to adopt it.

The Ayushman Bharat scheme aims to provide free and cashless treatment for a wide range of medical services, covering 1,961 procedures across 27 specialities. The scheme covers various healthcare expenses, including medicines, diagnostic services, hospitalisation, ICU care, surgeries, and more. Under the scheme, eligible families in Delhi will receive an annual health coverage of up to Rs 10 lakh, with Rs 5 lakh funded by the Centre and the remaining amount provided as a top-up by the Delhi government.

The MoU was signed between the Delhi government and the National Health Authority, with Union Health Minister J P Nadda and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta present during the ceremony. The National Health Authority is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat scheme across the country.



- **Scheme offers free treatment up to ₹10 lakh for eligible families.**
- **Delhi becomes 35th state/UT to adopt AB-PMJAY; West Bengal remains.**
- **CM Rekha Gupta and Health Minister J.P. Nadda attended the signing.**

Following the signing of the MoU, a special campaign will be launched to enroll eligible beneficiaries under the scheme. The BJP government in Delhi, which assumed power in February after a 26-year gap, approved the implementation of the Ayushman Bharat scheme during its first cabinet meeting. This decision was made shortly after Chief Minister Rekha Gupta and her ministers took the oath of office on February 20.

The Ayushman Bharat scheme is expected to significantly improve healthcare access for many in Delhi, particularly for low-income families, and further strengthen the national government's vision of providing affordable healthcare to all.

Khan moved a writ petition under Article 32 of the Constitution, which provides for the enforcement of fundamental rights. He contends that the Bill allows for undue executive interference in the management of Waqf properties, which he argues could undermine the rights and freedoms of Muslim communities. According to Khan, the proposed amendments in the Bill do not respect the autonomy of religious minorities and could lead to unjust administrative control over religious institutions and their assets.

## AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan moves SC challenging Waqf Bill

### Claims it ‘curtails religious autonomy’

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Amanatullah Khan from Delhi has approached the Supreme Court, challenging the Waqf (Amendment) Bill. In his petition, Khan describes the Bill as “arbitrary” and “unconstitutional,” asserting that it infringes on the religious and cultural autonomy of Muslims.

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The Waqf (Amendment) Bill,



which aims to make changes in the governance of Waqf properties, has faced criticism from various quarters, with detractors arguing that it would give the government too much control over religious affairs. The Bill proposes the creation of a Waqf Tribunal to adjudicate disputes, but Khan claims that such provisions could lead to unnecessary interference in the functioning of Waqf boards, which manage the religious endowments of the Muslim community.

Khan's petition emphasizes that the Bill could harm the democratic rights of minorities, particularly Muslims, by granting the government excessive powers over religious institutions. He has urged the Supreme Court to intervene and strike down the amendments as unconstitutional.

The case has drawn attention to the balance between state control and the autonomy of religious institutions, especially in light of India's commitment to protect the rights of minority communities. As the legal proceedings unfold, the Supreme Court's decision could have significant implications for the future of religious governance in India.

## Amit Shah Vows to Eradicate Naxalism in Bastar by 2026, Emphasizes Development



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday reassured the people of Bastar, Chhattisgarh, that Naxalism would not hinder the development of the region's tribal communities. Speaking at the closing ceremony of the state's 'Bastar Pandum' festival, Shah reiterated the government's commitment to eliminate the Naxal threat by March 2026.

"The days when bullets were fired and bombs exploded in Bastar are over. I urge the Naxalite brothers to lay down their arms and rejoin the mainstream. You are part of us. No one is happy when a Naxalite is killed. It is time to surrender your weapons for the betterment of your tribal brothers and sisters," Shah stated, underscoring that surrendering would guarantee full protection and support from both the Union and state governments.

Shah emphasized the need for comprehensive development in the region, focusing on education, healthcare, and essential documentation such as Aadhaar cards and ration cards. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants to give everything to Bastar in five years. However, this can only happen when children attend school, health facilities are available in tehsils, and villages are free from Naxalism," Shah explained.

In a move to further encourage Naxalites to surrender, Shah referenced an initiative by Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai and Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma. Under this initiative, villages that help Naxalites surrender and declare themselves Maoist-free would receive ₹1 crore in construction works.

Highlighting the success of these efforts, Shah shared that 521 Naxals had surrendered in 2025, following 881 surrenders in 2024. "Those who have realized that development comes with pens and computers, not arms, have chosen the path of peace," Shah noted.

In addition, Shah praised the cultural significance of the 'Bastar Pandum' festival and announced plans to elevate it to a national event next year. He expressed his hopes for President Droupadi Murmu to grace the opening ceremony and bless the tribal communities.

Shah also visited Dantewada during his trip, where he offered prayers at Goddess Danteshwari's temple. Reaffirming the government's resolve, Shah stated, "By the next Chaitra Navratri, we will rid Bastar of red terror and transform it into a prosperous region."

Criticizing the Congress for its failure to eradicate poverty, Shah highlighted the BJP-led government's initiatives to empower the poor, particularly in the tribal areas. He concluded by expressing confidence that Bastar was on the path to becoming free from Naxalism and progressing toward development.

## Waqf land will now no longer be looted, says CM Yogi

TPN Correspondent | Prayagraj

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited Maharajganj on Saturday, where he praised the passage of the Waqf Amendment Bill in Parliament, highlighting its potential to curb illegal land encroachments under the Waqf Board. Speaking to a public gathering, the Chief Minister emphasized that the new law would prevent unauthorized occupation of Waqf properties, ensuring that these lands are used for the public good, such as for schools, hospitals, colleges, and housing projects.

Adityanath assured the public that the Bill would strengthen efforts to protect Waqf properties and facilitate their proper utilization for the welfare of society. He added that this measure was in line with the state government's broader goal of promoting development and public welfare.

The Chief Minister also reiterated his commitment to eradicating poverty from Uttar Pradesh within the next three years and making the state the number one in the country. As part of his visit, he inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for 629 development projects worth Rs 654 crore. Among these, the highly anticipated Rohin Barrage, located in the Nautanwa assembly constituency, was a key highlight. Adityanath announced that the barrage would be named after Maa Banailiya Devi and emphasized its benefits for local farmers, including flood protection, irrigation, and job creation through tourism.

On the occasion of Ashtami during the Vasanti Navratri, the Chief Minister also visited the shrine of Maa Banailiya Devi and offered prayers. Reflecting on his government's achievements over the past eight years, Adityanath noted that Uttar Pradesh had risen from being the seventh-largest economy in India in 2017 to becoming the second-largest today. He also spoke of the completion of the Saryu Canal Project, which had been delayed for decades before the BJP came to power.

Addressing improvements in the education and law and order sectors, Adityanath pointed to the construction of new schools and medical colleges and emphasized the peaceful celebrations of festivals. He highlighted his government's efforts in empowering farmers, creating job opportunities for youth, and ensuring the safety and self-reliance of women.



In Maharajganj, he announced the promotion of gaushalas (cow sheds) and dairy production, along with plans to inaugurate a Kendriya Vidyalaya and a sports stadium soon.

## Didn't take long for RSS: Rahul Gandhi slams article on Catholic Church land



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Amid ongoing discussions over the Waqf Bill, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi has raised concerns that the Christian community may be the next target of the RSS after an article in its mouthpiece suggested that Catholic churches were the largest landholders in the country. The article, which has since been unpublished, claimed that Catholic institutions in India own 7 crore hectares of land, making them the largest non-governmental landowners in the country.

In response, Gandhi warned that the passage of the Waqf Bill, which targets Muslim Waqf properties, sets a dangerous precedent for other communities. He tweeted, "I had said that the Waqf bill attacks Muslims now but sets a precedent to target other communities in the future. It didn't take long for the RSS to turn its attention to Christians. The Constitution is the only shield that protects our people from such attacks - and it is our collective duty to defend it." Gandhi's remarks were made while sharing a news report based on the controversial article from the Organiser.

Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala also condemned the article, calling it "deplorable." He claimed that the BJP's next move would be to control the properties owned by the Catholic community. Chennithala pointed out that during debates on the Waqf Bill, both Congress and Rahul Gandhi had warned that Christians might be targeted next. He further stressed that the article's reference to the Catholic Church holding vast land in India was a clear indication of the BJP's future intentions.

The article, titled "Who has more land in India? The Catholic Church vs Waqf Board debate," alleged that much of the land held by Catholic institutions was acquired during British rule under the Indian Church Act of 1927. It also referenced a 1965 government order that invalidated land leased during the colonial era as church property.



# Manipur's Meitei, Kuki Representatives Hold Talks With Centre In Delhi



- Home Minister Shah confirmed joint meeting plans and emphasized peace as top priority.
- No deaths in past four months, but thousands remain displaced in relief camps.
- President's rule imposed on Feb 13; state under suspended animation.

TPN Correspondent| New Delhi

The central government convened a crucial meeting today with representatives from Manipur's Meitei and Kuki communities in a bid to restore peace and normalcy in the state. The discussions were aimed at fostering greater trust and cooperation between the two communities, with a focus on maintaining law and order and facilitating reconciliation.

A six-member delegation from the Meitei community, which included members from the All Manipur United Clubs' Organisation (AMUCO) and the Federation of Civil Society Organisations (FOCS), participated in the meeting. The Kuki community was represented by a nine-member delegation. AK Mishra, a retired special director of the Intelligence Bureau, served as the mediator from the central government.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, in a recent Lok Sabha debate, shared that the Ministry of Home Affairs had previously held discussions with both the Meitei and Kuki communities, and that separate meetings had been arranged with various organizations representing both sides. He assured that the Ministry would soon convene a joint meeting to further progress toward peace.

Shah emphasized that the government's primary objective was to restore peace and order in the state. While he noted that the situation had improved over the past four months, with no new deaths reported, he acknowledged that the current circumstances were far from satisfactory, as many displaced people still reside in relief camps.

The imposition of President's rule in Manipur on February 13 followed the resignation of the state's Chief

Minister, N Biren Singh, on February 9. Since the ethnic violence erupted in May 2023, over 260 people have lost their lives, and thousands of firearms were looted from police stations during the initial stages of the conflict.

Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla, who assumed office on January 3, has been actively engaging with various groups to gather feedback on how to bring stability to the state. He has also taken steps to encourage the surrender of weapons looted during the violence.

The central government has also made attempts to restore normal traffic routes within the state, though efforts have faced resistance, particularly from the Kuki community. Travel between areas dominated by the Meitei and Kuki communities remains restricted.

## DMRC Receives ₹4,309 Crore Loan for Delhi Metro Phase-4 Expansion

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has secured its first loan tranche of ₹4,309.53 crore from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to kickstart work on three corridors of Metro Phase-4. The corridors in question are Inderlok to Indraprastha, Saket G Block to Lajpat Nagar, and Rithala – Narela – Nathupur. The loan will facilitate the tendering process for these projects, according to officials familiar with the matter.

The total cost of the Phase-4 project is estimated to be ₹14,600 crore, with JICA contributing ₹6,252.91 crore. The remaining costs will be equally shared by the Government of India and the Delhi government. This loan is a crucial step in achieving financial closure for the three remaining corridors of Phase-4.

In a statement, DMRC confirmed the

signing of the loan agreement between the Government of India and JICA on March 27, 2025, for an amount equivalent to ₹4,309.53 crore (79,726 million Japanese Yen).

Phase-4 of the project involves constructing 103 kilometers of metro lines across six corridors. Currently, three corridors are already under construction: the Janakpuri West to RK Ashram Marg (Magenta Line extension), Majlis Park to Maujpur (Pink Line extension), and Aerocity to Tughlakabad (new Golden Line).

The 8-kilometer-long Lajpat Nagar to Saket G Block corridor will feature eight stops: Lajpat Nagar, Andrews Ganj, GK-I, Chirag Delhi, Pushpa Bhanu, Saket District Centre, Pushp Vihar, and Saket G Block. The color code for this line has yet to be decided. Meanwhile, the 12-kilometer Inderlok-Indraprastha corridor will extend the Green Line, which connects Baha-



durgarh and Kirti Nagar.

Additionally, the Prime Minister laid the foundation stone in January for the extension of the Red Line from Rithala to Narela, continuing on to Haryana's Kondli. This 26.4-kilometer corridor will have 21 elevated stations.

The Phase-4 expansion of Delhi Metro is a significant step toward enhancing the city's public transport network, easing congestion, and offering a more sustainable alternative for commuters.

## Municipal Corporation of Delhi to celebrate Ambedkar Jayanti on April 14



TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Delhi Mayor Mahesh Kumar Khichi, a member of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), announced that the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will organize a special event on April 14 to celebrate the birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. In a meeting held with municipal officials on Friday, Khichi instructed all MCD departments to collaborate and ensure the event's success by completing all necessary preparations on time.

The event, commemorating the contributions of Dr. Ambedkar, is set to be an important occasion for the city, with Khichi emphasizing the need for thorough coordination among various departments. He urged the officials to focus on making the programme a meaningful and well-organized tribute to the social reformer and architect of the Indian Constitution.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's birth anniversary, celebrated on April 14 every

year, is a significant day, especially for communities advocating for social justice and equality. The event aims to honor his legacy and bring attention to his pivotal role in shaping modern India.

Khichi's directive underlines the importance of this occasion in the city's calendar, especially given the central role Dr. Ambedkar played in fighting for the rights of marginalized groups. The event will likely include various activities, discussions, and cultural programs to highlight Ambedkar's contributions and promote his vision of equality.

With all municipal departments expected to work in unison, the MCD aims to create an event that will resonate with citizens and serve as a reminder of the values Dr. Ambedkar championed. Khichi's leadership in organizing this event underscores the AAP's commitment to commemorating historical figures who have had a lasting impact on India's social and political landscape.

## Heatwave alert over parts of NW India including Delhi until April 8: IMD

TPN Correspondent| New Delhi

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a warning of a gradual rise in maximum temperatures by 3-5°C over parts of northwest and central India until April 8, 2025. The department has forecasted heatwave conditions, with the potential for severe heatwaves in several regions.

On Friday, the highest maximum temperature of 44.5°C was recorded in Bhuj, Gujarat, with many parts of northwest India already experiencing scorching temperatures. The IMD predicts that the heatwave will extend to areas such as Madhya Pradesh, South Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and parts of west Uttar Pradesh around April 7-8.

The temperature on Friday ranged from 40-44°C in areas like Saurashtra, Kutch, southwest Rajasthan, and north Gujarat, with many regions including Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh,

Bihar, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, east Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala experiencing temperatures between 36-39°C. Punjab, Assam, Odisha, Karnataka, and coastal regions also recorded temperatures ranging from 32-35°C. Meanwhile, the Western Himalayan region recorded cooler temperatures, between 20-25°C.

Mahesh Palawat, Vice President of Climate and Meteorology at Skymet Weather, explained that the region is experiencing unusually early heatwaves, with hot winds from an anticyclone over the Arabian Sea blowing



into Rajasthan and Gujarat. These winds are expected to intensify the heat, including in Delhi-NCR, where temperatures will also rise. This early onset of heatwaves, which began in March, is causing significant concern.

According to the IMD's forecast, Gujarat is under a red-category warning on April 6 and 7, meaning local authorities should take preventive action to avoid heat-related emergencies. Rajasthan is under an orange-category warning, indicating that authorities should prepare for potential action. A yellow-category warning is in effect for parts of northwest India, including Delhi, signaling that authorities should remain vigilant for extreme temperatures.

With the temperature rise expected to continue, residents in affected areas should stay cautious and take appropriate measures to avoid heat-related health issues.

## Delhi Leads in Work-Related Hours, Gender Disparity Widens in Some States: Ministry Report

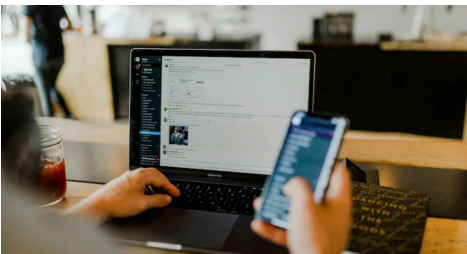
TPN Correspondent| Delhi

A new report by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation reveals that people in Delhi spend the most time on work-related activities compared to any other region in India. On average, an individual in India dedicates 455 minutes, or just over 7.5 hours, every day to work-related tasks, including commuting. However, in Delhi, this figure rises significantly to 571 minutes, or nearly 9.5 hours, daily.

The Time Use Survey report shows that the time spent on work-related activities also includes commuting to and from the workplace. Following Delhi, Haryana stands next with individuals spending an average of 493 minutes (around 8.2 hours) on employment-related tasks. In Tamil Nadu, the time spent on work-related activities is slightly lower at 484 minutes, or around 8 hours per day. People in states like Odisha, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan spend an

average of 420-440 minutes (around 7 hours) on work.

The report also highlights significant gender disparities in work hours. In



Uttar Pradesh, women spend 72% less time on work-related activities than men. Bihar follows closely, with women spending 71.6% fewer hours than men. However, Delhi and Kerala show comparatively better gender parity, with only a 22% difference in work hours between men and women. Goa reported the smallest gender gap, with just an 8% difference in working hours.

Regarding rural and urban divides, people living in rural areas spend

around 424 minutes (7 hours) on work-related activities, while those in urban areas dedicate 494 minutes (8.2 hours) daily. These figures illustrate a clear trend of longer working hours in urban settings, especially in major metropolitan areas like Delhi.

The report sheds light on the growing work culture in India, particularly in urban areas, while also drawing attention to the challenges posed by gender imbalances in employment participation across different states.



## Railway Projects To Improve Connectivity Infrastructure: PM Modi



- **Lauds Approval of Railway Projects and Vibrant Villages Programme-II**
- **Second phase targets border villages in 19 states**
- **Aim to enhance connectivity, reduce logistics costs, and boost regional economies.**

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday welcomed the Union Cabinet's approval of four major railway projects, which he said will significantly improve connectivity, enhance convenience, lower logistics costs, and strengthen supply chains. The approved projects, with a total investment of approximately ₹18,658 crore, aim to expand the Indian Railways network by around 1,247 kilometers, covering 15 districts across the states of Maharashtra, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh.

In his statement, PM Modi emphasized that these projects will not only improve the transportation infrastructure but will also bolster economic development in the regions they serve, facilitating smoother movement of goods and passengers. The expansion is expected to have a transformative effect on regional connectivity, providing a reliable and cost-effective alternative to road transport.

Additionally, PM Modi expressed his approval of the Union Cabinet's approval for the second phase of the Vi-

brant Villages Programme, describing it as "exceptional news" for border villages. He noted that this phase of the programme would extend its reach compared to the first phase, thereby improving the quality of life for residents in strategic border areas. The programme aims to improve living conditions and provide livelihood opportunities in order to ensure the prosperity and security of the nation's borders.

The Vibrant Villages Programme-II will be implemented with an outlay of ₹6,839 crore, focusing on selected villages in 19 states and Union Territories, including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, and others, over the course of the 2024-2029 period. The initiative seeks to combat trans-border crimes, integrate border populations into the national fold, and empower them as key stakeholders in maintaining internal security.

Together, the approval of the railway projects and the Vibrant Villages Programme-II represents a strategic effort by the government to improve infrastructure and promote sustainable development in India's border regions.

## 7 Women Farm Labourers Die, 3 Rescued After Tractor Plunges Into Well In Maharashtra



TPN Correspondent | Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

In a tragic incident in Nanded district of Maharashtra, seven women farm laborers lost their lives when the tractor-trolley they were traveling in plunged into a well early on Friday morning. The accident occurred around 7:30 AM in Asegaon village, under the jurisdiction of Limbgaon police station. The tractor veered off the road and fell into a well filled to the brim with water, according to District Information Officer (DIO) Pravin Take.

A rescue operation was launched immediately by police and local authorities, who pumped out a significant amount of water from the well. Despite their efforts, seven women were found dead, while three others were successfully rescued.

The women were on their way to a farm to harvest turmeric when the accident occurred. All of the deceased

were from Gunj village in Hingoli district's Vasmat tehsil. The victims were identified as Tarabai Satwaji Jadhav (35), Dhrupata Satwaji Jadhav (18), Saraswati Lakhnan Burad (25), Simran Santosh Kamble (18), Chaitrabai Madhav Pardhe (45), Jyoti Irabaji Saraode (35), and Sapna Tukaram Raut (25). The three survivors, Parvatibai Burad (35), Purbhabai Kamble (40), and Satwaji Jadhav (55), were rescued from the water.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences for the tragic loss, announcing a compensation of Rs 2 lakh each from the PM's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for the families of the deceased. Additionally, Rs 50,000 will be provided to the injured women. "Saddened by the loss of lives in an accident in Nanded, Maharashtra. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon," the Prime Minister tweeted.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis also expressed grief and announced financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh for the families of each of the deceased. He pledged to ensure steps are taken to prevent such accidents in the future and stated that an inquiry into the incident has been ordered. The local administrations of Hingoli and Nanded are providing support to those affected by the tragedy.

## IMD Issues Rain and Thunderstorm Warnings for Tamil Nadu

TPN Correspondent | Tamil Nadu

The regional center of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) in Chennai has issued warnings for rain, light thunderstorms, and lightning across several districts in Tamil Nadu. According to IMD predictions, light to moderate rainfall is expected to affect parts of the state, particularly the Nilgiris, Coimbatore, Tiruppur, and Nagapattinam districts, along with the Karaikal area.

The IMD forecast suggests that some areas in Tamil Nadu may experience rain throughout the day. The rainfall could cause waterlogging and slippery road conditions, leading to disruptions in local traffic. The districts likely to be impacted by light to moderate rain include Theni, Tenksasi, Ramanathapuram, and Kanyakumari.

Additionally, the weather department has highlighted the possibility of heavy rainfall in several parts of Tamil Nadu. Heavy rains experienced in Tiruppur on Friday night led to water entering homes, prompting municipal workers to engage in drainage efforts. Tiruppur North recorded 11 cm of rainfall, while Kozhivilai in Kanyakumari saw 19 cm. Other areas affected by heavy rain include the Nambiyur weather station in Erode district, Coimbatore, Sulur, and several stations in Theni and Nilgiris, all reporting significant rainfall accumulation ranging



from 5 cm to 9 cm.

The regional center also reported rain in multiple locations across Tamil Nadu, including areas in Pudukcherry, Karaikal, Kerala, Interior Karnataka, Rayalaseema, and Telangana, as well as isolated showers in Coastal Andhra Pradesh. Meanwhile, Mahe and Yanam remained dry.

Temperatures in the region have generally been lower than normal, with maximum temperatures in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Telangana, Rayalaseema, and Interior Karnataka dropping by 1 to 6 degrees Celsius. These cooler conditions are expected to persist as the rainfall continues.

The IMD's forecast urges local authorities and the public to stay alert for potential weather-related disruptions.

## Panel clears safety of Pamban bridge; PM Modi to open it on April 6

TPN Correspondent | Belagavi

A five-member high-level committee appointed by the Ministry of Railways has officially cleared the design of the newly constructed Pamban Rail Bridge, certifying that the 2.08-km-long structure is structurally sound. The committee's assessment, conducted after an inspection in January, concluded that the bridge met all necessary design requirements and was safe for use.

The committee, which included experts from the Railways, the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO), and IIT-Roorkee, carefully reviewed the bridge's design, ensuring it adhered to Indian Railway Standards and the Steel Bridge Code. The committee noted that the bridge had been designed to handle an annual traffic load of 50 million gross tonnes and was built with a lifespan of 100 years. In its report, the panel confirmed that the bridge is structurally secure and capable of serving its intended purpose.

The committee also expressed satisfaction with the design of the 72.5-meter vertical lift span of the bridge, which had been designed by expert engineers and reviewed by



IIT-Madras and IIT-Bombay. According to the report, the weld joints of the bridge were performed by skilled welders and met quality assurance standards, with independent weld checks carried out by the Welding Research Institute in Tiruchi, managed by BHEL.

The lift span's speed is limited to 80 km/h due to the curvature at the Ramswaram end, the report stated.

The Union Railway Minister, Ashwini Vaishnaw, had formed this committee after adverse comments from the Commissioner of Railway Safety, A.M. Chowdhary, during a statutory inspection of the bridge.

While the Commissioner had cleared the bridge for train services, he had raised concerns over lapses in the planning and execution of the ₹531-crore project, which was carried out by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited.

In its report, the committee recommended continuous collaboration between consultants, RDSO, and academic institutions to speed up the design clearance process for future high-profile projects. The Prime Minister is expected to inaugurate the Pamban Rail Bridge soon, marking a significant milestone in the country's infrastructure development.

## Vadodara Crash Accused Rakshit Was Not Drunk, Had Smoked Marijuana: Cops



TPN Correspondent | Vadodara, Gujarat

Rakshit Chaurasia, the accused in the fatal Vadodara crash that left a woman dead and seven others injured last month, was driving under the influence of drugs, according to police on Friday. The primary forensic report from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in Gandhinagar confirmed that Chaurasia tested positive for marijuana, though he was not intoxicated by alcohol at the time of the accident.

Along with Chaurasia, two other individuals—his co-passenger Praanshu Chauhan and another friend, Suresh Bharwad—also tested posi-

tive for drugs. The medical findings, which arrived nearly 20 days after the March 13 incident, revealed the trio had smoked marijuana before the crash.

The police have charged all three men under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, and have invoked Section 185 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, which makes driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs a criminal offense. While Chauhan has been arrested, Chaurasia remains in custody at the Vadodara Central Jail. The third accused, Bharwad, is still at large.

"We received the results today showing that all three had drugs in their system," said Deputy Commissioner of Police, Zone 4, Panna Momaya. "Chaurasia's co-passenger has been arrested, and we will arrest the third accused soon."

On March 13, Chaurasia, a 23-year-old law student from Prayagraj, crashed the Volkswagen Virtus sedan he was driving into three other vehicles near Amrapali Char Rasta in Karelbag, a busy intersection in Vadodara. The crash tragically killed Hemali Patel, a woman traveling in one of the vehicles.

A disturbing video from the scene went viral, showing Chaurasia shouting "Another round, another round!" and "Om Namah Shivay!" while appearing unaffected by the crash. Following the incident, Chaurasia was initially charged with culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

Previously, Chaurasia denied being drunk or speeding and claimed the crash occurred when the car's airbags deployed after hitting a pothole, causing him to lose control. He expressed remorse, stating, "I want to meet the victims' families—it's my fault."



## Lord Sri Ram

# A Timeless Symbol of Sanatana Dharma

conveyed the message to mankind that there is only an ability-character hierarchy that is respected, not by the birth origins and inheritance.

The epic Ramayana clearly demonstrates that Sanatana Dharma opposes a caste system. It maintains that a person's worth is determined by their values, character, and dedication to dharma rather than by where they were born. Rather than their origins, the vanaras—including Hanuman—are admired for their extraordinary traits and fearlessness. Anyone can become great, regardless of upbringing, as demonstrated by Hanuman's dual roles as a devout supporter and a celestial figure. This principle affirms that true devotion to righteousness and service eradicates any innate caste hierarchy and emphasizes how every person in Sanatana Dharma is respected for their inner traits and contributions.

### Lord Rama's life and charater a guiding light for humanity

Indeed, Lord Rama's life and character have long been held as a guiding light for humanity. His unwavering commitment to dharma, his compassion, humility, and willingness to sacrifice personal gains for the greater good offer enduring lessons on moral integrity and righteous leadership. Rama's example encourages us to strive for a life of duty, selflessness, and justice—principles that continue to resonate across cultures and generations.

### A king should be like a saint, willing to give up power and pleasures.

Lord Sri Ram embodies the essence of Sanatana Dharma — upholding righteousness, duty, and compassion in every aspect of life. He demonstrated deep respect for parents, obeying their wishes without question, even when it meant sacrificing his throne and comforts of the palace. In contrast, history records many rulers who imprisoned their fathers or killed their



brothers for power. Had they studied the life of Rama, perhaps they would have chosen the path of dharma over ambition.

### Did not depend on the palace army and made the tribals as army.

Rama embraced both palace and forest life with the same grace — never once expressing disappointment. Even when he set out to rescue Sita Mata, he did not call upon his royal army or his brother Bharata, who was ruling in his absence. Instead, he stood with the vanaras (forest dwellers), transformed them into a powerful force, and embraced them as his equals, declaring, "They are no less

than my brothers. This shows that true leadership is not about status or wealth, but about commitment, integrity, and a connection to the people. Rama valued public sentiment, stood by his word, and led by example.

### The Champion of tribal empowerment transformed them into warriors, raising their status to match his divine standing.

Lord Rama transformed the lives of forest dwellers by turning the Vanaras into a formidable army against the mystic demons of Lanka. Among these brave warriors, Hanuman—originally a Vanara—was elevated to

a divine status, revered as equal to the Lord Rama himself. This honor is a profound reminder of Rama's commitment to inclusivity; every temple of Lord Rama proudly displays a statue of Lord Hanuman, celebrating his divine contribution.

Furthermore, during the Treta Yuga, when Lord Rama incarnated as lord Krishna, the presence of a flag bearing Hanuman's image on Lord Krishna's war chariot during the Kurukshetra battle underscored the highest respect for forest dweller the lord Hanuman. This gesture exemplifies the essence of Sanatana Dharma—a society that transcends caste barriers and uplifts even the most marginalized. By bestowing the highest honors upon tribal warriors, Sanatana Dharma stands as a testament to equality, justice, and the empowerment of the down-trodden.

### Conveyed the message to the world that skills and commitment will be honoured, not the one's birth caste.

The Ramayana indeed elevates vanaras the tribal beings—by highlighting their courage, loyalty, and commitment to duty. Their celebrated roles suggest that qualities such as efficiency, valor, and adherence to dharma are far more significant than the circumstances of one's birth. This narrative supports the idea that in the broader principles of Sanatana Dharma, intrinsic virtue and moral action are held in higher esteem than social hierarchies or caste distinctions. It's important to recognize that while the epic emphasizes these universal values, the evolution of social structures

in later periods sometimes introduced more rigid interpretations of caste. Nonetheless, the core message of the Ramayana serves as a reminder that true nobility arises from one's actions and character, not merely from inherited status. In Lord Rama's legacy, we find a profound lesson: true strength lies not in birth or privilege, but in the courage and spirit of every individual, regardless of their origins.

### Proved that bare footed Vanaras the tribal beings can build mighty bridge on ocean, an impossible task

The construction of Ram Setu, a bridge across the ocean built by bare-foot vanaras with nothing but stones and faith, is a testament that no goal



Dr Buragadda Srinadh

is impossible when confidence and unity lead the way. Rama encouraged Hanuman to realize his own divine strength — a reminder that a good leader inspires others to discover their inner power. His rule was one of justice, inclusivity, and equality, where caste had no place, and every being was treated with dignity.

### Lord Rama's life and charater a guiding light for humanity

Indeed, Lord Rama's life and character have long been held as a guiding light for humanity. His unwavering commitment to dharma, his compassion, humility, and willingness to sacrifice personal gains for the greater good offer enduring lessons on moral integrity and righteous leadership. Rama's example encourages us to strive for a life of duty, selflessness, and justice—principles that continue to resonate across cultures and generations.

## Waqf Amendment Bill 2025: Balancing Justice, Reform, and Rights



The Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2025, officially titled the UMEED Act, represents a landmark step towards streamlining the management of Waqf properties while upholding justice, transparency, and constitutional safeguards. More than a simple amendment, the Act aims to rectify long-standing administrative and legal loopholes in India's Waqf system. The Act abolishes Section 40 of the original 1995 Waqf Act, which allowed Waqf Boards to unilaterally declare any property as Waqf land, often without due process. This provision had led to thousands of disputes and was criticized by the Sachar Committee in 2006 for undermining justice. The 2025 amendment replaces this arbitrary system with a structured legal mechanism: district collectors now have the authority to adjudicate such matters, with a right to appeal to the High Court within 90 days. Home Minister Amit Shah emphasized this during parliamentary debate, underscoring that clause 35(9) of the new bill introduces statutory appeals and aligns with Article 14's principles of equality and Article 32's protection of legal remedies. The claim that the bill undermines Waqf's inalienable status is countered by judicial precedents that distinguish religious practice from administrative functions. In *Sardar Syedna Taher Saifuddin Saheb v. State of Bombay* (1962), the Supreme Court clarified that

governance tasks do not equate to worship. The 2025 Act introduces a 12-year limitation period for claims, mirroring the Limitation Act, 1963, thus preventing indefinite litigation and potentially unlocking around 9.4 lakh acres of land worth ₹1.2 lakh crore. This land, currently tied up in over 13,000 pending cases, could be redirected towards educational and healthcare initiatives benefiting economically disadvantaged sections of the Muslim community. Another reformative step is the inclusion of two Muslim women on every Waqf Board, addressing the historical underrepresentation—only 2% female participation noted by the Sachar Committee. This democratization aligns with Articles 15(3) and 16(2), which support affirmative action and gender equity in public institutions. The Act also introduces limited representation for non-Muslims—two of the 11 members on a Waqf Board—to enhance transparency, without infringing on religious autonomy, as permitted under *S.R. Bommai v. Union of India* (1994). Claims under Article 26—that the bill interferes with religious practices—are further dispelled through precedents like *Raja Bira Kishore Deb v. State of Orissa* (1964) and *Durgah Committee, Ajmer v. Syed Hussain Ali* (1961), where the Supreme Court upheld state regulation of secular aspects of religious institutions.

## Karnataka's Pay Hike for Crorepati Lawmakers

In a move that has sparked widespread criticism, the Karnataka government has approved a sweeping pay hike for its legislators—even as the state grapples with a mounting financial crisis. On March 21, the Congress-led Assembly passed bills doubling salaries and allowances for the Chief Minister, ministers, and members of both legislative houses. The Chief Minister's monthly salary was raised from ₹75,000 to ₹1.5 lakh, while ministers now receive ₹1.25 lakh, up from ₹60,000. MLAs and MLCs have seen their pay double from ₹40,000 to ₹80,000. Even pensions have been hiked from ₹37,500 to ₹75,000 per month. Altogether, this revision

is projected to cost the state an additional ₹62 crore annually.

This pay hike comes at a time when the state is struggling with debt that has surged past ₹7.6 lakh crore. Despite a record revenue collection of ₹2.6 lakh crore (excluding borrowings) for 2025–26, a major chunk—₹1.6 lakh crore—is earmarked for salaries, pensions, and interest payments. Another ₹2 lakh crore is needed to sustain welfare schemes, leaving just ₹60,000 crore (about 15% of the budget) for infrastructure and development projects. Consequently, the state has resorted to



borrowing to keep basic services running. The decision to reward lawmakers so generously seems all the more tone-deaf when placed against the backdrop of their personal wealth. According to a recent report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), Karnataka has the highest number of ultra-wealthy MLAs in India, with 31 legislators possessing assets exceeding ₹100 crore. The state's MLAs have an average net worth of ₹63.5 crore, and a staggering 97% of sitting MLAs are crorepatitis. Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar alone has declared assets worth over ₹1,413 crore, making him the richest legislator in the state and

the second richest in India.

Among Congress MLAs, 132 out of 135 are crorepatitis, with an average wealth of ₹67.13 crore. BJP MLAs also follow suit—63 of 66 are in the same category, averaging ₹44.36 crore. Janata Dal (Secular) is not far behind, with 18 of its 19 MLAs owning assets worth over ₹1 crore. In this context, the state's generous pay hike appears unnecessary and sends a message of detachment from the financial realities faced by ordinary citizens.

Meanwhile, the government's welfare schemes are under stress. Payments under flagship initiatives such as the Gruha Lakshmi Yojane have reportedly been delayed for five months. Pending dues to electricity supply companies (Escoms) remain unpaid, and Local Area Development Fund allocations to MLAs are stuck. Public infrastructure projects, including metro and bus services, are struggling due to lack of funds.



# PM Modi Receives Sri Lanka's Top Honour



Prime Minister Narendra Modi was honoured with Sri Lanka's highest civilian award, the 'Mitra Vibhushana' medal, on Saturday for his outstanding role in enhancing India-Sri Lanka relations. The award was conferred shortly after Modi landed in Colombo for a three-day official visit. This prestigious honour recognizes Modi's exceptional contributions to strengthening bilateral ties and nurturing the shared cultural and spiritual heritage between India and Sri Lanka. According to the Sri Lankan President's Office, the Mitra Vibhushana medal was specially instituted to acknowledge extraordinary global friendships and reflects the depth of the longstanding ties between the two nations. This event also marks a diplomatic milestone, as Prime

Minister Modi is the first international leader to be officially hosted by Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake since he assumed office in September 2024. The warm welcome and the honour bestowed upon Modi underscore Colombo's strategic emphasis on deepening its engagement with New Delhi. Notably, this is the 22nd international honour Modi has received from a foreign government, further solidifying his stature as a respected global statesman. The recognition from Sri Lanka adds to a growing list of accolades for his proactive foreign policy and leadership in regional cooperation. President Dissanayake highlighted Modi's pivotal role in championing regional unity and acknowledged India's consistent support in areas ranging

from infrastructure development to humanitarian aid and cultural exchange. The medal ceremony also served as a symbolic reaffirmation of the two nations' shared historical legacy rooted in Buddhism, trade, and people-to-people connections. During his visit, PM Modi is expected to hold bilateral meetings with top Sri Lankan leaders, address issues related to economic collaboration, energy partnerships, and regional security, and participate in cultural events celebrating India-Sri Lanka friendship. The honour reinforces India's status as a key partner for Sri Lanka in its pursuit of stability, growth, and post-crisis recovery, while also reflecting PM Modi's growing diplomatic footprint in South Asia and beyond.

## Dhoni Retirement Buzz Grows Louder

speculation is mounting around ms dhoni's potential retirement from the indian premier league (ipl), especially after a rare appearance by his parents at the chepauk stadium ahead of chennai super kings' clash against delhi capitals. fans and netizens have taken to social media, suggesting that the 43-year-old legend could be preparing to make a major announcement following tonight's match. the presence of dhoni's family, which is uncommon during regular season games, has only fueled retirement rumors. the speculation comes at a time when the chennai super kings (csk) are under pressure, having lost their last two matches. dhoni, who has been more selective in his appearances on the field, faced criticism for coming in too late during the team's 50-run defeat against royal challengers bangalore, a match where the chase was already out of reach by the time he stepped in. despite the recent slump, dhoni's ipl legacy remains unmatched. he is the only captain to have led a team to over 100 wins in the tournament and boasts the highest number of matches as a skipper—226 games. over the course of his illustrious career, he has played 267 ipl matches, scored 5,289 runs, and holds a batting average of 39.18 with a strike rate



of 137.70. specifically with csk, dhoni has appeared in 237 matches, amassing 4,715 runs with an even better average of 40.30 and strike rate of 139.46. as fans await clarity, delhi capitals captain axar patel won the toss in saturday's match and opted to bat first, aiming for a third consecutive victory. delhi brought

in sameer rizvi to replace the unavailable faf du plessis, while csk replaced devon conway with jamie overton and brought in rahul tripathi for mukesh choudhary. whether this is dhoni's final match or not, tonight's game could be a defining moment in the history of one of ipl's greatest icons.

## BookMyShow Drops Kunal Kamra Content

Online ticketing platform BookMyShow has reportedly removed all content related to stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra from its website. The move follows a complaint letter from Yuva Shiv Sena leader Rahool N Kanal, who raised objections to Kamra's controversial content, particularly a recent joke that was labeled as "anti-national" by critics. According to reports by India Today, Kamra's profile has been removed, and no upcoming shows featuring the comedian are currently listed on the platform. This action comes in the wake of a letter dated April 2, in which Rahool Kanal urged BookMyShow to refrain from promoting or selling tickets for Kamra's performances. Kanal described Kamra as someone with a "documented history of habitual offensive behavior," alleging that his content consistently crosses the line of decency and decorum. In his letter, Kanal wrote, "I am addressing this letter in my individual capacity as a concerned citizen to bring to your attention a matter of significant public interest concerning the operations of BookMyShow." He went on to say that Kamra has used his platform to engage in a "vil-



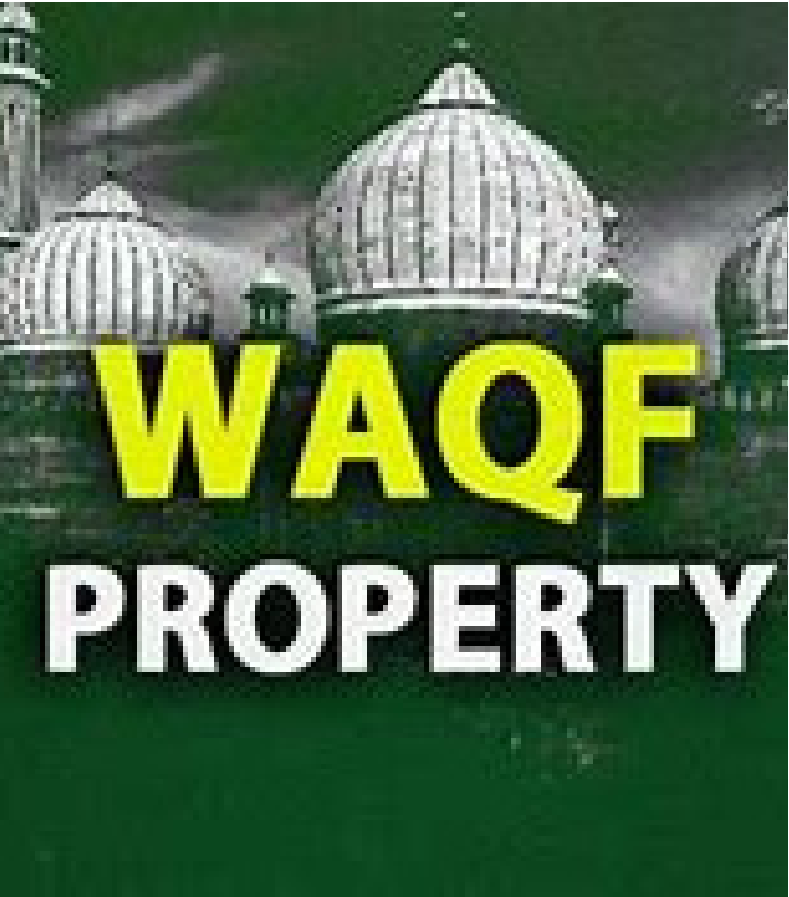
ification campaign" targeting prominent public figures, including the Prime Minister, deputy chief ministers, and other leaders. The controversy reportedly stems from a recent stand-up routine where Kamra cracked a joke that some interpreted as mocking national sentiment and leadership. Social media users and certain political outfits criticized the content, labeling it "traitorous," sparking calls for a boycott and further amplifying demands for action against the comedian. While Kunal Kamra has not officially responded to BookMyShow's action or the political letter, he has been known to defend his right to free speech in the past, often pointing out the role of satire in a healthy democracy. The incident has once again sparked a debate around censorship, freedom of expression, and political influence in entertainment spaces. BookMyShow has yet to issue a public statement on the matter.

## Violence Erupts at Bokaro Plant Protest

Tensions flared in Bokaro on Thursday as a protest demanding employment at the Bokaro Steel Plant (BSP) turned violent, resulting in the tragic death of a 23-year-old youth and injuries to at least 15 others, including one person currently in the ICU. The deceased, Prem Mahto, was part of a demonstration organized by the Visthapit Apprentice Sangh (VAS)—a union representing youth displaced during the establishment of the steel plant. Mahto allegedly succumbed to injuries after being struck on the head during a CISF lathi charge as protesters tried to breach barricades near the plant's main gate. The protest triggered a city-wide shutdown from Thursday night and brought plant operations to a standstill, with thousands of workers stranded inside. Authorities responded quickly to the escalating situation. Bokaro Deputy Commissioner Vijaya Jadhav confirmed that a three-member inquiry committee has been formed to investigate the incident. An order has also been issued for the arrest of the BSP's Chief General Manager. The district administration has announced a compensation of ₹20 lakh for

Mahto's family. The roots of the unrest lie in long-standing grievances of displaced families. According to protester Sahdev Sao, the plant was set up in 1967-68 on 34,000 acres of acquired land with promises of over 20,000 jobs for displaced locals. However, many of these promises remain unfulfilled. "We've been demanding jobs since 2016. Back then, we even breached the canal in protest, which led to the arrest of 52 protesters for seven months," said Sao. Another youth, speaking anonymously, stated that in 2016, the government identified 4,328 displaced persons eligible for employment. However, only 1,500 were offered apprenticeships between 2016 and 2022, with the number of recruitments decreasing in each phase. Despite an official meeting held in February, no progress followed. Frustrated by delays, youth and their families launched a fresh sit-in protest on April 3, which ultimately culminated in Thursday's violent confrontation. The incident has raised serious concerns over the state's handling of displacement and job promises tied to industrial development.

## Waqf Bill Passed, 8.8 Lakh Properties Listed



The waqf (amendment) bill 2025 has been passed by parliament with ease in both houses, ushering in new rules that may affect over 73,000 disputed waqf properties across the country. the bill, which underwent more than 12 hours of debate, marks a major update in how waqf assets—properties endowed by muslims for religious or charitable purposes—are recorded and managed. according to data from the ministry of minority affairs, there are a total of 8.8 lakh waqf properties listed across 30 states and union territories, based on entries in the waqf assets management system of india (wamsi), the government's official database. out of the total, more than 6.2 lakh properties—roughly two-thirds—are classified as graveyards, agricultural land, mosques, shops, or houses. graveyards make up 17.3%, while agricultural land and mosques account for 16% and 14%, respectively.

n interestingly, while up has the most waqf properties, punjab has the highest proportion of disputed properties, suggesting sharp regional contrasts in land contention. these disputes now fall under the new framework of the amended legislation. a waqf is a unique form of property in islamic tradition, where the ownership is believed to rest with god, while the property is managed for a religious, charitable, or community purpose. the amended bill is expected to bring greater transparency, digitization, and dispute resolution mechanisms. the move has stirred public debate and political activity, particularly in regions with ongoing land disputes involving waqf properties. in some areas, the passage of the bill has even triggered shifts in local political affiliations, including christian groups joining the bjp amid related disputes.

### Waqf properties by type

Top 5 types of waqf properties

|                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| Graveyard         | 152,523 |
| Agricultural Land | 140,778 |
| Mosque            | 121,653 |
| Shop              | 115,964 |
| House             | 92,868  |

Source: WAMSI • Created with Datawrapper



# JP Morgan Predicts U.S. Recession Due to New Tariffs; India's Exports May Be Impacted

- **U.S. GDP expected to shrink and unemployment may rise to 5.3%.**
- **Fed Chair Powell warns tariffs could worsen inflation and slow growth.**
- **India faces a 26% tariff on exports starting April 9.**

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

JP Morgan has forecasted that the United States is likely to enter a recession this year, primarily driven by the economic effects of newly imposed tariffs, as announced by President Donald Trump. In a note to investors released on Friday, Michael

Feroli, the firm's chief U.S. economist, predicted that the country's gross domestic product (GDP) will contract due to the weight of these tariffs.

Feroli further stated that this economic downturn could push the U.S. unemployment rate to 5.3%, as a result of reduced economic activity. This prediction comes after Presi-

dent Trump revealed on April 2 that his administration would be imposing reciprocal tariffs on various countries as part of a broader strategy to rebalance trade relations with major U.S. trading partners.

The Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell also voiced concerns over the potential impact of the new tariffs. During a business journalism conference on Friday, Powell warned that these tariffs could cause more significant economic damage than previously anticipated.

He explained that the tariff hikes would likely lead to higher inflation and slower economic growth, complicating the Federal Reserve's ongoing

efforts to control inflation.

According to Trump's tariff plan, a 10% tariff will be applied to imports from all countries beginning on April 5. Additionally, countries with the largest trade deficits with the U.S. will face individualized, higher tariffs starting April 9. India, in particular, will be affected by a 26% tariff on its exports.

Despite this negative outlook, global brokerage firm Jefferies has taken a more optimistic view regarding the impact on India.

The firm noted that key sectors of Indian exports, such as information technology (IT) services, pharmaceuticals, and automobiles, will not be directly affected by the new tariffs.



However, Jefferies warned that a potential slowdown in the U.S. economy could still negatively impact Indian exports, particularly in IT services, due to weakened de-

mand. While the 26% tariff on Indian goods may seem "reasonable" compared to other countries' tariffs, the broader economic challenges in the U.S. could pose greater risks.

## Death Toll from Myanmar Earthquake Surpasses 3,300, UN Urges Global Aid

TPN Correspondent | Yangon, Myanmar

The death toll from the devastating earthquake in Myanmar has risen to over 3,300, according to state media reports on Saturday. The earthquake, which struck on March 28, caused widespread destruction across the country, leaving 3,354 people dead and over 4,500 injured. Additionally, 220 people are still missing, with many survivors left without shelter.

Over a week after the disaster, survivors are still struggling to find adequate housing. Many are sleeping outdoors as their homes were either destroyed or are too unsafe to occupy due to the risk of further collapses. According to a United Nations estimate, more than three million people have been affected by the 7.7-magnitude quake, exacerbating the country's already dire situation, which has been complicated by four years of ongoing civil war.

The UN's top aid official, Tom Fletcher, visited the city of Mandalay, which is located near the earthquake's epicenter and has sustained signif-



icant damage. He described the destruction as "staggering" and called for the international community to urgently support Myanmar's recovery efforts.

The new death toll was announced following the return of Myanmar's military junta leader, Min Aung Hlaing, from a regional summit in Bangkok. His attendance at the summit was met with controversy, as protesters accused him of being a "murderer," and anti-junta groups condemned his presence.

The military junta has been in power since a 2021 coup that ousted the civilian government of Aung San Suu Kyi, sparking a

violent conflict that continues to this day.

Despite the ongoing internal conflict, international aid is slowly reaching Myanmar. Neighboring countries like China, Russia, and India were among the first to provide rescue teams to help locate survivors. In addition to earlier contributions, the United States has pledged an additional \$7 million in aid to support relief efforts.

The prolonged fighting in Myanmar has left the country's infrastructure and economy in tatters, significantly hindering global aid efforts in the aftermath of the earthquake.

## Nationwide Protests Planned Against Trump and Musk's Administration

TPN Correspondent | US

Opponents of President Donald Trump and billionaire Elon Musk are gearing up for widespread protests across the United States on Saturday, aiming to voice their opposition to the administration's policies on government downsizing, the economy, human rights, and various other issues.

The protests, which are being organized under the banner "Hands Off!", will see over 1,200 demonstrations take place nationwide. These rallies have been planned by more than 150 groups, including civil rights organizations, labor unions, LGBTQ+ advocates, veterans, and fair elections activists. The events are set to take place in major cities, including the National Mall in Washington, D.C., state capitols, and various other locations throughout all 50 states.

The demonstrations come in response to what protesters see as harmful government policies and corporate practices that disproportionately impact marginalized communities and working-class Americans. Protesters are expected to highlight a range of issues, includ-

ing government budget cuts, the erosion of civil liberties, climate change denial, and corporate influence on politics. Many of the activists involved have expressed concerns about Musk's business practices and his growing influence, particularly his role in the tech industry and its intersections with politics.

The "Hands Off!" protests aim to create a unified voice against policies that critics say threaten social justice, the economy, and the environment. With rallies organized across the country, participants are hoping to send a strong message to the administration, demanding accountability and advocating for changes that prioritize the welfare of everyday Americans.

The demonstrations are expected to draw a diverse group of participants, each bringing their own grievances and concerns to the forefront. Organizers hope that these rallies will galvanize public sentiment and



encourage political action leading into upcoming elections. The protests also serve as a reflection of the ongoing national debate over government power, corporate influence, and the future direction of the United States.

Yoon's removal has also sparked concerns about the future stability of the government. South Korea's constitution requires the holding of a new presidential election within two months, and political parties are already gearing up for a highly charged electoral battle.

In the meantime, South Korea's prime minister will serve as the acting head of state until the election can be held, ensuring that the government continues to function despite the political upheaval.

## North Korea leader Kim Jong Un visits military training base

TPN Correspondent | North Korea

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited a military training base of the Korean People's Army's special operations units on April 4, 2025, as reported by state media on April 5. During the visit, Kim observed a general tactical training session and a small-arms shooting contest, which involved combatants from various special operation units under the ongoing training program.

Kim Jong Un emphasized the importance of strengthening North Korea's special operations forces as a key aspect of the nation's current military strategy. The state news agency KCNA quoted him as saying that enhancing these forces is central to his vision of building a more formidable military. However, KCNA did not reveal specific details regarding the tasks Kim outlined to improve the operational capabilities of these units.

As part of his visit, Kim also oversaw the test-fire of a newly developed sniper rifle, designed for use by the special operations units. Kim expressed



satisfaction with the rifle's performance, highlighting the success of the weapon, which was developed using North Korean technology.

The visit comes amid increasing concerns about North Korea's military activities, including its deployment of special operations forces to Russia to participate in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. According to South Korea, North Korean troops have been stationed in Russia to support Russian forces. This deployment was initially downplayed by both Moscow and Pyongyang, but in October 2024, Russian President Vladimir Putin did not deny the presence of North Korean troops on the battlefield, while a North Korean official con-

firmed that such a deployment would be in accordance with international law.

Analysts suggest that North Korea may be gaining valuable experience by contributing troops and weapons to the conflict in Ukraine, potentially using these insights to strengthen its own military forces. However, Ukrainian officials have reported heavy casualties among the North Korean troops involved.

Kim Jong Un's inspection of the special operations units and his focus on enhancing their capabilities further underline his commitment to developing North Korea's military strength amidst ongoing regional and international tensions.

## Trump Imposes 25% Tariff on Imported Vehicles to the U.S.

President Donald Trump has unveiled a new 25% tariff on cars and car parts that are imported into the United States, marking a significant change from the current 2.5% import tax. This decision is part of the administration's broader economic strategy aimed at boosting domestic production and protecting American industries from foreign competition.

The tariff will apply to vehicles and car components from countries outside the U.S., further intensifying trade tensions with global partners. While the policy is intended to encourage more car manufacturing within the U.S., it raises concerns about the potential for higher consumer prices and strained relations with trading partners. The new tariff policy follows a series of similar trade measures introduced by Trump since taking office. The administration has implemented tariffs on various goods, including steel and aluminum, in an effort to protect U.S. manufacturers from what it sees as unfair competition. However, critics argue that these tariffs could



harm American consumers by raising the cost of imported goods, leading to higher prices for cars and car parts in the domestic market.

In his announcement, President Trump expressed confidence that the new tariff would lead to "tremendous growth" in the U.S. car industry. The administration believes that by making foreign-made cars more expensive, American manufacturers will have a competitive advantage, potentially leading to job creation and increased production within the country.

The impact of the tariff will extend beyond the U.S.,

with countries like the United Kingdom and other car-exporting nations potentially facing higher costs for their vehicles and parts sold to the U.S. market. These countries may seek to negotiate exemptions or retaliate with tariffs of their own, which could lead to further trade disruptions.

As the situation develops, the full impact of these tariffs on global trade and consumer prices remains to be seen. The move highlights the Trump administration's focus on protecting U.S. industries, but it also underscores the complexities of global trade in a highly interconnected economy.



# Tata Capital files for confidential IPO with Sebi, eyes ₹15,000 cr listing

Tata Capital, the financial services arm of the Tata Group, has submitted a confidential pre-filing for its initial public offering (IPO) to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi). This step marks the beginning of the group's plan to list its financial subsidiary while ensuring the protection of sensitive business information, according to reports from Moneycontrol.

Tata Capital, a non-banking financial services (NBFC) company and a subsidiary of Tata Sons, has hired 10 investment banks to advise on the IPO. These include prominent institutions such as Kotak Mahindra Capital, Citi, JP Morgan, Axis Capital, ICICI Securities, HSBC

Securities, IIFL Capital, BNP Paribas, SBI Capital, and HDFC Bank.

The IPO will likely include a mixture of primary and secondary share offerings. Tata Sons and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) plan to reduce their stakes in the company. However, Tata Sons is expected to retain a significant role in the stake sale, ensuring its continued influence in the business. On February 25, the board of Tata Capital approved the IPO, which will feature a fresh issue of up to 230 million shares alongside the offer for sale by existing shareholders. The success of the IPO will depend on market conditions and regulatory approvals.

As of March 31, 2024, Tata Sons held 92.83% of Tata Capital, with the remaining shares owned by other Tata Group entities and IFC. A recent Fitch Ratings report suggests that the public listing will not reduce Tata Sons' stake below 75% in the foreseeable future.

Tata Capital's IPO represents a significant move for the Tata Group, which continues to expand its footprint in various sectors. The listing will provide an opportunity for public investors to participate in the company's growth while also enhancing the financial services business's market presence.



## India remains attractive destination for global capital: Experts



India continues to stand as an appealing destination for global capital, buoyed by a strong economic outlook, progressive policy reforms, and a resilient market, experts said on Saturday.

Despite the recent reciprocal tariffs imposed by the US on Indian goods, experts noted that these measures remain relatively modest compared to other Asian countries. This situation preserves India's competitive edge and provides a strong proposition for viable export opportunities.

Manoj Purohit, Partner and Leader, FS Tax, Tax and Regulatory Services at BDO India, highlighted India's position as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. He noted that India benefits from a large consumer market, a skilled workforce, and a government that is committed to implementing business-friendly reforms. The government's emphasis on infrastructure, digital growth, and ease of doing business has further bolstered investor confidence.

One of the recent steps in reinforcing India's investment climate was the RBI's decision to maintain the existing corporate bond and G-sec limits for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs). This move signals the government's

intent to keep India's market accessible to offshore investors, ensuring continued foreign inflows.

Trade diversification and strategic partnerships have also created new avenues for investment, making India an attractive market for long-term investment despite potential short-term challenges such as tariffs. Purohit pointed out that India's robust economic fundamentals make it resilient to temporary disruptions like rising inflation, tight earnings, and high valuations.

Market participants are closely monitoring the potential long-term effects of proposed tariffs, along with upcoming announcements from the RBI regarding its monetary policy stance. There is anticipation of a possible rate cut, which could influence investment strategies in the next cycle.

The upcoming week is critical, with key domestic and global events on the horizon. Investors are likely to track developments related to tariff tensions, and domestic economic indicators, including the IIP and CPI data, will be closely watched. Additionally, the Q4 earnings season kicks off with IT giant TCS scheduled to announce its results on April 10.

### Market Outlook for FY26

## Cautious Start Amid US Tariff Hikes and Geopolitical Concerns

The new financial year (FY26) has begun on a cautious note, largely driven by the unexpected imposition of higher tariffs by the US, market experts noted on Saturday. While the initial market sentiment remains subdued, any positive developments from the ongoing India-US bilateral trade talks could provide a potential catalyst to support the market's recovery. Sectors like IT and metals have significantly underperformed compared to the broader market, reflecting growing concerns about the US economy's outlook and the possibility of retaliatory trade actions from other countries. Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Investments Limited, highlighted that investors will be closely watching for any countermeasures taken by global trade partners, which could escalate geopolitical and economic uncertainty. This cautious sentiment is reflected in the rally of gold and bond prices, as investors flock to safe-haven assets in response to the growing risk of a trade war. On Friday, benchmark indices ex-



tended their losses, with the Nifty falling 345.65 points, or 1.49%, to 22,904.45. The fear of a trade war, fueled by US President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariffs, has led to widespread concern that aggressive trade policies could result in retaliatory measures, disrupt global supply chains, and hinder global economic growth.

The broader markets experienced a sharp decline, with the Nifty Midcap 100 and Nifty Smallcap 100 indices dropping 2.91% and 3.56%, respectively. All sectoral indices faced signifi-

cant losses, particularly IT, Auto, Pharma, PSU Bank, Realty, Oil and Gas, and Metals, which saw declines between 3% and 6%.

Market analysts suggest that the key support level for the Nifty lies around 22,700-22,800. Holding above this level will be crucial for a potential recovery towards the previous week's high of 23,565. However, failure to maintain support could lead to a further decline, potentially reaching 22,300.

In the coming week, investors will also focus on the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy meeting and the resumption of the Q4 FY25 earnings season. A positive outcome from the MPC meeting could benefit rate-sensitive sectors, while key economic indicators, such as inflation figures and US jobless claims, will offer critical insights into the health of the global economy.

## India Ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in Private AI Investment, Improves Position in Tech Readiness:UN

India has emerged as a significant player in the global AI landscape, ranking 10th in private investments in AI in 2023, according to the United Nations' 2025 Technology and Innovation Report. The report, published by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), highlights that India is one of only two developing countries with substantial private AI investments, alongside China.

The report reveals that the US leads global AI investment, contributing USD 67 billion, which accounts for 70% of worldwide private investment. China follows in second place with USD 7.8 billion, while India ranks tenth with USD 1.4 billion. This marks a notable achievement for India in the evolving field of AI, with the technology expect-

ed to reach a market value of USD 4.8 trillion by 2033, transforming industries worldwide.

India has also shown improvement in the UNCTAD's Readiness for Frontier Technologies Index, rising from 48th place in 2022 to 36th in 2024. This index measures a country's ability to adopt and deploy cutting-edge technologies, combining factors like ICT deployment, research and development (R&D), skills, industrial capacity, and access to finance. India performed particularly well in R&D, ranking 3rd globally, but still faces challenges in ICT infrastructure (99th) and skills development (113th).

Despite these challenges, the report notes that India, along with other de-

veloping countries like China and Brazil, is outperforming its income level in technology readiness. The report emphasizes that AI and other frontier technologies, while offering productivity gains, could also exacerbate inequality if not managed properly. To mitigate this risk, the report stresses the importance of investing in workforce reskilling and adaptation.

AI is expected to reshape global economies, and while access to AI infrastructure remains concentrated in a few developed countries, nations like India are beginning to carve out their place in the AI revolution. The future, according to the report, will require global collaboration to ensure that AI benefits not just capital but workers as well, creating new industries and jobs.

## Companies defend India's startup proposition after Piyush Goyal's jibe stirs debate

Several prominent Indian entrepreneurs rallied in defense of the startup ecosystem after Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal questioned the value and innovation of Indian startups. His remarks, made at a recent Startup Mahakumbh event, sparked a debate, especially from figures like Zepto CEO Aadit Palicha and Zoho founder Sridhar Vembu, who defended the contributions of startups in India.

Goyal had suggested that Indian startups should shift focus from consumer-based businesses like food delivery and ice cream production to high-tech sectors such as robotics, AI, and semi-

conductors. He criticized food delivery startups for creating jobs that, in his view, only turned youth into "cheap labor" for wealthy consumers. He further pointed to China's advancements in electric mobility and AI as a model for India to aspire to, urging Indian startups to be bolder in their approach.

Palicha, who co-founded Zepto, hit back, emphasizing that consumer internet companies like his have made significant contributions to job creation, foreign direct investment (FDI), and innovation in India's supply chain. He noted that Zepto alone



had created over 1.5 lakh jobs and contributed more than ₹1,000 crore in taxes annually. "We need to build great local champions in the internet sector," he argued, suggesting that consumer internet companies were integral to scaling technologies like cloud computing and AI, as seen with global giants like Amazon and Facebook.

Zoho's Sridhar Vembu supported Palicha, viewing Goyal's challenge as a call for engineers to solve India's technological hurdles. Vembu emphasized that smart engineers could overcome these challenges and bring India clos-

er to technological excellence.

Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma also chimed in, highlighting the maturity differences between India's startup ecosystem and those of more developed markets like the U.S. and China. He noted that India's ecosystem is still evolving, and its startups are playing to their strengths as they gradually mature.

While Goyal's remarks stirred controversy, the entrepreneurs underscored that India's startup ecosystem, though still developing, holds vast potential for future innovation and growth.



## Why This Man Hates Mumbai Living

Mumbai, often hailed as the city of dreams, doesn't always live up to that reputation—at least not for everyone. A recent post on Reddit has gone viral after a man shared his deep regret about relocating from Delhi to Mumbai for work. Just a month into his new life, he's already contemplating a transfer to Gurgaon. In his post, the user vents about the harsh realities of adjusting to Mumbai life, with sky-high rents, perpetual construction, and an overwhelming population being top of the list. The man explained that renting a flat in Mumbai is a far more complicated ordeal compared to Delhi. While in Delhi, one can simply pay and move in, in Mumbai, the process includes meeting multiple people and often dealing with rigid housing societies that impose strict regulations—especially on bachelors. He pointed fingers at “society uncles” who he claimed interfere excessively in the personal lives of tenants. Rules like “no female guests overnight” or “no male friends staying too long” are imposed even after paying steep rents. The user's frustrations extended to the overall vibe of the city as well. He noted that despite assuming Mumbai and Delhi wouldn't be too different culturally, he finds Mumbaikars to be far more conservative than he expected. The constant noise, dust, and the city being in a state of construction all the time have left him yearning for the comparatively freer lifestyle of Delhi or the comfort of Gurgaon. His post resonated with several others who have either faced similar issues or feel the struggle of adapting to Mumbai's intense housing and social environment. While Mumbai offers opportunities and energy, for some, like this user, the cost—both financial and emotional—may outweigh the dream



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## West Bengal Man Builds ‘Bed Car’

The internet has once again been left amazed by the brilliance of Indian “jugaad” after a man from West Bengal turned an ordinary bed into a fully functional car. In a now-viral video from Murshidabad, Nawab Sheikh can be seen cruising down the road—not in a traditional vehicle, but in what appears to be a bed on wheels. The sight has not only amused passing motorists but also sparked widespread curiosity and admiration online. The video, widely shared on Instagram, shows Mr. Sheikh confidently behind the wheel of his unconventional ride. What was once a standard bed has been ingeniously transformed into a mobile vehicle, complete with four wheels, a motor, and a functional steering system. The setup even includes



brakes, ensuring it's not just a quirky prop but a fully operational mode of transportation.

Adding to the charm of the invention are the details: a proper mattress, a colorful bedsheet, fluffy pillows, and hilariously, side mirrors mounted on the footboard—blending comfort with functionality in the most unexpected way. At one point during the video, Mr. Sheikh stands up on his creation to strike Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's iconic arms-wide-open pose before smoothly returning to his seat and continuing his drive.

The clip has become a viral sensation, drawing reactions that range from laughter to amazement. Many social media users have praised the creativity and engineering behind the “bed car,” calling it the ultimate symbol of Indian innovation. Others joked that Mr. Sheikh has achieved the dream of literally driving from bed.

While the invention may not be road-legal, it serves as a perfect example of how ingenuity, humor, and technical know-how can come together in the most entertaining and unexpected ways—proving once again that when it comes to desi jugaad, there are no limits.

## Man Pets Cobra, Internet Stunned



In a scene that looks straight out of a surreal nature documentary, a man was captured on camera calmly interacting with a giant cobra, leaving viewers across the internet completely stunned. The viral video, posted on Instagram, showcases an encounter that defies logic and fear—one where mutual calm seems to replace instinctive panic. The clip begins with the man, dressed casually in a yellow T-shirt and blue jeans, crouching calmly in front of the massive snake. The cobra, hood raised and mouth agape, appears ready to defend itself—but the man shows no signs of fear or hesitation. Instead, he focuses intently and reach-

es out to gently touch the snake's head. The cobra reacts, but not in a hostile manner. The moment is tense, yet strangely peaceful.

As the cobra stands tall and circumspect, the man maintains his calm demeanor. He doesn't flinch or back away. Instead, in what has left many viewers breathless, he slowly leans in and touches his forehead to the cobra's head—a gesture that feels spiritual, almost like a silent exchange of trust or energy. The two remain still for a heartbeat before the man gently pulls back, unharmed and composed.

The internet was quick to react, with a mix of admiration, disbelief, and concern. While some praised

the man's courage and composure, others questioned the wisdom of engaging so closely with a venomous creature. Wildlife experts caution against such interactions, warning that even the calmest cobra is still dangerous and unpredictable.

Nevertheless, the video has sparked conversations about human-animal connections, fear, and respect for the wild. Whether seen as a daring stunt or a rare moment of harmony between species, the encounter is undeniably captivating. For now, the identity of the man remains unknown—but his fearless bond with one of nature's most feared creatures has made him an internet sensation

## Viral Picnic Table Spans Three Nations

Imagine having lunch with one hand in Austria, your feet in Slovakia, and your back resting in Hungary. Sounds like a geography puzzle—but it's entirely possible thanks to a unique and now-viral picnic table placed at the precise spot where these three countries meet. Nestled in a quiet corner of Central Europe, this picnic site has captured the attention of travel enthusiasts and social media users alike. The table sits in a public park designed to celebrate the geographical junction of Austria, Slovakia, and Hungary, offering a rare and whimsical chance to be in three countries at once.

What makes this destination even more captivating is its artistic setting. The park is adorned with sculptures crafted by international artists, all centered around the theme of a triangle—a simple shape with profound symbolism in this context. Representing the unity and convergence of the three nations, the triangle becomes more

than just geometry; it's a symbol of connection, cooperation, and curiosity.

The concept isn't entirely new—places like the Four Corners in the United States, where Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah touch, have long attracted tourists for similar reasons. But the picnic table at this European tri-point brings a more relaxed, scenic charm to the concept. Visitors don't just pass by for a quick selfie—they stay for lunch, soak in the landscape, and marvel at the novelty of casually existing in multiple countries all at once.

Social media has played a key role in the picnic table's rising fame. Many who stumbled upon it online now dream of planning a trip there, lured by the idea of literally crossing borders with each bite of lunch. Whether you're a geography geek, an art lover, or just someone looking for a travel story worth telling, this table offers a passport-free way to connect across cultures—one meal at a time.



## Sobbing Man Nabbed for Chicken Theft

In one of the most bizarre yet oddly emotional incidents to surface online, a video from Washington state has gone viral, showing a sobbing man being arrested in the woods after stealing his ex-girlfriend's pet chicken, Polly. The footage, released by the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office, has left the internet both amused and bewildered.

According to the sheriff's report, the drama unfolded when a woman called 911 last week, alleging that her former partner had broken into her house and fled—clutching her beloved chicken. Witnesses say the man shouted, “I've got Polly!” sev-

eral times before making his escape. What followed was a short manhunt through a forested area near a main road.

The bodycam footage shows officers sweeping the area until they found the man hiding in the woods, visibly emotional and still holding Polly. “Don't hurt my chicken,” he cried, hugging the bird tightly. Remaining calm, one officer replied, “That's fine. Just hold your chicken. I'm not gonna hurt your chicken,” while instructing the man to show his hands and surrender. Despite the surreal nature of the situation, the arrest was handled with care. The

man eventually complied, walking out of his hiding place still in tears. Officers allowed him to gently place Polly in the back of the patrol vehicle before taking him into custody.

The police confirmed that Polly the chicken was safely returned to her rightful owner and was unharmed during the ordeal. While the motive behind the theft remains unclear, social media users have reacted with a mix of laughter and sympathy. Some joked about the “feathered custody battle,” while others praised the officers for their calm and compassionate response.







Delhi Capitals ended their 15-year winless streak at Chepauk with a commanding 25-run victory over Chennai Super Kings in the IPL 2025 clash held on Saturday. Led by KL Rahul's masterful knock, DC posted 183/6 before restricting CSK to 158/5 in their 20 overs. KL Rahul was the star of the match, delivering a classy yet aggressive innings of 77 runs off 51 balls, featuring six boundaries and three towering sixes. His composed approach anchored the Delhi innings and laid a solid foundation. Tristan Stubbs added a quickfire unbeaten 24 off

12 balls, but DC were denied a bigger total thanks to a tight final over by CSK's Matheesha Pathirana (1/31). In response, CSK's batting faltered under pressure as DC's bowlers kept things tight. Despite a packed MA Chidambaram Stadium cheering them on, the hosts couldn't chase down the target. This marks DC's third consecutive win in the season, while CSK continues to struggle for momentum.

## Rajasthan Royals Crush Punjab Kings with 50-Run Victory

Rajasthan Royals handed Punjab Kings a disappointing welcome back to their new home ground in Mullanpur with a commanding 50-run win in their latest IPL 2025 clash. Batting first, Rajasthan Royals posted a competitive total of 189/6, thanks to skipper Sanju Samson's classy half-century and impactful contributions from Jos Buttler and Riyan Parag. Samson anchored the innings with well-timed strokes while maintaining a steady run rate. In reply, Punjab Kings struggled from the outset. RR's disciplined bowling attack, led by Trent Boult and Yuzvendra Chahal, dismantled the PBKS batting line-up, restricting them to just 139. Despite home support, PBKS failed to build any meaningful partnerships. This dominant win boosts RR's position on the

points table and signals their strong intent this season, while PBKS will need to regroup quickly after the setback in front of their home crowd.



## Sift Kaur Samra Clinches India's First Gold at ISSF World Cup 2025

India's 23-year-old shooting prodigy Sift Kaur Samra made headlines by winning the country's first gold medal at the ISSF World Cup 2025 in Buenos Aires. Competing in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions (3P) final, Samra displayed nerves of steel and outstanding accuracy to clinch the

top podium finish. Initially trailing Germany's Anita Mangold, Samra mounted a strong comeback in the latter stages of the 45-shot final, eventually finishing with an impressive score of 458.6. Mangold settled for silver with 455.3, while Kazakhstan's Arina Al-tukhova took bronze with 445.9. Samra, a student of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, and the current world record holder in this event, continues to shine on the global stage. Her win further solidifies her reputation as one of India's top shooting talents. The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) lauded her performance, describing it as "extraordinary" and a testament to her champion mindset. With this victory, Samra adds another feather to her cap following her record-breaking performance at the 2023 Asian Games, and boosts India's morale ahead of future international competitions.



## "Didi Supports Me A Lot": Mahima Tete on Training with Sister Salima at Senior Camp

Rising hockey star Mahima Tete is making waves at the Senior National Camp in SAI, Bengaluru, where she trains alongside her elder sister and Indian team captain, Salima Tete. Mahima, who recently helped Hockey Jharkhand win the 15th Senior Women National Championship, is now focused on breaking into the senior national team. "I've always wanted to follow in my sister's footsteps. She supports me a lot during training and helps me improve," Mahima shared. Initially part of a 65-member core group, Ma-

hima impressed selectors and secured a spot in the final 40-member senior camp list. She acknowledges the leap in intensity from domestic play and aims to match the pace and fitness of international players. Despite being ill during the national championship final, Mahima played the full game, pushing herself to help her team win their first-ever gold. Looking ahead, she aims to work hard enough to earn a place in the starting line-up.



## Manchester Derby Set for Showdown as United Seek Redemption Against City

Old Trafford will witness high-stakes drama on Sunday as Manchester United take on defending champions Manchester City in a much-anticipated derby clash in the 2024-25 Premier League season. Manchester United come into the contest on the back of a 1-0 defeat to Nottingham Forest and currently sit 13th in the standings with 37 points from 30 games. City, meanwhile, are in fifth place with 51 points from 30 matches, following a 2-0 win over Leicester City. Injury concerns loom large over both sides.

United will be without key players including Luke Shaw, Kobbie Mainoo, Lisandro Martinez, Jonny Evans, Amad Diallo, and Ayden Heaven. City too face absences, with Rodri, Nathan Ake, John Stones, Manuel Akanji, and Oscar Bobb ruled out. Erling Haaland remains doubtful but may still feature. The Red Devils will be desperate for a turnaround in front of home fans, while Pep Guardiola's men look to strengthen their top-four hopes. A fiery Manchester derby awaits.



## Barcelona, Real Madrid Legends Arrive in Mumbai for 'Legends Face-off' on April 6

Football fever is gripping Mumbai as legendary players from FC Barcelona and Real Madrid have arrived for the much-anticipated 'Legends Face-off', set to be held on April 6, 2025, at DY Patil Stadium. The event marks a major moment in Indian football history, bringing one of the sport's greatest rivalries to Indian soil. Former stars including Javier Saviola and Edmílson from Barcelona Legends, and Fernando Morientes and Pepe from Real Madrid Legends, addressed a pre-match

press conference, expressing their excitement and admiration for India's growing passion for football. "I'm thrilled to be here. The energy in India is electric. We hope this match boosts football's popularity here," said Edmílson. Saviola added, "It's emotional to see our careers celebrated by Indian fans. I hope this inspires future footballers." The match promises to be more than nostalgia—it's a celebration of the beautiful game and its unifying power.





## Rashmika Mandanna Birthday Celebrated by Film Teams



National crush Rashmika Mandanna celebrates her birthday today, receiving warm wishes from her upcoming film teams Kubera and The Girlfriend. The Kubera team, led by director Sekhar Kammula, shared a heartwarming BTS video from the sets. Meanwhile, The Girlfriend unit released the teaser of the song Reyi Lolothula, sung by Hesham Abdul Wahab, Chinmayi Sripada, and Vijay Deverakonda, with lyrics by Rakendu Mouli and a poetic touch by director Rahul Ravindran. Rahul shared the teaser on X, wishing Rashmika: “You are precious! May God bless you with love, joy, and health.” Produced by Allu Aravind, The Girlfriend stars Rashmika and Dheekshith Shetty. Kubera, featuring music by Devi Sri Prasad and cinematography by Niketh Bommi, is set to release on June 20, 2025.



## Kaajal Shankhwaarr Gets Candid About KINK 2, Industry Bias, and Beyond

Actress Kaajal Shankhwaarr, known for her role in KINK Season 2: Kiss, Ishq n Konnections, opened up about the show's success and behind-the-scenes reality. While fans have embraced the series, Kaajal revealed, “Some scenes were edited unfairly — like one where I was shown slapping someone, but they cut out the part where I was pushed first.” She expressed concern about misrepresentation and credited co-actor Nisha Yogini, whose efforts, she felt, went unnoticed. Kaajal acknowledged the risks of speaking up in the industry: “Many producers boycott actors for being outspoken, but I’ll always stand up for what’s right.” Off-screen, Kaajal unwinds with her iguana and cats, cooks, paints in her signature Wabi-Sabi style, and supports animal welfare and old-age homes. With dreams of directing and exploring Europe, she balances life with discipline and affection: “I never leave without kissing my pets.”

## Sonali Bendre’s ‘Book of Books’ Arrives April 23

Award-winning actress and author Sonali Bendre Behl is set to release her second non-fiction book, A Book of Books, on April 23, announced HarperCollins India. Celebrating her enduring love for reading, the book presents ‘13 reasons why everyone should read’, along with thoughtful recommendations for all age groups and genres. In her statement, Bendre said, “Reading has been my constant companion... this book is a guide, a journal, and a friend in every reader’s journey.” Following her 2015 debut The Modern Gurukul, this new work continues her literary mission through Sonali’s Book Club, a thriving online reading community.



A Book of Books is priced at ₹599 and is now available for pre-order.

## Mahesh Babu Finally Gets Passport Back, Heads Abroad!



Superstar Mahesh Babu, fresh off the first schedule of SSMB29 in Odisha, is now on a fun foreign trip with his family. But before taking off, he gave fans a playful moment at the airport—flashing his passport for the cameras! This comes after director SS Rajamouli jokingly “confiscated” Mahesh’s passport, likening it to caging a lion, a video of which went viral earlier. SSMB29, helmed by Rajamouli, promises to be a

massive action-adventure drama. With top stars like Priyanka Chopra and Prithviraj Sukumaran on board, and Hollywood technicians involved, expectations are sky-high. The film is being produced by K.L. Narayana under Durga Arts with music by Oscar-winner M.M. Keeravani. As Mahesh heads abroad for a well-deserved break, fans are enjoying every bit of the fun-filled updates!

## Aishwarya Raj Bhakuni on Staying Grounded Amid Fame



Actress Aishwarya Raj Bhakuni, currently seen as Parvati in Veer Hanuman, believes fame is never permanent. Known for her roles in Shrimad Ramayan, Tenali Rama, Jhansi Ki Rani, and Vighnaharta Ganeshha, Aishwarya says she easily disconnects from her character once the camera stops rolling. “As soon as I remove my makeup and costume, I become myself again,” she shares, reflecting on her years of experience. The actress credits her family and close friends for keeping her grounded, saying their love and support keep her focused. She also appreciates the role of social media in helping her stay authentic, stating, “It allows me to be myself.” For Aishwarya, staying humble and real is the key, even in an industry where fame can be fleeting.

Global star Ram Charan is all praise for the upcoming film Peddi, directed by Buchi Babu Sana. Taking to social media, Ram Charan revealed that he watched the “glimpse” video ahead of its April 6 release at 11:45 AM and was thrilled by the visuals and music. Sharing a powerful music bit with the catchy line “Peddi Peddi,” Charan lauded music maestro A.R. Rahman, calling

his work “extraordinary” and “electrifying.” He expressed immense excitement and assured fans they would love the sneak peek too. Produced on a massive scale, Peddi marks a major collaboration between Charan, Buchi Babu, and A.R. Rahman, setting high expectations among fans and movie buffs alike. Stay tuned for the Peddi glimpse release tomorrow!

## Ram Charan Hypes ‘Peddi’ Glimpse and AR Rahman

