



BUZZ POINTS

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Reviews GHMC Works After Municipal Reorganisation



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World's First-Ever 'Swiss Mall' to Come Up in Hyderabad



TPN Bureau | Davos-January 22

In a landmark discussion at the on-going World Economic Forum in Davos, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy engaged with Christelle Luisier Brodard, Chief Minister of the Council of Vaud, Switzerland, exploring avenues for collaboration and strategic partnership between Telangana and Vaud. The dialogue centered on leveraging the upcoming India-Switzerland Free Trade Agreement to strengthen cultural, educational, and industrial ties. During the meeting, both leaders emphasized cooperation in skilling and training programs, particularly in hospitality management and sports, aligning with Telangana

Rising 2047's vision to develop world-class human capital. They also discussed the exchange of best practices in retail and life sciences, with a special focus on building mutually beneficial opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs from both regions. A highlight of the discussion was Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's proposal to establish the world's first-ever 'Swiss Mall' in Hyderabad, combining Swiss retail expertise, technology, and lifestyle offerings under one roof. The Swiss delegation responded positively, expressing eagerness to explore the concept and its implementation, marking a unique step in global retail collaboration. This initiative aims to create a landmark destination in Hyderabad, promoting tourism,

employment, and international trade while showcasing Swiss design and innovation. Both leaders, who share a personal interest in football, explored potential collaboration in sports development, including youth programs, training facilities, and exchange initiatives, further strengthening cultural and recreational ties between the two regions. Additionally, the Swiss delegation expressed interest in supporting Telangana's women empowerment initiatives through self-help groups (SHGs). Isabelle Moret, Industries & Economy Minister of Vaud, assured that a Swiss team will soon visit Hyderabad to examine detailed opportunities for investment, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing in retail, life-

style, sports, and women-centric enterprises. This engagement underscores Telangana's proactive approach in promoting international partnerships that combine economic growth with social development. By positioning Hyderabad as a hub for global retail, innovation, and skill development, the proposed Swiss Mall is expected to become a landmark project, fostering employment, tourism, and cross-border investment. The discussions reflect the state government's commitment to creating a future-ready Telangana, emphasizing innovation, collaboration, and sustainable development while showcasing the region as a preferred destination for global investors and strategic partnerships.



Chief Minister of AP Chandrababu Naidu met with CM of TG Revanth Reddy. Mr Lokesh also in the meeting

CM Revanth Reddy Proposes Annual WEF Follow-Up Meet in Hyderabad

TPN Bureau | Davos-January 22

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Tuesday proposed the conduct of a World Economic Forum (WEF) follow-up conference in Hyderabad every year during July, aiming to accelerate investment decisions and sustain global engagement with the state. The proposal was made during the "Join the Rise" programme held on the sidelines of the WEF annual meeting in Davos. Global business leaders and policy-makers present at the event unanimously welcomed and supported the Chief Minister's suggestion.

The Chief Minister recalled the recent success of the Telangana Rising Global Summit held in Hyderabad, which attracted investment commitments worth over 5.75 lakh crore. "Every year we come to Davos to sign MoUs. This time, after the success of the Global Summit, we are here to present the Telangana Rising vision and the people's government's policies to the world," he said.



Revanth Reddy underlined that Hyderabad has emerged as a major global hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs). He also outlined the state's plans to rejuvenate the Musi river and develop a riverfront, with a special focus on promoting a night-time economy. The Chief Minister stated that Hyderabad would be developed into the country's first city with a truly 24-hour working ecosystem. Looking to the future, he announced the development of the Bharat Future City across 30,000 acres to meet next-generation requirements. More than 50 per cent of the area, he said, would be reserved for green cover, reinforcing Telangana's commitment to sustainable development. At the event, the Telangana Rising 2047 Vision Document was showcased. The state also unveiled the Telangana AI Innovation Hub (TAIH) and the Telangana Next-Gen Life Sciences Policy 2026-2030, signalling its focus on emerging technologies and advanced healthcare sectors. Ministers D. Sridhar Babu and Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy, who participated in the meeting, presented key game-changer projects planned for Hyderabad, including metro rail expansion and the rejuvenation of lakes and water bodies. They also explained the newly proposed Core, Pure, and Rare economic growth zones, and invited global companies to partner with Telangana by contributing technology, expertise, and skills.

Addressing the gathering, Revanth Reddy said that in the fast-changing global economic environment, a one-year gap between investment discussions and follow-ups was too long. He suggested that a mid-year follow-up forum in Hyderabad, either in July or August, would help review progress on memorandums of understanding (MoUs), resolve bottlenecks, and fast-track implementation of investment commitments. He conveyed the proposal to WEF representatives, highlighting Hyderabad's readiness to host such a global platform.

Adding star power to the event, veteran film actor Chiranjeevi emerged as a special attraction. He joined the Chief Minister at the programme and later participated in a dinner interaction, drawing attention from delegates and guests alike.

L'Oréal to Inaugurate World's First Beauty-Tech Hub in Hyderabad in November 2026

TPN Bureau | January 22:

The Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy-led "Telangana Rising" delegation has secured yet another major Global Capability Centre (GCC) investment for Hyderabad, with global cosmetics giant L'Oréal announcing plans to set up the world's first beauty-tech GCC in the city.

The decision was announced during a meeting between the Telangana delegation and Nicolas Hieronimus, Chief Executive Officer of L'Oréal, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2026 in Davos. The state-of-the-art facility is scheduled to be inaugurated in November 2026 and will mark L'Oréal's first-ever GCC dedicated exclusively to the beauty-tech domain.

Expressing his enthusiasm, Hieronimus said L'Oréal was delighted to establish a large-scale beauty-tech GCC in Hyderabad with a significant investment. The proposed centre will function as a global hub for innovation, technology, data, and supply chain operations for the world-renowned cosmetics company. He noted that the Hyderabad facility would play a key role in driving L'Oréal's global digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and advanced analytics initiatives.



"Technology solutions developed at the Hyderabad GCC will be deployed across our facilities worldwide," Hieronimus said, underlining the strategic importance of the centre. He also formally invited Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Minister for IT and Industries D. Sridhar Babu to attend the inauguration of the GCC in November 2026. Minister Sridhar Babu recalled that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy had been keen on attracting L'Oréal's GCC investment to Hyderabad and had ensured all possible support from the state

government to make the proposal a reality. He said the successful engagement with L'Oréal was a reflection of Telangana's focused efforts to position Hyderabad as a global GCC capital. Pitching Hyderabad as the best destination for global investments, the minister said Telangana was not only leading in traditional GCC segments such as med-tech and health-tech, but was also creating new categories like beauty-tech, thereby opening up fresh opportunities in the GCC ecosystem. He pointed out that several hospitality majors, including

Marriott, were setting up GCCs in Telangana, while global companies such as Vanguard, Netflix, McDonald's, Heineken, Jaggara, and Costco Wholesale had recently chosen Hyderabad for their global capability centres. During the meeting, the Telangana delegation also briefed L'Oréal's leadership about the launch of the Telangana AI Innovation Hub (TAIH). Responding positively, Hieronimus said it was "very interesting" to learn about the AI Innovation Hub and its potential to support innovation-driven enterprises. Special Chief Secre-

tary for ITE&C and Industries, Sanjay Kumar, invited L'Oréal to explore manufacturing opportunities in Hyderabad in addition to the GCC investment. Highlighting the state's strong industrial ecosystem and infrastructure, he said Telangana would welcome L'Oréal's future manufacturing plans. Hieronimus responded positively to the proposal, expressing interest in exploring the possibility of setting up a manufacturing unit in Hyderabad, further strengthening the long-term partnership between L'Oréal and Telangana.

Telangana Secures AI and Clean Energy Partnerships at Davos

TPN Bureau | Davos Jan 22:

The Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy-led "Telangana Rising" delegation continued to secure major global partnerships at the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2026, with significant developments in the areas of advanced technology and clean energy. On Tuesday, Telangana entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Blaize, a California-based company specialising in energy-efficient artificial intelligence (AI) hardware and full-stack software for data-centre AI computing, while Slovakia-based NUKler Products submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) to develop a large-scale clean energy project in the state.



The MoU with Blaize was signed during a meeting with Dinakar Munagala, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of the company. The agreement is aimed at accelerating Telangana's initiatives in electronics, semiconductor manufacturing, and artificial intelligence, while strengthening the state's technology ecosystem and its ambition to emerge as a global hub for next-generation digital infrastructure. Blaize currently works with partners across Asia to deliver hybrid AI infrastructure solutions focused on smart cities and industrial applications. The company already operates a dedicated research and development centre in Hyderabad. During the discussions, both sides explored the state government's support for scaling up Blaize's Hyderabad R&D centre and expanding its advanced AI engineering capabilities.

Expressing satisfaction over the partnership, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy said Telangana's ambition to become a major AI data centre hub was central to its long-term economic vision. He noted that emerging technologies such as AI, data centres, quantum computing, hardware systems, and automation would be key growth drivers. Strategic collaborations with global technology leaders, he said, would help Telangana move closer to its target of achieving \$3 trillion economic growth over the next two decades. IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu said the state was in the process of launching the Telangana AI Innovation Hub, which would serve as the strategic nerve centre for AI-driven investments, research, and innovation. He welcomed Blaize's interest in expanding its Hyderabad R&D operations and assured full government support in terms of talent availability, infrastructure, and policy incentives. The meeting also explored potential pilot projects in healthcare diagnostics, manufacturing automation, and energy efficiency, with both sides agreeing on the global relevance of applied AI

Government Support Transforms Rural Woman's Life: Palamakula Aruna Breaks Barriers by Driving a JCB

Hyderabad, January 21 (TPN Bureau):

Challenging long-held stereotypes that heavy machinery is a man's domain, Palamakula Aruna from rural Telangana has emerged as a powerful symbol of women's empowerment. With confidence, hard work, and the support of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and government initiatives, Aruna has rewritten her life story and become an inspiration for countless rural women.

Hailing from Erugollapadu village in Jangaon mandal of Jangaon district, Aruna studied up to Class 10. Her life took a difficult turn at a young age with the loss of her father, forcing her to confront responsibilities early. She married Palamakula Nagaraju in

2012, but the couple received little support from either side of the family. Burdened by debt and financial insecurity, they had no option but to carve out their own path.

To support the family, Nagaraju learned JCB driving and began working as a driver, while Aruna worked as an agricultural labourer. She also took up tailoring to supplement the household income. Despite relentless effort, financial stability remained elusive.

A major turning point came in 2013 when Aruna joined a Self-Help Group. This decision proved life-changing. Through the SHG, she gained access to financial literacy, collective strength, and institutional support. In 2014,



she availed a loan of 1 lakh, which helped clear old debts. Regular savings and timely loan repayments gradually brought stability to the

JCB Purchase Changes Fortunes

In 2019, with the support of SHG bank linkage, the village organisa-

tion, and Stree Nidhi, the family purchased a JCB machine—the first of its kind in their village. With encouragement from villagers, work opportunities steadily increased. Through discipline and determination, all loans were repaid on time.

Inspired by her husband and driven by self-belief, Aruna decided to learn JCB driving herself. In 2024, she successfully completed her training. What initially drew sceptical glances soon turned into admiration. Today, villagers proudly remark, "The husband is the owner, and the wife is the driver—you make a perfect team." So far, Aruna's family has accessed loans worth 22.10 lakh through SHGs. They di-

versified their livelihood through agriculture, a grocery store, a Tata trolley vehicle, a two-wheeler, and a bag-manufacturing unit. Currently, the JCB alone generates 1,000–1,200 per hour, translating to an average daily income of 4,000–5,000. Beyond her personal success, Aruna has taken on leadership roles as an SHG group leader, Village Organisation (VO) president, and Mandal Federation president. Under her leadership, many women in the village have taken up self-employment, starting ventures such as textile shops, flour mills, and bangle stores. These initiatives have significantly improved their economic standing and self-confidence. Aruna says it is a mat-

ter of pride for her to hoist the national flag during Independence Day and Republic Day celebrations in her capacity as federation president. She recalls that as a child she dreamed of becoming an Anganwadi teacher; today, she stands as a recognised woman leader. From beginning life with hand loans to confidently operating a JCB, her journey exemplifies the transformative power of SHGs.

She firmly believes that without SHGs, bank linkage loans, and government support, her life would have remained limited to daily wage labour.

Minister's Message
Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Minister Dr. D. Anasuya Seethakka praised Aruna's journey, calling it a shining example of rural women's strength. "Palamakula Aruna's life shows that through SHGs, women gain not only financial independence but also immense self-confidence. I met her at a recent SERP programme, and her courage in driving a JCB is truly inspiring for every woman. Despite many hardships, she stood strong and reached this level. Through the Indira Mahila Shakti programme, our people's government is committed to creating lakhs of such Arunas," the minister said. Aruna's story stands as a testament to what rural women can achieve when opportunity, institutional support, and determination come together.

Tata Group Chairman N. Chandrasekaran Meets Telangana CM Revanth Reddy at Davos



Davos, January 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau:

At the ongoing World Economic Forum (WEF) 2026 in Davos, Tata Group Chairman N. Chandrasekaran held a detailed meeting with Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. The discussion focused on the state's long-term development vision, in-

vestment climate, and future-ready policies under the "Telangana Rising Vision-2047."

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy elaborated on Telangana's comprehensive planning for industrial growth, youth skill development, and sports infrastructure. Highlighting the state's strategic, future-orient-

ed approach, Chandrasekaran praised the policy framework, noting that Telangana is showcasing its vision and governance globally, beyond mere investment pitches.

The CM shared plans to develop major sports facilities in Hyderabad to international standards. Chandrasekaran

expressed Tata Group's readiness to collaborate with the government in building world-class stadiums and training infrastructure, emphasizing that talent needs proper facilities to excel.

Youth skill development was another key focus. The Chief Minister explained efforts to upgrade 65 government ITIs into advanced technical centres with Tata Technologies' support, and plans to convert polytechnic colleges into skill development hubs. He also highlighted the establishment of the Young India Skill University under Anand Mahindra's guidance.

Sports development initiatives, including the proposed Young India Sports University, were discussed, aiming to prepare India for medal-winning performances at the 2036 Olympics.

Chandrasekaran showed keen interest in the Moosi River revitalisation project in Hy-

derabad, referencing Tata Group's experience in water resource restoration in Rajasthan and Maharashtra. He offered to partner in the Moosi project and suggested plans to develop surrounding areas for economic activities.

Discussions also covered tourism infrastructure. Tata Group expressed interest in hotels and resorts near major temples like Medaram, Vemulawada, and Bhadrachalam, as well as an international-standard resort along the Srisailem highway. The meeting concluded with discussions on Telangana's emerging industrial opportunities in AI data centres, semiconductors, and electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing. Senior officials, including Ministers D. Sudhakar Babu and Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy, participated in the discussions, exploring potential public-private partnerships for the state's growth trajectory.

Rashmi Group, AB InBev Announce Major Investments in Telangana at WEF 2026



Davos, January 21, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

Telangana's industrial landscape is set for a major boost as Rashmi Group and AB InBev announced significant expansion plans for the State during the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2026 in Davos.

Rashmi Group, globally recognised for its ductile iron (DI) pipe manufacturing, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Telangana government for setting up a new steel production unit in the State, with an investment of 12,500 crore. The project is expected to generate approximately 12,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities. The MoU was signed in the presence of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy-led "Telangana Rising" delegation, with IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu facilitating the investment. The minister assured full government support, including supply linkages for raw materials such as coal, and all necessary facilitation for the steel plant. Rashmi Group promoters Sajjan Kumar Patwari and Director Sanjib Kumar Patwari met the delegation and outlined that the steel plant will adopt a labour-intensive manufacturing model, creating substantial employment opportunities. Discussions also included potential collaboration with the Telangana government in green manufacturing practices and circular economy initiatives. Rashmi Group operates in over 40 countries across Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas, further highlighting the scale of investment and global footprint.

These announcements underscore Telangana's growing appeal as a destination for large-scale industrial and manufacturing investments, reinforcing the State's position as a progressive, investor-friendly hub for global enterprises.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy expressed satisfaction at attracting these global investments, highlighting that such projects align with the Telangana Rising 2047 vision to transform the State



In a separate devel-

Congress Government Focused on Welfare, Farmers, and Education, Says Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka

Dharmapuri, Jagtial District, January 21, 2026 (TPN Bureau): Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, addressing a massive public gathering in Dharmapuri, Jagtial district, reaffirmed the Congress government's commitment to welfare, inclusive development, and farmers' prosperity. He highlighted that Telangana's resources and wealth are dedicated to the people, and that only the Congress government has the capability to make the State competitive on a global scale.

Deputy CM Vikramarka recalled that previous governments treated governance as looting and sharing among a few, while the present government aims to create wealth and distribute it equitably among the people. He emphasised that agriculture, once considered a burden, is now celebrated as a festival under the government's farmer-friendly policies. With 1 lakh crore spent exclusively on farmers, the State has implemented initiatives including crop insurance, distribution of agricultural machinery, drip irrigation facilities, farm loan waivers, and a 500 bonus for fine rice.

On education, he spoke about the construction of Young India Integrated Residential Schools, designed to foster unity and inclusiveness among students from all sections of society. These schools, built on 25 acres



each at a cost of 200 crore, will have facilities comparable to international standards. The government has approved the construction of 100 such schools statewide, with a total allocation of 22,500 crore, and promised timely payment of bills as construction progresses.

Deputy CM Vikramarka also highlighted housing initiatives under the Indiramma scheme. In the first phase, 4.5 lakh houses have been sanctioned across Telangana, with ongoing construction and regular payment of bills. The government aims to provide the poor with homes that uphold dignity and self-re-

spect, correcting the failures of previous administrations.

He elaborated on women's welfare initiatives, including free RTC bus travel, interest-free loans exceeding 26,000 crore, and high-quality Indiramma saree distribution, aimed at empowering women economically and socially. For employees, salaries are being disbursed on the first of every month, a marked improvement from previous practices.

Under energy initiatives, 47,814 domestic consumers in Dharmapuri and over 52 lakh consumers statewide receive free electricity up to 200 units

under the Gruha Jyothi scheme. During the event, foundation stones were laid for development works worth 263 crore, with commitments to resolve local electricity issues in coordination with the MLA and Minister Adduri Laxman.

Deputy CM Vikramarka concluded by reiterating that the Congress government's vision prioritises welfare, education, agriculture, women empowerment, and infrastructure, ensuring equitable growth and positioning Telangana as a progressive and globally competitive State.

Senior Congress Leader Jeevan Reddy Walks Out of Review Meeting at Gandhi Bhavan

Hyderabad, January 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau:

Senior Congress leader and former MLC T. Jeevan Reddy walked out of a key party review meeting held at Gandhi Bhavan on Wednesday, triggering intense discussion within political circles and highlighting internal differences within the Telangana Congress. The meeting was convened to review organisational preparedness and strategies for the upcoming municipal elections. However, tensions arose when Jeevan Reddy objected



to the presence of a legislator who had recently joined the Congress from the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS). Expressing strong dis-

pleasure, the veteran leader questioned the decision to include a former rival party leader in an internal Congress strategy meeting. Speaking to the media after exiting the meeting, Jeevan Reddy stated that he had been associated with the Congress party for over four decades and had stood by the party during its most challenging phases. He said allowing leaders who had opposed the Congress until recently to participate in core organisational discussions undermined the party's values and traditions.

He asserted that such decisions hurt the sentiments of long-standing party workers who had dedicated their lives to the Congress ideology. Jeevan Reddy clarified that his walkout should not be interpreted as quitting the party. He emphasised that his protest was aimed at safeguarding the party's principles and internal discipline. He reiterated his commitment to the Congress but insisted that senior leaders and loyal cadres must be respected in the decision-making process.

The incident has exposed growing unease among some senior Congress leaders over the increasing induction of leaders from rival parties ahead of elections. While party leadership believes that expanding the base is essential for electoral success, several veterans feel that such moves should be handled with greater sensitivity and internal consultation. Party sources indicated that the leadership may initiate discussions to address the concerns raised by Jeevan Reddy and other senior leaders to prevent further

discord. Maintaining unity within the party has become crucial as the Congress prepares for a series of local body elections across Telangana. Political observers note that the episode reflects the broader challenge faced by major parties in balancing experienced leadership with new entrants in a competitive political environment. As the Congress looks to consolidate its position in the state, resolving internal differences swiftly will be key to sustaining momentum and presenting a united front to voters.

Kavitha Calls Phone-Tapping Probe a 'Political Drama,' Questions Timing of Investigation

Hyderabad, January 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau:

Kalvakuntla Kavitha, President of Telangana Jagruthi, on Wednesday described the ongoing phone-tapping investigation as a "political drama," raising serious questions about the timing and motives behind the probe. Speaking to the media, she criticised the way the case has been pursued, especially amid the run-up to municipal elections.



Kavitha asserted that politicians are using the phone-tapping issue to create unnecessary controversy instead of focusing on genuine public concerns. She questioned why the investigation is being highlighted so prominently now, particularly when the municipal polls are imminent. According to her, the timing of the inquiry suggests political engineering rather than a sincere effort to deliver justice or uphold privacy rights.

The Jagruthi leader expressed scepticism over the investigation reaching its final stages, saying she does not believe the current process will result in justice for victims — including those like her — who have claimed that their phones were tapped. She stated that the ongoing legal proceedings and publicity surrounding them are unlikely to benefit those genuinely affected by alleged surveillance, and instead are being used for political point-scoring.

Kavitha also highlighted broader issues of social justice, emphasising that empowerment of marginalised communities — particularly backward classes — should be the central agenda of politics. She accused both major parties of being indifferent to sustained backward class reservations and not seriously addressing the concerns of these communities. She pointed out that the current municipal elections are being held without guaranteeing a 42 percent reservation for BCs, a demand she believes should be met before any polls are conducted. Beyond the phone-tapping controversy, Kavitha addressed other political priorities, urging local leaders to consider demands such as naming a district after former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and calling for increased recognition of Telangana's contributions in public spaces. She also reiterated the need to honour local heroes by erecting appropriate memorials and statues, reflecting pride in Telangana's cultural and political heritage.



Irrigation Minister Orders Fast-Track Execution of Key Projects, Dedicated Division for SLBC Tunnel

Hyderabad, January 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau:

Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies, N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, on Wednesday instructed officials to accelerate the execution of ongoing and new irrigation projects, including the Palaru-Rangareddy Lift Irrigation Scheme (PRLIS), while announcing the creation of an exclusive division to oversee the Srisailem Left Bank Canal (SLBC) tunnel project.

Addressing a high-level review meeting attended by Engineers-in-Chief, Chief Engineers, Executive Engineers, and Principal Secretary (Irrigation) Rahul Bojja, the Minister emphasised transparency, strict adherence to procedures, and accountability. He assured that the Chief Minister has allocated necessary funds to ensure fast-track implementation and made it clear that any deliberate lapses by officials would not be tolerated.

SLBC Tunnel Division and TBM Removal The Minister highlighted the top priority given to the SLBC tunnel project, noting that the wreckage of the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) trapped inside has been dismantled and removed, allowing works to progress. Rail track maintenance and repair inside the tunnel are currently underway. A dedicated division will now monitor and execute all aspects of the tunnel project.

Union Coal Minister Kishan Reddy Addresses Singareni Concerns

New Delhi, January 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau:

Union Minister of Coal and Mines, Shri Kishan Reddy, held a press conference in New Delhi to clarify recent controversies surrounding the Singareni Collieries, particularly the Naini Coal Block in Odisha. He outlined the historical importance of the company, its current challenges, and the steps being taken by both the central and state governments.

Shri Kishan Reddy noted that Singareni Collieries, spanning over eight districts, has a 136-year history and has been a cornerstone in Telangana's development. The company achieved multiple coal production records and played a crucial role during the Telangana statehood movement. However, he highlighted that after the formation of Telangana, operational difficulties emerged, even though the state holds 51% and the central government 49% shares. He clarified that the central government has no direct control over daily operations, as board decisions include three central directors and seven state-nominated directors. The minister accused the BRS regime of treating Singareni as a "family-run enterprise" for ten years, citing political interference in tenders and contracts. "During the BRS tenure, governance in Singareni was marred by nepotism and irregularities. The company was used as a vehicle for personal gain, and workers' efforts were exploited," he said. Kishan Reddy recalled how the NDA government had previously rescued Singareni from BIFR insolvency in 2001 under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, granting a moratorium on Rs. 684 crore debt, which helped restore profitability.

Addressing recent delays in the Naini Coal Block, the minister explained that all necessary central approvals were provided promptly in 2015. He emphasized that any tendering delays under the current or previous Congress government were procedural, not political, and involved requirements like "site visit certificates" to ensure transparency. He dismissed calls for a CBI investigation as premature, noting that state government consent is required before central action. Shri Kishan Reddy also highlighted the financial challenges faced by Singareni, with pending dues of nearly Rs. 47,000 crore from the



Telangana government. He explained that G11 grade coal is being sold at Rs. 4,088 per ton, compared to Rs. 1,605 in Coal India, due to operational constraints and government interference. He stressed that irregularities in pricing and quality have endangered Singareni's sustainability and the welfare of its employees. The minister concluded by asserting the central government's readiness to assist the state in restoring Singareni to profitability, instituting transparent tender procedures, and safeguarding employees' interests. "Our priority is Singareni's future and the families who depend on it. We are committed to system reforms, regular review meetings, and ensuring that operational decisions are transparent and accountable," he said. This press briefing underscored the central government's position on political interference, financial accountability, and worker welfare at one of India's oldest and strategically important coal enterprises.

Following the rituals, the Mesram clan felicitated the Deputy Chief Minister, accompanying ministers, public representatives, and officials with shawls and presented portraits of Lord Nagoba. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from tribal community leaders, members of the Mesram clan, and a large number of devotees, reflecting the deep-rooted cultural significance of the Nagoba festival in the region. This visit reinforces the state government's commitment to preserving tribal heritage while facilitating the welfare and development of tribal communities across Telangana.

Nagoba Temple Visit: Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka Emphasizes Preservation of Tribal Culture

Adilabad, January 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau:

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka visited the revered Nagoba temple in Keslapur village of Indervelli Mandal, Adilabad district on Wednesday evening, paying homage to the presiding deity of the Mesram clan. Accompanying him were Minister Atluri Laxman, MLA Vedma Bojju Patel, District Collector Rajarshi Shah, SP Akhil Mahajan, other public representatives, and senior officials. The Deputy Chief Minister was welcomed

in a traditional manner by the Mesram family and temple priests with a poornakumbha ceremony. Inside the sanctum sanctorum, special abhishekam and rituals were performed to honor the deity. Addressing the gathering, Bhatti Vikramarka stressed the importance of preserving the rich tribal traditions and culture associated with the Nagoba festival. He stated that the government bears the responsibility to protect these ancient customs and ensure they continue for future generations. The Deputy Chief

Minister assured that necessary funds would be sanctioned for the development of the Keslapur Nagoba temple and to enhance facilities for devotees attending the festival. He highlighted the government's focus on providing infrastructure, education, and healthcare in tribal areas, emphasizing full support for the development of tribal children. Bhatti Vikramarka also instructed the District Collector to ensure uninterrupted supply of drinking water, sanitation, and transport facilities for devotees during the festival.

Following the rituals, the Mesram clan felicitated the Deputy Chief Minister, accompanying ministers, public representatives, and officials with shawls and presented portraits of Lord Nagoba. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from tribal community leaders, members of the Mesram clan, and a large number of devotees, reflecting the deep-rooted cultural significance of the Nagoba festival in the region. This visit reinforces the state government's commitment to preserving tribal heritage while facilitating the welfare and development of tribal communities across Telangana.



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Rs.10.50-Crore GHMC Circle Offices Inaugurated in Secunderabad Zone

Hyderabad, January 21 (TPN Bureau):

In a significant step towards strengthening decentralized urban governance and improving citizen access to civic services, Hyderabad In-charge Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar on Tuesday inaugurated the newly constructed Kavadi and Musheerabad Circle Offices under the Secunderabad Zone of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). The two modern offices have been constructed at a total cost of 10.50 crore.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by GHMC Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi, Rajya Sabha Member Anil Kumar Yadav, Deputy Mayor Mothe Srilatha, MLA

Mutha Gopal, GHMC Commissioner R.V. Karnan, along with several public representatives, senior officials, and staff members of the civic body.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar said the new circle offices were part of the government's broader vision of administrative decentralisation aimed at bringing governance closer to the people. He explained that the objective was to ensure easy access to civic services and faster grievance redressal by strengthening administrative units at the grassroots level.

"As part of decentralisation and people-friendly administration, village panchayats,



municipalities, and municipal corporations located within the Outer Ring Road have been brought under a unified

administrative system," the minister said. He added that this integration would help create uniform standards of

governance and enable planned urban development across Hyderabad. The minister noted that the People's Governance

model adopted by the present government focuses on bringing all systems under a single umbrella to ensure coordinated planning and effective implementation of development programmes. This approach, he said, would reduce overlaps, eliminate delays, and improve accountability in civic administration.

Ponnamp Prabhakar highlighted that GHMC is now organised into 12 zones, 60 circles, and 300 wards, with zonal commissioners, deputy commissioners, and other key officials appointed to ensure efficient administration. This structured framework would strengthen monitoring mechanisms and significantly improve service

delivery at the ward and circle levels.

Referring to areas that were merged into GHMC in recent years, the minister said a clear plan of action had been prepared for their systematic development. Special focus was being placed on infrastructure, sanitation, roads, drainage, and public amenities in these localities to bring them on par with core city areas.

Touching upon environmental concerns, the minister said the state government was committed to ensuring that Hyderabad does not face pollution challenges similar to those seen in cities like Delhi. "We are moving forward with a concrete action plan to control pollution and en-

sure sustainable urban growth," he said.

Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi and other public representatives welcomed the inauguration of the new circle offices, stating that the facilities would enhance coordination between citizens and officials. They expressed confidence that the new infrastructure would improve transparency, efficiency, and responsiveness in GHMC's functioning.

With the inauguration of the Kavadi and Musheerabad Circle Offices, GHMC aims to further strengthen urban governance in the Secunderabad Zone and deliver better civic services through decentralised and accessible administration.

Telangana Drug Control Administration Cracks Down on Indiscriminate Antibiotic Sale

Telangana, January 21, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

The Telangana Drug Control Administration carried out a state-wide enforcement drive on 21st January, 2026, targeting the rampant misuse and sale of antibiotics as part of its ongoing efforts to combat Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR).

During the special drive, officials conducted inspections across numerous medical shops in the state, focusing on curbing the indiscriminate sale of antibiotics without proper prescriptions. The campaign aimed to safeguard public health and reinforce responsible antibiotic usage among healthcare providers and pharmacies. The drive revealed discrepancies in the sale of antibiotics in 190 medical shops. As a result, Show Cause Notices were issued to the concerned shop owners, initiating departmental action to address violations of drug control regulations. Authorities emphasized that such steps are critical to prevent the



spread of antimicrobial resistance, which poses a significant public health threat globally.

The administration also issued a public advisory on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), urging citizens to avoid self-medication and to use antibiotics only under proper medical guidance. The advisory highlighted the importance of completing prescribed courses, avoiding leftover antibiotics, and consulting qualified healthcare professionals before using such medicines.

This crackdown is part of Telangana's broader strategy to ensure compliance with drug regulations, promote rational use of medicines, and protect

public health from the growing threat of antibiotic-resistant infections. Officials stressed that repeated violations will attract strict departmental action, including suspension of licenses and legal proceedings. The state government has reiterated its commitment to tackling AMR proactively, combining regulatory oversight with public awareness campaigns to encourage responsible antibiotic use among healthcare providers and citizens alike.

This drive demonstrates Telangana's resolve to strengthen its health system, ensure safe medical practices, and contribute to the global fight against antimicrobial resistance

Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar Reviews GHMC Works After Municipal Reorganisation

Hyderabad, January 21 (TPN Bureau):

Minister for Transport and BC Welfare, Ponnamp Prabhakar, addressed a media briefing at the HMC office on Tuesday, responding to recent criticisms and allegations directed against the Telangana government and its handling of Singareni coal mines. He said baseless accusations and mudslinging against the government officials would not win public support.

Speaking at the event, Minister Prabhakar pointed out that former ministers, including Harish Rao and KTR, had repeatedly criticised the government's policies and allocations related to Singareni mines. "The issues they raise pertain to basic claims which are either misconstrued or factually incorrect. The allegations that the current government is mismanaging mine allocations are unfounded," he said.

He noted that under the previous BRS administration, out of 21 coal blocks, only one block was allocated at 0.1% in the minus category, while the current public governance has followed transparent

procedures. The minister highlighted that attempts were being made to portray the government's actions as mistakes despite the fact that allocations under the Congress government were within fair limits. "From 2014 to 2026, the government is fully prepared to conduct inquiries into all mine allocations. We are committed to transparency," he said.

Minister Prabhakar further recalled that prior contracts under the old government were awarded without proper oversight, with open-cast tenders often given to contractors under questionable circumstances. He accused previous administrations of attempting to divert attention from irregularities in Singareni operations by politicising issues such as Hill Policy and Krishna river projects. "They staged dramas in the Assembly, avoiding proper debate while using political sentiment to mislead the public," he said.

On allegations related to telephone tapping, the minister called for factual clarifications and challenged opposition leaders to substantiate



their claims. He accused the BJP and BRS of attempting to destabilise the public governance by spreading misinformation. Ponnamp Prabhakar also outlined the government's achievements in public welfare: the distribution of ration cards, provision of fine rice, free electricity to 200 units, concessional loans to women's self-help groups, disbursement of bonuses, loan waivers, and the Rythu Bhara support programme. He emphasised

that the government has successfully completed site inspections and procedural verifications for Singareni projects, ensuring compliance with regulations.

Concluding, the minister reiterated that the Congress-led Telangana government remained committed to transparent governance and development-oriented policies. "We welcome scrutiny and are fully prepared for investigations into coal allocations and other projects.

Our focus is on delivering public welfare and ensuring that development reaches every citizen," he said, appealing for constructive dialogue over politically motivated attacks.

This press briefing reaffirmed the government's readiness to defend its record on governance, mine allocations, and public welfare programs, while challenging opposition parties to provide evidence rather than resort to baseless allegations.

Falaknuma Police Recover 20 Stolen Mobile Phones in Special

Hyderabad, January 21, 2026:

In a concerted effort to curb mobile phone thefts and assist the public, Falaknuma Police Station conducted a special detection drive, successfully recovering 20 lost and stolen mobile phones valued at approximately 3.5 lakhs. The operation employed technical analysis, CEIR portal tracking, IMEI tracing, and coordinated field investigations to locate and retrieve the devices from various locations across the city.

The recovered phones are being handed over to their rightful owners after thorough verification, demonstrating the Hyderabad Police's commitment to leveraging technology for effective crime detection and public service. Citizens are urged to immediately report the loss or theft of mobile phones at the nearest police station or through the designat-



ed online portals to enable timely action.

The Station House Officer of Falaknuma Police Station, Sri A. Seethaiah, expressed appreciation for the dedicated efforts of the team involved in the drive. Key personnel who contributed to the operation include DI Sri Jakeer Hussain, DSI Sri B. Mahesh, HC 4189 B. Satish Kumar, and PCs 2714 Ch. Dashaarath, 31516 D. Nikhil, and 31543 M. Rahul. The SHO emphasized the importance of public cooperation in ensuring law and order and

highlighted that the proactive use of technology and coordination among police personnel played a critical role in the success of the drive.

This initiative reinforces the Hyderabad Police's focus on safeguarding citizens' property and maintaining public confidence in the law enforcement system. Residents are encouraged to remain vigilant and assist the police in combating mobile phone thefts, which will contribute to a safer urban environment.

Constable's Family Receives Support After Tragic Death

January 21, 2026 | Hyderabad | TPN Bureau:

In a compassionate gesture, the family of constable Ravi Kumar from Uppal, who tragically died due to electrocution while on duty at Uppal Excise Station, was provided financial support by the Prohibition and Excise Department. Commissioner C. Harikiran, along with senior excise officials, handed over fixed deposits and postal bonds to the constable's family, ensuring security for his three young daughters.

Each of Ravi Kumar's daughters—Yashasvi, Anushree, and Suryashree—was given a fixed deposit of 5 lakh, amounting to a total of 15 lakh. Additionally, 2 lakh in postal bonds was presented to the mother, Lakshamma. The formal handover was conducted by Commissioner C. Harikiran, who expressed that the department and fellow officers felt a moral responsibility to support the children of a dedicated public servant.

The ceremony was held in Hyderabad and



attended by Ravi Kumar's wife, Ramanujula, and mother, Lakshamma, alongside colleagues from the 2014 batch of constables. The initiative, supported by Rangareddy Division excise officials, was hailed as a commendable act of solidarity and compassion for the bereaved family. Senior officials present

included Rangareddy Deputy Commissioner P. Dashaarath, and Excise Superintendents from Medchal, Malkajgiri, and Saroor Nagar—Fayazuddin, Naveen, and Uzwal Reddy. The event also saw the participation of the Constables' Association President, Rajireddy, highlighting the department's collec-

tive support for the welfare of its personnel and their families. Commissioner Harikiran emphasized that such initiatives reinforce the department's commitment to taking care of the families of officers who sacrifice their lives in the line of duty. He urged fellow officials to continue extending as-

sistance and support to ensure the well-being of the children and dependents of departed personnel.

The event concluded on a solemn yet hopeful note, with the department assuring ongoing guidance and financial security for the young daughters of Constable Ravi Kumar.

Nizamabad Hosts National Road Safety Week 2026; Mahesh Kumar Goud Stresses Public Awareness



Nizamabad, January 21 (TPN Bureau):
Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) President and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud on Tuesday participated as the chief guest in the National Road Safety Week 2026 celebrations held in Nizamabad. Addressing the gathering, he emphasised the urgent need to raise public awareness on road safety, underlining that the protection of human lives should remain the foremost priority.

highlighted the severe impact of road accidents, noting that thousands of families across India suffer tragedies due to preventable mishaps. He stressed that while the government plays a pivotal role in accident prevention, citizens must also shoulder responsibility. "Wearing helmets, using seat belts, avoiding driving under the influence of alcohol, and strictly following traffic rules can significantly reduce accidents," he said. He further urged the youth to set an exam-

ple for safe driving practices and become advocates of road safety in their communities. The TPCC leader also lauded the Telangana Congress government for prioritising public safety and welfare since assuming office. He explained that the government is committed to reducing road accidents through a multi-pronged approach, including upgrading road infrastructure, modernising traffic management systems, and running continuous awareness campaigns.

"National Road Safety Week is not just a ceremonial event; it should inspire lasting behavioural change and a culture of responsible road usage among citizens," he added. The event saw active participation from senior party leaders and district representatives, including DCC Presidents Bobbili Ramakrishna, Nagesh Reddy, Kesh Venu, Ram Bhupal, Gadugu Gangadhar, and Vipul Goud, who shared their perspectives on enhancing road safety in

the district. RTA Officer Rajanarender Goud provided technical insights on traffic regulations, road safety norms, and measures to improve compliance among drivers. A large number of party members, government officials, and citizens attended the programme, contributing to meaningful discussions and knowledge-sharing on road safety. Demonstrations and awareness sessions were held to educate participants on preventive measures, proper traffic discipline, and emergency response protocols.

Concluding the event, Mahesh Kumar Goud reiterated that road safety is a collective responsibility, and sustained efforts from both the government and the public are necessary to save lives. He called on everyone, especially the younger generation, to follow traffic rules diligently and become active participants in creating safer roads across Telangana.

With this initiative, the National Road Safety Week celebrations in Nizamabad aimed not only to sensitise the public but also to instil a long-term culture of safety and accountability on the state's roads.

Mahesh Kumar Goud Slams BRS Allegations Ahead of Corporation Elections



Nizamabad, January 21, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

TPCC President and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud held a media briefing in Nizamabad, flanked by DCC presidents Bobbili Ramakrishna, Nagesh Reddy, chairpersons Kesh Venu, Taherbin, Ram Bhupal, Shekhar Goud, and several senior Congress leaders. Addressing the ongoing political tensions ahead of municipal elections, he strongly rebutted allegations made by BRS leaders, including KTR and Harish Rao, accusing them of trying to defame the Congress government.

Mahesh Kumar Goud stated that the Congress party is ready for a transparent discussion on governance and alleged irregularities during the BRS rule. "If you have the courage, come and discuss. Spreading baseless accusations and running away won't work," he said. He emphasized that investigations into BRS leaders' alleged corruption are ongoing, and that the current government has cleaned up institutions such as Singareni and

issued directives to strengthen operational guidelines.

He highlighted that contracts and tenders during the past decade under the BRS administration, including those in Singareni, are now under scrutiny. "The mistakes and lapses of BRS leaders over the last ten years are being exposed one by one. KTR and Harish Rao's allegations relate to actions carried out under BRS tenure," he added. He also pointed out that BRS attempts to cover up past mistakes are transparent, citing irregularities in projects like Kaleshwaram where estimates were inflated. The TPCC leader also addressed the contentious issue of alleged phone tapping, noting that even BRS party leaders were monitored. "Telegraph law stipulates that phone tapping is a serious matter. We are ready for discussion on all such allegations," he said. Focusing on governance, Mahesh Kumar Goud reaffirmed that the Congress government has prioritized the people of Nizamabad, implementing multiple development works

across sectors including education, healthcare, and infrastructure. He warned against using religious sentiments for political gains. "Those trying to solicit votes in the name of temples have not contributed to real development," he said, adding that central government initiatives such as the Smart City plan for Nizamabad were left incomplete by MP Arvind. He further reassured voters that the Congress party's commitment to public welfare, including education, healthcare, and district-specific development projects, remains steadfast. "In tomorrow's municipal elections, victory for the Congress is certain," he asserted, stressing that Congress governance focuses on self-reliance and sustainable development rather than depending on political packages. The media briefing highlighted Congress's proactive approach toward accountability, transparency, and development, contrasting sharply with the BRS party's record during the previous decade.

Minister Tummala Assures Farmers on Palm Oil Cultivation, Promises Timely Payments and Sustainable Income

Dharma Puri, January 21, 2026 (TPN Bureau):
Minister Tummala Srinivas Reddy on Tuesday addressed a gathering of farmers at Dharma Puri, assuring them of full government support for palm oil cultivation in northern Telangana. Speaking at the event, the minister highlighted the benefits of palm oil farming, emphasising that farmers would receive timely payments and additional income through intercropping. Minister Tummala gave farmers a strong commitment regarding the sale of palm oil fruits. He stated that once the harvested fruits reach the factory, the payment would be credited to the farmers' accounts within three days. "It is our responsibility to ensure that farmers receive their dues promptly without any delays or inter-

ference from middlemen or contractors," he said, reassuring the gathering. The minister also addressed concerns about pests and crop damage. He assured farmers that with proper guidance and government support, palm oil cultivation could be managed without significant losses from pests or other agricultural challenges. "Our responsibility is to make sure farmers can grow palm oil safely, without the fear of crop damage, and enjoy sustained income over the long term," he said. Highlighting the potential for additional income, Minister Tummala encouraged farmers to practice intercropping alongside palm oil plantations. He said this would not only maximise land use but also provide a supplementary revenue source, further enhancing the financial stability of farming families.

The minister stressed the government's focus on expanding palm oil cultivation across northern Telangana districts. "We are paying special attention to the northern Telangana region to ensure that more farmers benefit from palm oil farming," he said. He also noted that under Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's public governance model, agriculture is being prioritised to make farmers feel like rulers of their own land. Minister Tummala's assurances were aimed at instilling confidence among the farming community, encouraging them to adopt palm oil cultivation as a profitable and sustainable enterprise. His speech emphasised that government policies and interventions were designed to protect farmers from risks, ensure timely payments, and support long-term



agricultural growth. By providing expert guidance, financial security, and proactive government support, the minister said Telangana is committed to transforming agriculture into a reliable source of livelihood. The initiative is expected to promote widespread adoption of palm oil cultivation in north-

ern districts, boosting the income and prosperity of the state's rural population. This announcement reinforces the government's commitment to strengthening the agricultural sector while empowering farmers with modern, sustainable farming practices and assured economic returns.

Uttam Kumar Reddy Urges Congress Workers to Mobilize for Municipal Poll Sweep



Hyderabad, January 21, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Minister for Irrigation and Civil Supplies, N Uttam Kumar Reddy, on Wednesday called upon Congress workers to actively engage with voters across the state to ensure a decisive victory in the upcoming municipal elections. Speaking at a meeting of senior Congress leaders from the Nizamabad Lok Sabha constituency, called for coordinated efforts by all party workers to secure an overwhelming mandate. He underscored the need for meticulous planning, voter outreach, and active participation at every level to ensure the Congress achieves comprehensive success across municipalities.

Addressing the gathering, Uttam Kumar Reddy highlighted the party's consistent performance in past elections and urged cadres to replicate the resounding success achieved in recent gram panchayat

polls. He stressed that municipal elections are not mere formalities but critical platforms to strengthen the party's grassroots presence and demonstrate its robust support base.

TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud chaired the meeting, while Minister Uttam Kumar Reddy, serving as the in-charge for the Nizamabad constituency, called for coordinated efforts by all party workers to secure an overwhelming mandate. He underscored the need for meticulous planning, voter outreach, and active participation at every level to ensure the Congress achieves comprehensive success across municipalities. The Minister advised party leaders to approach the polls with seriousness and prestige, emphasizing that only dedicated, organized, and united action can deliver the desired re-

sults. "Every worker must take responsibility to reach out to voters, educate them about the party's achievements, and secure their trust for a clean sweep," he added. The meeting also provided a platform to deliberate strategies for voter mobilization, public engagement, and effective campaign execution in line with the party's broader electoral objectives.

Among those present were government advisor Shabbir Ali, MLA Sudarshan Reddy, former ministers Jeevan Reddy and Mandava Venkateswar Rao, along with several senior Congress leaders and local functionaries. The Minister concluded by urging all members to work in unison, ensuring the Congress victory bell rings across Nizamabad municipalities and sets the tone for success statewide.

Adilabad District Witnesses Grand Indiramma House Inauguration at Dantanpalli

Adilabad, January 21, 2026 (TPN Bureau):
A festive atmosphere marked the inauguration of a new Indiramma house in Dantanpalli village of Utnoor Mandal, as State Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka formally handed over the home to Lingampelli Taramma, a long-time resident of the village. The ceremony was attended by local villagers, officials, and dignitaries, celebrating the government's commitment to providing permanent housing to all eligible beneficiaries. Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka emphasized that the government is committed to sanctioning Indiramma houses for every eligible poor family in the state. He recalled his 2023 Padayatra across the region,



when villagers had shared the hardships they faced while seeking permanent housing for decades. "A clear promise was made during that journey," he said, "and the government has ensured that every eligible beneficiary will receive an Indiramma house with financial assistance of 5 lakh per home." Highlighting the scale of the initiative, the Deputy Chief Minister stated that 4.5 lakh In-

diramma houses have been sanctioned statewide, with each Assembly constituency receiving approximately 3,500 houses. Specifically for Adilabad district, 150 crore has been sanctioned, demonstrating the government's focus on equitable development. He assured villagers that construction is being expedited and funds are being directly transferred into beneficiaries' accounts on a weekly basis as work

progresses. During the ceremony, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka presented a silk saree to house owner Taramma in recognition of her new home. He also extended New Year and Sankranti greetings to the community, reinforcing the government's people-centric approach. The programme began with a grand welcome for the Deputy Chief Minister, Minis-

ter Adduri Laxman, and MLA Vedma Bojju Patel, including drum beats and floral tributes. The leaders paid homage to the statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and received a portrait of the leader from the village community. District Collector Rajarshi Shah, SP Akhil Mahajan, ITDA PO Yuvraj Marmat, departmental officials, public representatives, and a large number of villagers were present, highlighting the significance of the Indiramma housing initiative in transforming the lives of poor families and promoting social welfare across Adilabad district. This event underscores the state government's commitment to fulfilling its promise of providing safe, dignified, and permanent housing to all eligible residents.

Wpl After The World Cup: A New Era For Indian Women's Cricket

Watching a match in the ongoing season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) has become a fascinating exercise. There is a visible shift in body language, confidence and intent among Indian cricketers and, by extension, their franchises. If it felt as though players like Harmanpreet Kaur, Deepti Sharma, Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma and others were playing with an extra spring in their step, that perception is not misplaced. This is, after all, the first WPL season in which Indian players are competing as reigning world champions. The enormity of that achievement has altered not just their careers, but the way they are seen by fans, franchises and sponsors alike.

For these cricketers, winning a World Cup has brought with it a sense of self-belief that is impossible to manufacture. They have climbed the highest peak in the sport, and it shows. That confidence has added a compelling new lens to WPL viewership: the opportunity to assess just how far Indian women's cricket has come, and where it might be headed next. The WPL is no longer merely a promising league—it has become a litmus test for sustained excellence.

Not very long ago, even avid cricket followers in India could name only a handful of prominent women cricketers. Names like Diana Edulji, Shantha Rangaswamy, Jhulan Goswami and Mithali Raj stood out as pioneers, often discussed in isolation rather than as part of a thriving ecosystem. Today, as WPL 2026 approaches, fan curiosity extends far beyond the established stars. Players such as Shree Charani, Richa Ghosh, Sneha Rana, Pratikha Rawal, Harleen Deol, Amanjot Kaur, Kranti Gaud and Radha Yadav are increasing-

ly part of everyday cricket conversations. Not all of them are household names yet, but they are being watched closely—followed because they are World Cup winners, or potential stars shaped by that success.

The WPL is giving these players a platform similar to what the IPL once provided for emerging male cricketers like Ravindra Jadeja, Jasprit Bumrah, Hardik Pandya, Rishabh Pant and Suryakumar Yadav. Perform consistently on this stage, and anonymity can quickly turn into stardom. Fail, and the spotlight moves just as swiftly to the next contender. That is the nature of elite sport, and Indian women cricketers are now firmly part of that reality.

At the same time, the established stars are experiencing a level of scrutiny that would have been unthinkable a decade ago. Every movement in the field by Jemimah, Deepti, Harmanpreet, Shafali or Smriti is analysed, replayed, debated and judged. Performances are dissected on television panels, social media timelines and fan forums. Praise and criticism arrive in equal measure. For perhaps the first time in the history of Indian women's cricket, the leading players are being viewed through the same unforgiving fan lens as their male counterparts.

For years, male cricketers such as Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Rahul Dravid, Yuvraj Singh, Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Jasprit Bumrah have occupied the pedestal of national sporting idols. Women cricketers admired them, learned from them and often existed on the fringes of mainstream adulation. That equation is changing. Today's female stars are sharing the same celebrity space. One of the clearest indicators of this shift has been



the sight of packed stadiums during India's World Cup matches—a phenomenon once reserved almost exclusively for men's cricket. It would be no surprise if WPL 2026 sets new benchmarks for stadium attendance, television ratings and digital viewership.

The surge in interest, however, is not limited to fans. Well before the World Cup victory ignited public imagination, a powerful and influential group had already identified Indian women cricketers as the next major growth avenue: sponsors. For them, the World Cup triumph marked a decisive transition—from cautious observation to full-scale investment. The women's team was no longer just a feel-good story; it had become a bankable brand.

Fans now want to know everything about these players: their journeys, struggles,

families, food preferences, holiday destinations, music playlists and favourite films. A World Cup win as an Indian cricketer transforms life overnight. Privacy becomes a luxury, as personal stories turn into public property. Magazine covers, television appearances, radio interviews, billboards and brand campaigns follow in quick succession. Living room conversations and online polls revolve around these athletes. According to reports, India's inaugural women's World Cup win led to an almost 30 per cent increase in the overall brand value of the team—a staggering leap by any measure.

Endorsement fees and appearance charges rose sharply as brands from sectors such as automobiles, wellness, FMCG, technology and consumer electronics lined up to associate with the new heroes. WPL franchises ben-

efitted directly from this momentum. The Mumbai Indians, led by World Cup-winning captain Harmanpreet Kaur, added high-profile sponsors such as the De Beers Group and BKT Tyres. The Delhi Capitals reportedly saw a surge in sponsor interest following India's success and the appointment of World Cup semi-final hero Jemimah Rodrigues as captain. Similar stories emerged across all five franchises, with existing sponsors keen to stay and new ones eager to come on board.

For sponsors, the WPL ecosystem is expanding rapidly. Confidence in the BCCI's long-term vision is growing—the belief that the WPL can do for women's cricket what the IPL did for the men's game. Women's cricket in India is now firmly embedded in the economic conversation surrounding the sport. It is no longer a pe-

ripheral investment; it is a growth market, and no one wants to be left behind.

Importantly, this newfound wealth and visibility has not triggered widespread resentment. In the men's game, it is common to see fans question astronomical player salaries, particularly during lean patches. While women cricketers are not yet paid in the same bracket—Smriti Mandhana, Nat Sciver-Brunton and Ashleigh Gardner were retained for a record Rs 3.5 crore, compared to Virat Kohli's Rs 21 crore IPL retention—it is also worth remembering that the WPL is barely four years old. As the league matures, similar debates may well arise. For now, the country seems content to celebrate and encourage the women's team's success, and that support is both refreshing and vital.

Yet, popularity inevitably brings pressure. With greater

fame will come sharper scrutiny and higher expectations. The margins at the top are thin, and competition for Indian team and WPL spots will only intensify. Players will need to keep improving, knowing that each rung up the ladder offers less room for error. At the grassroots level, the message is already clear: excellence in women's cricket can now lead to financial security, recognition and long-term opportunity. That knowledge alone is likely to strengthen domestic competition and deepen the talent pool.

The ripple effects extend beyond able-bodied cricket. In December last year, during an interview with members of India's women's blind cricket team that won the inaugural T20 World Cup, one theme stood out. Players spoke about the encouragement they received from stars like Jemimah Rodrigues and Harmanpreet Kaur, who stayed in touch and offered constant support. For that team, seeing their idols lift a World Cup was deeply motivating. They wanted to follow in the footsteps of "Jemimah didi" and "Harman didi." Their journey, too, deserves attention and backing if women's cricket in India is to grow inclusively.

For decades, women's cricket in India existed on the margins—an afterthought, a postscript. Individual trailblazers were celebrated, but the collective remained largely invisible. The first Indian women's Test was played in 1976, the first ODI in 1978. Nearly fifty years later, the sport appears to have finally found its moment. Indian women's cricket is no longer searching for validation. It is claiming its space—under the sun, and in the hearts and minds of millions.

Pakistan's Defence Export Ambitions: Momentum, Constraints, and Strategic Signalling

Pakistan's defence export industry has found itself under an unusual international spotlight in recent months, with the JF-17 Thunder Block III fighter aircraft emerging as the centrepiece of Islamabad's renewed military-diplomatic outreach. Military negotiations involving the aircraft have reportedly extended across Southeast Asia, West Asia, and parts of Africa, marking what Pakistani officials portray as a turning point in the country's long-standing aspiration to transition from a defence importer to a defence exporter.

The immediate momentum behind this narrative can be traced to Azerbaijan's induction of the JF-17, with deliveries of its first units reportedly beginning in October 2025. Azerbaijan thereby became the third foreign operator of the aircraft, following Myanmar's order in 2015 and Nigeria's induction of the platform in 2021. This was followed by announcements in December 2025 of a defence deal between Pakistan and Libya's Libyan National Army (LNA), which reportedly included the acquisition of JF-17 fighters. Beyond these confirmed or semi-confirmed cases, a growing list of countries—including Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Iraq—has been cited in Pakistani media and official statements as expressing interest in the aircraft. Saudi Arabia has also been reported to be exploring unconventional arrangements, including the possibility of converting approximately USD 2 billion in outstanding Pakistani debt into a fleet of fighter jets.

Yet the attention Pakistan is currently receiving—particularly in the aftermath of the

May 2025 conflict with India—is not solely about the JF-17 as a weapons platform. Rather, it reflects a broader attempt at rebranding by a security-centric but economically constrained state seeking to reposition itself in the global arms market. Pakistan's military aviation industry is increasingly being projected as both an instrument of economic relief and a vehicle for strategic signalling. This ambition has been reinforced by official rhetoric, with Pakistan's Minister for Defence Production, Raza Hayat Haraj, reportedly confirming that Islamabad is in active negotiations with "several countries" for the sale of JF-17 Thunder jets.

Aspirations Versus Industrial Reality

Despite the heightened diplomatic activity and optimistic public statements, most of the discussions surrounding the JF-17 remain at the level of expressions of interest rather than finalised contracts. Defence sales—particularly those involving combat aircraft—are inherently capital-intensive and time-consuming. They require not only the delivery of airframes, but also comprehensive training programmes, sustainment packages, long-term maintenance arrangements, spare parts availability, and upgrade pathways that can span decades.

In this context, the real measure of Pakistan's military-industrial expansion lies not in the volume of media coverage or diplomatic signalling, but in its ability to convert rhetoric into durable defence partnerships. This challenge is compounded by the JF-17's status as a jointly developed platform with Chi-



na. While co-development with Beijing has enabled Pakistan to field a domestically assembled fighter aircraft, it also imposes structural constraints. Any export contract requires Chinese approval, placing Pakistan's ambitions firmly within the political and industrial boundaries of its relationship with Beijing.

These constraints are further sharpened when viewed against Pakistan's broader defence-industrial capacity. Persistent economic difficulties, foreign exchange shortages, and a high degree of dependence on external financial and political supporters raise questions about Islamabad's ability to meet long-term obligations related to spare parts supply, maintenance infrastructure, and lifecycle support. Pakistan's defence industrial ecosystem

also remains heavily state-driven, with limited private sector participation and modest depth in high-end manufacturing and systems integration.

Targeting a Vulnerable Market Segment

Arguably recognising these limitations, Pakistan appears to be targeting a niche segment of the global arms market: conflict-affected and economically fragile states seeking affordable alternatives to Western and Russian suppliers. For many such countries, Western arms deals are constrained by political conditionalities, sanctions risks, and scrutiny related to governance and human rights. At the same time, Russian defence exports face uncertainty due to supply chain disruptions and prioritisation of do-

mestic requirements amid Moscow's ongoing conflict with Ukraine.

This environment creates a narrow opening for Pakistan to position the JF-17 as a cost-effective, politically less restrictive alternative. The pitch emphasises affordability, operational simplicity, and relative freedom from Western political oversight. However, this strategy also exposes Pakistan to reputational risks, as it reinforces the perception that its defence exports are aimed primarily at vulnerable or unstable markets rather than established air forces with demanding operational standards.

Complicating this narrative is the fact that the Chinese People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) does not operate the JF-17, despite China's role as a co-developer. While

this has not prevented Pakistan from marketing the aircraft internationally, it does raise questions about the platform's standing within China's own force structure and long-term development priorities.

Conflict as a Sales Pitch

Pakistan has also sought to leverage the May 2025 conflict with India as a marketing tool. Pakistani officials and media outlets have highlighted the alleged combat performance of the JF-17 and other Chinese-origin systems, presenting the episode as evidence of industrial credibility and operational effectiveness. Claims of Indian aircraft losses, alongside assertions of superiority over French-made Rafale fighters and Russia's S-400 air defence systems, have been advanced as proof of "escalation dominance."

India, for its part, has not released any official details regarding aircraft losses during the conflict. Nevertheless, for Pakistan, projecting parity—or even advantage—over its larger neighbour serves multiple purposes. Domestically, it bolsters the military's legitimacy and reinforces narratives of deterrence. Internationally, it functions as strategic signalling aimed at potential buyers who may view recent combat exposure as a validation of the platform's capabilities, regardless of the contested nature of the claims.

Implications for India

From New Delhi's perspective, there is little reason for immediate alarm. The countries currently engaging with Pakistan on defence exports do not constitute direct Indian

adversaries, nor do they possess the capacity to meaningfully alter the military balance in South Asia. However, India is likely to monitor closely the growing engagement between Pakistan and Bangladesh, particularly in the wake of political changes in Dhaka following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government in 2024. Defence cooperation offers Pakistan a channel to rebuild ties with Bangladesh without directly confronting the sensitive historical legacy of 1971.

More broadly, media attention should not obscure the structural realities facing Pakistan. Even if a limited number of JF-17 deals materialise, they are unlikely to generate revenues sufficient to stabilise Pakistan's economy or fundamentally transform its defence-industrial base. Fighter aircraft exports are valuable symbols of technological ambition, but they do not, on their own, resolve systemic economic or industrial weaknesses.

Conclusion

Ultimately, Pakistan's aspirations in the global defence market rest on capacity, consistency, and credibility rather than rhetoric. The JF-17 Thunder has provided Islamabad with a platform to project ambition and seek strategic relevance, but sustained success will depend on Pakistan's ability to deliver reliable production, long-term support, and institutional stability. Until those foundations are firmly in place, Pakistan's defence export push is likely to remain more a tool of signalling and narrative-building than a transformative economic strategy.

Spain Signals Strong Support for India Ahead of India-EU Summit, Pushes for Strategic Partnership

NEW DELHI — Spain has sent a clear political and economic signal endorsing India's rising global role, with Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares describing India as a "reliable country" that upholds international law, multilateralism, and the principles of the United Nations Charter. Speaking in New Delhi on Wednesday during a meeting with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Albares emphasized Spain's intent to deepen bilateral ties and accelerate cooperation ahead of the high-stakes India-European Union summit scheduled for January 27.

"Very complicated times in the world make it essential for Spain to strengthen its partnership with India," Albares said, portraying India as a stable and trustworthy actor on the global stage. His remarks coincided with a politically significant moment as the long-pending India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is expected to take center stage at the summit, with the possibility of its conclusion finally materializing. Albares stated that Spain "would very much love to see" the FTA finalized, calling the timing "right" for such a milestone.

The Spanish minister highlighted the economic dynamism of both nations, noting that Spain and India are among the world's fastest-growing economies. Albares stressed



that the next phase of cooperation should focus on expanding trade relations, increasing the presence of Spanish companies in India and Indian companies in Spain, and fostering joint ventures. Citing the partnership between Spanish infrastructure firm Herbas and India's Tata Group as a model, he said such collaborations "represent the real example of what we have to foster and achieve" in bilateral economic ties. He emphasized opportunities in manufacturing, infrastructure, mobility, and industrial cooperation.

A key political takeaway was Spain's intention to elevate its relationship with India to a strategic association, the highest level of partnership Ma-

drid extends to close allies. Albares conveyed a formal letter outlining this intent, signaling Spain's commitment to anchor India more centrally in its foreign policy, both bilaterally and through the EU. He also announced that Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez will soon visit India and expressed hope that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would reciprocate, maintaining the recent momentum of high-level exchanges.

Culture and people-to-people ties were also highlighted during the visit. Both ministers unveiled the logo for the "Dual Year" in 2026, marking 70 years of diplomatic relations and focusing on culture, tourism, and artificial intelligence. Albares noted that the

logo, selected via crowdsourcing, symbolized a shared vision for the future of India-Spain relations.

Albares further expressed Spain's willingness to join India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, signaling Madrid's growing interest in the Indo-Pacific and readiness to align with India's regional vision. Jaishankar echoed themes of trust, shared democratic values, and multilateralism, noting that bilateral trade has crossed \$8 billion. He highlighted Spanish firms' presence in India in infrastructure, renewable energy, urban mobility, water management, and smart cities, while Indian companies are active in Spain in IT, pharmaceuticals, and automotive components.

The meeting also reviewed flagship projects such as the Airbus-Tata C-295 final assembly line in Vadodra, a symbol of deepening defence-industrial cooperation, and discussed AI collaboration ahead of India hosting the AI Impact Summit next month.

In a world marked by geopolitical uncertainty, Albares' description of India as a dependable partner underscores Spain's commitment to strengthening ties and reflects a broader European recalibration toward India, with the potential to reshape trade, technology, and strategic cooperation in the years ahead.

Supreme Court Extends Stay on Aravalli Hills Definition, Orders Status Quo



NEW DELHI — The Supreme Court of India on Wednesday extended the stay on its earlier verdict regarding the definition of the Aravalli Hills, directing that the status quo be maintained until further orders. The move comes amid growing concerns over environmental protection, mining, and encroachment in one of India's oldest mountain ranges.

The Aravalli Range, among the oldest mountain systems in the world, serves as a vital ecological barrier and life-support system for the National Capital Region (NCR) and the Indo-Gangetic Plains. It faces increasing threats from deforestation, mining, grazing, and human encroachment.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant stated that the interim direction — which keeps in abeyance the November 20 judgment prescribing a revised definition of the Aravallis — would continue to operate. The earlier verdict had established a uniform definition of the hills, introducing criteria

such as a 100-metre elevation threshold and a 500-metre gap between hills, which environmentalists argued could remove significant portions of the range from legal protection.

On December 29, 2025, the top court had stayed its earlier orders, citing "critical ambiguities" in the definition. Wednesday's extension continues this approach, allowing time for expert review before any changes are implemented.

The Bench directed Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, representing the Rajasthan government, and amicus curiae K. Parameshwar to submit within four weeks a list of environmentalists, scientists, and experts in mining to form an expert committee. This body will examine all aspects of the Aravalli ecosystem, including environmental protection, mining practices, and legal implications, under the supervision of the Supreme Court.

"We need experts from different walks of life so that a body can be constituted to

examine all aspects," the court said.

The court also took note of submissions indicating that illegal mining continues at scattered locations in the Aravallis. It directed the Rajasthan government to ensure that no unlawful extraction takes place and emphasized that the law must act against violators. Additional Solicitor General KM Nataraj assured the bench that the state would take all necessary steps to prevent illegal mining.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court directed all parties to submit a comprehensive note outlining the legal questions involved in the case, helping the court frame the issues for further consideration. The matter has been listed for hearing after four weeks.

The decision underscores the Supreme Court's cautious approach to balancing environmental conservation with legal and administrative clarity, ensuring that the fragile Aravalli ecosystem continues to receive protection while ambiguities in the definition are resolved.

Nitin Nabin Takes Charge as BJP National President: What It Means for Bihar and Parliament

NEW DELHI — Nitin Nabin assumed office as the BJP's new National President on Tuesday morning and has wasted no time taking key organizational decisions. Within 24 hours of taking charge, Nabin appointed the party's in-charge and co-in-charge for the Kerala Assembly elections later this year, as well as for select local body polls. On Wednesday, he convened a day-long meeting with senior leaders from BJP state units, including state presidents and organisational general secretaries, signaling his immediate focus on strengthening party structures nationwide.

A major priority on his agenda is poll-bound West Bengal, widely seen as the BJP's toughest electoral battle in recent years, following a hat-trick of defeats to Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee in both state and federal elections. However, political observers are also closely watching whether Nabin will participate in the Bihar Assembly budget session, scheduled to begin on February 2. Although he resigned from Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's cabinet, where he served as Roadways Minister, Nabin remains a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), which technically obliges him to attend House proceedings.



Nabin has represented the Bankipur constituency five times and is one of Bihar's most experienced legislators. Balancing his new national role with legislative responsibilities could be challenging. One option is induction into the Rajya Sabha, allowing him to operate primarily from Delhi. His predecessor, JP Nadda, had similarly transitioned to Parliament after taking on the national presidency.

This could happen as soon as April 2026, when five Rajya Sabha seats from Bihar fall vacant. BJP's numbers make it virtually certain to secure two seats, with the remaining three likely split between Nit-

ish Kumar's JDU and potentially the BJP. Alternatively, Nabin could represent a different state, as 30 other Rajya Sabha seats fall vacant this year, many of which the BJP is poised to win.

Top BJP sources, however, indicate that Nabin may remain a Bihar MLA for the foreseeable future. This approach mirrors the precedent set by Amit Shah, who remained an MLA while holding senior party positions, including the National Presidency, to maintain strong organizational oversight in Gujarat before transitioning to the Rajya Sabha in 2017 and later to the Lok Sabha in 2019.

Unlike Gujarat during Shah's tenure, Bihar currently poses no electoral threat to the BJP, as the party-led alliance holds a comfortable majority. Yet keeping Nabin in the state may serve strategic purposes, particularly in planning for a post-Nitish Kumar era. There are ongoing concerns over Nitish Kumar's health and potential shifts in JDU loyalties, including reports of six Congress MLAs possibly joining JDU, which could alter legislative dynamics.

This year is also significant for the Rajya Sabha, with 71 seats set to fall vacant, including six held by union ministers and eight by Congress members. The BJP currently holds 103 seats, and 30 of its members' seats are up for election, with potential gains increasing its influence in the Upper House. Key states with upcoming Assembly elections, such as Tamil Nadu, Bengal, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh, will play a critical role in determining the party's Rajya Sabha strength.

As the youngest National President in BJP history, Nitin Nabin is expected to play a pivotal role in steering the party through a high-stakes electoral year while balancing legislative responsibilities in Bihar and strategic planning at the national level.

Trinamool MLA Threatens Election Commission Amid Bengal Voter Re-verification Row

KOLKATA — Trinamool Congress MLA Monirul Islam on Wednesday issued violent threats against the Election Commission (EC), escalating tensions between Bengal's ruling party and the poll body over a special intensive revision (SIR) of voter lists ahead of the state Assembly elections.

Islam, who represents the Farakka constituency, threatened to "break the Commission's waist with lathis" and referenced the controversial law granting lifetime protection to the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners for actions taken in their official capacity. He specifically targeted CEC Gyanesh Kumar, claiming he would "drag him from the grave" for allegedly "harassing" Bengal voters to favour the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"...it has to be broken with a stick. We want lathis to break the Election Commission's waist. You are playing with people but staying inside a protected shield. You are in the bubble, but we will drag you



out," Islam declared, echoing opposition claims that the SIR exercise is biased toward the BJP.

Islam's rhetoric mirrors comments made by other senior Trinamool leaders, including Abhishek Banerjee, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's nephew and party No. 2, who in October urged party workers to aggressively confront BJP leaders involved in the voter re-verification drive, instructing them to "gherao" officials and demand proof of lineage certificates.

The remarks drew immedi-

ate criticism from Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, who accused Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of a "break-down in governance." He alleged that issues such as education, health, jobs, and industrial development had been sidelined ahead of elections, with SIR dominating political discourse. "There is no discussion on people's problems... only political intimidation. The Chief Minister has created an atmosphere where SIR alone is being projected as deciding people's fates," Chowdhury said.

The tension comes days after violence in Islam's constituency, where vandals targeted the office of the Block Development Officer (BDO). BJP national general secretary Amit Malviya alleged that the unrest was orchestrated by Islam, claiming it was a response to the EC's demands for additional voter information during the re-verification process.

The SIR voter re-verification drive has emerged as a major flashpoint in Bengal politics. The Trinamool alleges that the exercise is intended to remove lakhs of legitimate voters likely to support the party, while the EC maintains that SIR operations fall within its constitutional mandate. The Supreme Court is also monitoring the matter, reflecting the national significance of the dispute.

With Assembly elections approaching, the conflict highlights the deepening political polarization in Bengal, as the ruling Trinamool, the opposition BJP, and allied parties like Congress navigate voter verification, election oversight, and accusations of bias.

Indore Contaminated Water Deaths Rise to 25 as High Court Questions State Response



INDORE — Hemany Gaikwad, a 51-year-old resident of Bhagirathpura in Indore, became the latest victim of contaminated drinking water, bringing the death toll in the city to 25. Gaikwad, also known as Bala, fell ill on December 22 after consuming contaminated water. Initially admitted to a private nursing home in Pardeshipura, his condition worsened, and he was referred to Aurobindo Hospital on January 7. Despite treatment, he died on Tuesday morning. Doctors said he was suffering from cell carcinoma and kidney disease, but severe vomiting and diarrhoea triggered by contaminated water caused his health to deteriorate rapidly. Gaikwad, the sole breadwinner of his family, leaves behind four daughters and earned a living driving an e-rickshaw.

The crisis has drawn intensified scrutiny from the Madhya Pradesh High Court, which questioned the state government on the monitoring of its earlier directions and the mechanism for citizens to register

complaints. During Tuesday's hearing, Chief Secretary Anurag Jain, appearing via video conferencing, was unable to provide clear answers.

The state government informed the court that it had constituted a high-level committee of senior bureaucrats to probe the deaths and examine administrative and technical lapses. The committee is headed by Additional Chief Secretary Sanjay Kumar Shukla, with members including Principal Secretary P. Narhari, Urban Administration Commissioner Sanket Bhandve, and Indore Divisional Commissioner Sudam Khade, who will also serve as member secretary. The panel has been tasked with conducting site inspections, reviewing records, fixing accountability, and submitting its report within a month.

The move has drawn sharp criticism from petitioners. Senior advocate Ajay Bagaria described the committee as an "eyewash" that could shield responsible officials. He highlighted concerns over the recent post-

ing of former Indore Municipal Commissioner Dilip Kumar Yadav as Managing Director of the State Tourism Development Corporation, barely two weeks after his removal in connection with the deaths. Bagaria also cited 2016-17 Pollution Control Board reports documenting total and faecal coliform contamination in borewell samples across the city and questioned the incomplete drinking water pipeline project awarded to a private contractor in February 2023, of which the last 20 percent of work was reportedly completed only after judicial scrutiny. He suggested including independent members, such as retired High Court judges, in the committee to ensure credibility.

So far, 21 families have received Rs 2 lakh each in compensation. Nine patients remain hospitalized, seven in intensive care units, while the state government has spent Rs 1.21 crore on medical treatment for affected residents. The High Court has reserved its order after hearing all parties.

Former South Korean Prime Minister Han Duck-soo Sentenced to 23 Years for Role in 2024 Martial Law Declaration



SEOUL — A South Korean court on Wednesday sentenced former Prime Minister Han Duck-soo to 23 years in prison for his involvement in what the court described as a “top-down insurrection” related to ex-President Yoon Suk Yeol’s declaration of martial law in December 2024.

The Seoul Central District Court found Han guilty of being instrumental in creating the outward appearance of a cabinet meeting that enabled the martial law declaration. The judge characterized the actions as a direct threat to South Korea’s democratic order, saying Han participated in a scheme that endangered the nation’s hard-won freedoms. “The defendant was a Prime Minister who had been indirectly given democratic legitimacy and responsibility,” the court said. “Nevertheless, the defendant chose to turn a blind eye and participate as a member of the December 3 insurrec-

tion. As a result of the defendant’s actions, South Korea was in danger of returning to the dark past when the basic rights and liberal democratic order of the people were violated, potentially preventing them from escaping the quagmire of dictatorship for a long time.”

In addition to insurrection, Han was convicted of related charges, including perjury and creating false official documents. Han, 76, denied all wrongdoing except partial admission of perjury. The court noted that Han was the first former cabinet minister to be formally convicted in connection with the 2024 martial law events. He was detained immediately following the verdict. The ruling underscores the judiciary’s commitment to holding even high-ranking officials accountable for actions that threaten South Korea’s democratic framework. Experts have described the case as

unprecedented in modern South Korean history, given the rarity of criminal charges directly tied to martial law and the involvement of former top government officials.

While the ruling carries a lengthy sentence, it is subject to appeal. The lower court judge said he expected the case to move through the appeals process up to the Supreme Court. Legal analysts anticipate a prolonged legal battle, given the historical and political significance of the case and the high-profile nature of the defendant.

The verdict comes nearly two years after the December 2024 martial law declaration, which drew widespread domestic and international scrutiny for its potential threat to civil liberties. Han’s conviction represents a major moment in South Korea’s ongoing efforts to safeguard democratic governance and enforce accountability for senior officials.

Trump Defends ICE Actions Amid Controversy Over Minnesota Immigration Enforcement



WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump defended his administration’s aggressive immigration enforcement Tuesday, acknowledging that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents sometimes make mistakes while standing by a crackdown that has drawn sharp criticism in cities nationwide.

“They’re going to make mistakes. Sometimes ICE is going to be too rough with somebody or, you know, they deal with rough people, they’re going to make a mistake. Sometimes it can happen,” Trump said during an impromptu White House press briefing.

The remarks come amid mounting backlash over federal immigration operations in Minnesota, where thousands of ICE agents have been deployed since December. Protests and street confrontations have intensified, fueled by incidents including the January 7 fatal shooting of Renee Good by an ICE officer and a recent detention of a U.S. citizen in his home at gunpoint without a warrant.

Trump said the killing of Good was a “tragedy” and noted that her father was a supporter of his, adding, “He was all for Trump, loved

Trump, and, you know, it’s terrible.”

The president’s comments followed criticism of his administration’s messaging. Earlier Tuesday, Trump instructed the Department of Homeland Security and ICE to “Show the Numbers, Names, and Faces of the violent criminals, and show them NOW.” At the press briefing, he displayed photos of Minnesota migrants he described as criminals, emphasizing the need for aggressive enforcement.

Trump’s remarks also touched on unrelated topics, including his first-year accomplishments, his upcoming trip to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, the situation in Venezuela, and the cost of living. He acknowledged concerns that his message is not reaching the public, saying he might have “bad public relations people.”

The Justice Department has subpoenaed Minnesota officials, including Governor Tim Walz, Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, and Attorney General Keith Ellison, as part of a probe into whether local authorities interfered with federal immigration operations. The Department has also warned protesters who disrupted a church service in

St. Paul that they could face prosecution.

“Attacks against law enforcement and the intimidation of Christians are being met with the full force of federal law,” U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi said in a social media post. Walz called the investigation “a partisan distraction” and said Minnesota “will not be drawn into political theater.”

Public support for the administration’s immigration crackdown appears to be declining. A CBS News/YouGov poll released Sunday found that more than 60% of Americans believe ICE is too harsh, and a majority said its operations make communities less safe. 56% said the administration is prioritizing people who aren’t dangerous criminals for deportation.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon has ordered 1,500 troops in Alaska to be ready for deployment, and the FBI is seeking volunteers for temporary assignments in the region. Trump has threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act, which would allow the deployment of U.S. military forces for domestic law enforcement, while Minnesota has mobilized the National Guard to support local authorities.

Mark Carney Declares “End of Old World Order” at Davos, Calls on Middle Powers to Act Together

At the 2026 World Economic Forum in Davos, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney delivered a defining address that forcefully declared the end of the post Second World War “rules based international order” as it has existed for decades, calling the current geopolitical climate not a mere transition but a rupture in global norms and stability.

Carney, a career economist and former central banker who entered politics less than a year ago, warned that the predictable order built around U.S. leadership and multilateral institutions has been significantly weakened. “We are in the midst of a rupture, not a transition,” he said, asserting that the idea of a stable, rules based system no longer reflects international reality.

He characterized the old order as a partially useful but fundamentally flawed “pleasant fiction,” saying powerful states often bent or ignored the rules when convenient, and that trade and international law had been enforced asymmetrically. “The strong do what they can, and the weak suffer what they must,”



Carney said, borrowing a classical aphorism to describe what he sees as the resurgence of raw power politics.

Carney argued that the benefits Canada enjoyed under the old system — including open sea lanes, a stable financial framework, collective security and mechanisms for dispute resolution — were products of American hegemony, which helped deliver public goods even as it masked deeper inequalities in enforcement. But he stressed that assumption can no longer be relied upon.

Without naming U.S. President Donald Trump, whose policies

and rhetoric have strained relations with allies, Carney made clear he was responding to a world in which economic integration is increasingly wielded as a tool of coercion. He observed that tariffs, control over financial systems, and reliance on supply chains can all become leverage against less powerful countries.

Pointing to recent disputes — including controversial U.S. moves relating to Greenland — Carney took a strong stance in support of allies’ sovereignty. “Canada stands firmly with Greenland and Denmark and fully supports their unique

right to determine Greenland’s future,” he said, underscoring concerns about unilateral actions that undermine established norms.

A central theme of Carney’s speech was a call to “middle powers” like Canada to adapt strategically rather than simply concede to great power demands. He warned that hoping “compliance will buy safety” is no longer a viable strategy. Instead, Canada and similar nations must work collectively to build new forms of cooperation and alliances, creating what he described as a “dense web of connections” in trade, investment and security that

reflects shared values and enhances resilience.

Carney’s remarks pointed to an active reshaping of Canada’s foreign policy. He highlighted efforts to diversify economic partnerships beyond traditional allies, including strategic engagements with the European Union, China, and other regions, and announced plans to deepen cooperation on trade and security issues.

Rather than mourning the decline of the old system, Carney urged a clear eyed acceptance of global realities. “The old order is not coming back. We should not mourn it. Nostalgia is not a strategy,” he said. His message was that middle powers must build something more ambitious — neither isolationist nor deferential — rooted in values based realism, collective action and strategic autonomy.

Carney’s address, delivered to the world’s political and financial elite, was met with a standing ovation and reflects a dramatic shift in Canada’s diplomatic posture amid rising tensions in the international system.

Ryanair Mocks Elon Musk With “Great Idiots” Seat Sale Amid Feud

DUBLIN — Low-cost airline Ryanair has taken a swipe at Elon Musk just a day after the Tesla CEO jokingly asked how much it would cost to buy the Irish carrier. The airline announced a “Great Idiots” seat sale, offering 100,000 one-way tickets to Basel, Birmingham, and Cologne for just 16.99 Euros (around Rs 2,000), urging customers to “Buy one now before Musk gets one.”

The sale comes amid an ongoing public feud between Musk and Ryanair CEO Michael O’Leary, which has been amplified by social media exchanges and the airline’s trademark humor. O’Leary has scheduled a press conference in Dublin on Wednesday to “address/undress” Musk’s Twitter antics, which the airline called his “latest Twitsh*t.” In a press release, O’Leary said, “Musk knows even less about airline ownership rules than



he does about aircraft aerodynamics.”

The spat began last week when O’Leary rejected Musk’s Starlink satellite internet service for Ryanair flights, citing an antenna that would compromise aerodynamics and increase fuel costs by 200–250 million Euros. He also noted that Ryanair passengers, drawn to the airline for its low fares, would not pay even an

extra 1 Euro per ticket for the service.

Musk responded by polling his followers on X (formerly Twitter) about whether he should buy Ryanair, with nearly 900,000 people voting. The poll joked that Musk would “restore Ryan as their rightful ruler,” referencing Ryanair co-founder Tony Ryan. Musk also called O’Leary an “utter idiot,” suggesting he should be fired, while O’Leary fired back that Musk was “very wealthy, but still an idiot” with “zero” knowledge of airline management.

Ryanair’s social media team has continued to mock Musk, maintaining their signature dry humor. During a recent X outage, the airline tweeted, “Perhaps you need Wi-Fi [Elon

Musk]?” and dismissed the idea that in-flight Wi-Fi is a real draw for passengers.

While Musk’s net worth of \$681 billion far exceeds Ryanair’s market capitalization of nearly \$36 billion, a takeover is highly unlikely due to EU and U.S. airline ownership rules. EU law requires airlines to be majority-owned by EU nationals or member states, and U.S. foreign ownership is capped at 25 percent. O’Leary himself owns over \$1.2 billion in Ryanair shares.

Despite the unlikely possibility of a takeover, the feud has captured global attention, with Musk teasing the idea of buying the airline and Ryanair using the public spectacle to showcase its irreverent branding. The “Great Idiots” sale is just the latest twist in the ongoing war of words between the billionaire entrepreneur and the airline CEO.

Pakistan Defence Minister Inaugurates “Fake” Pizza Hut Outlet in Sialkot, Sparks Social Media Mockery



SIALKOT — Floral arrangements were in place, the red carpet rolled out, and cameras flashing when Pakistan’s Defence Minister Khawaja Asif confidently cut the ribbon at what he believed was a new Pizza Hut outlet in Sialkot’s cantonment area. The high-profile inauguration appeared to go smoothly — until

Pizza Hut Pakistan stepped in to clarify that the outlet was unauthorized and fraudulent.

The clarification came after photos and videos of the event went viral on social media, showing the minister inaugurating an outlet that, despite featuring Pizza Hut’s familiar red roof and branding, was

missing from the official store list. Online users quickly noticed the discrepancy, raising questions about how the event was organized.

Pizza Hut Pakistan issued an official statement confirming the outlet was not affiliated with the brand. “Pizza Hut Pakistan informs our valued customers that an un-

authorized outlet falsely using the Pizza Hut name and branding has recently opened in Sialkot Cantonment. This outlet is not associated with Pizza Hut Pakistan, or Yum! Brands. It does not follow Pizza Hut International recipes, quality protocols, food safety and operational standards. We have formally filed a complaint with the relevant authorities to stop the misuse of our trademark and ensure immediate action.

Pizza Hut Pakistan currently operates a total of 16 stores nationwide: 14 in Lahore and 2 in Islamabad. To verify an official Pizza Hut location operating across Pakistan, please visit: <https://www.pizzahutpakistan.com/en/store-locations>. Your trust matters deeply to us. Thank you for choosing the authentic Pizza Hut experience.

The US-based chain added that it had filed a formal complaint with relevant authorities to stop the misuse of its trademark and ensure “immediate action.”

One user wrote, “One ribbon cut, one statement issued. That has to be some kind of record.” Another joked, “When even Pizza Hut

says, ‘Not our slice of the pie.’” A third remarked, “Only in Pakistan can a Defence Minister proudly inaugurate a fake Pizza Hut — cut the ribbon, smile for cameras, and walk away — only for the brand to later declare the outlet unauthorized. No one can parody this level of incompetence.”

Social media reactions also included Urdu commentary, with one user asking, “Kuch asli baki reh gaya hi ya nahi is soobay main? Ajeeb vahiyat log nafiz hain hum per” (“Is there anything real left in this province? We are surrounded by absurd and useless people”).

The incident highlights both the perils of high-profile events conducted without proper verification and the rapid scrutiny that social media can bring to public figures in Pakistan.

Market Volatility Peaks Ahead of Union Budget, Analysts Flag Select Sectors to Watch



Indian equity markets have witnessed a sharp sell-off over the past three consecutive sessions, with the Sensex plunging nearly 2,500 points so far this week. The steep decline has unsettled investors ahead of the Union Budget scheduled for February 1, even as market experts believe the correction is driven more by uncertainty than by a deterioration in fundamentals. Analysts have outlined sectors that could offer value opportunities amid the volatility.

On January 21, the Sensex fell more than 1,056 points, or nearly 1.3 percent, to an intraday low of 81,124.45. Although the index staged a brief recovery and even turned positive for a short while, selling pressure resurfaced, pushing it back into negative territory. The Nifty 50 mirrored this weakness, sliding 313 points, or over 1.2 percent, to a day's low of 24,919.8. This marked a weekly decline of around 775 points, or more than 3 percent. After breaching the psychologically important 25,000 level, the index attempted a rebound but failed to sustain it.

The sell-off was broad-based. All major sectoral indices ended

in the red, with consumer durables, banking, and IT stocks leading the losses. Broader markets fared worse, as midcap and smallcap indices underperformed benchmark indices. Adding to the caution, India's volatility index rose to 14.43, its highest level since June, signalling heightened market stress, increased intraday swings, and fragile investor sentiment, according to SAMCO Securities.

Budget expectations and market nerves

Despite the turbulence, analysts say the pre-Budget correction should not be viewed as a sign of weakening fundamentals. Citi Research expects the Union Budget 2026 to stay focused on targeted priorities such as defence, affordable housing, and health insurance, while offering limited direct support to consumption. The brokerage anticipates continued emphasis on public capital expenditure, led by defence spending, even as fiscal consolidation remains a priority amid narrowing tax-revenue options.

Tushar Badjate, Director at Badjate Stock & Share, said markets are correcting largely due to global geopolitical uncertain-

ty and a risk-off environment, not because of structural weakness in Indian businesses. Corporate balance sheets remain stable, earnings visibility is largely intact, and India continues to stand out as a strong long-term growth story, he noted.

Echoing this view, Balaji Rao Mudili of Bonanza highlighted global trade uncertainties, aggressive foreign institutional investor (FII) outflows, a weakening rupee, and concerns over potential US-led trade tariffs as key triggers behind the volatility. These factors, combined with Budget-related uncertainty, have tested the traditional "buy the dip" mindset.

Where value is emerging

Several experts believe the correction has unlocked selective opportunities. Citi Research has flagged defence as a preferred theme, naming Bharat Electronics (BEL) as a top pick. Affordable housing players such as Aavas Financiers and Aadhar Housing Finance are also favoured. Defensive sectors like FMCG and healthcare, along with quality large-cap financial stocks and select PSU banks, are increasingly attractive on valu-

ation grounds, said Pranav Koomar of PlusCash.

Capex-linked sectors such as infrastructure, railways, and defence are expected to continue benefiting from government spending, providing long-term triggers. Analysts also see value emerging in IT due to reasonable valuations and AI-driven growth, as well as in policy-driven areas like renewable energy.

Anirudh Garg of INVasset PMS stressed that investors should focus on balance-sheet strength, pricing power, and cash-flow durability rather than reacting to short-term sentiment. Historically, pre-Budget corrections have rewarded investors who accumulate gradually and stay disciplined.

Investor strategy

Experts advise against panic selling during such volatile phases, except in illiquid or fundamentally weak stocks. Commodities may be added cautiously with a long-term view, while ETFs offer a safer route for those uncertain about stock selection. Overall, analysts recommend patience, discipline, and a focus on quality as markets navigate pre-Budget uncertainty.

Markets Extend Losses for Third Day as Nifty Slips Below 200-Day Average



The Indian equity market extended its decline for a third straight session on January 21, weighed down by weak global cues and rising investor caution. Concerns around geopolitical tensions linked to Greenland, along with a sharp sell-off in Japanese government bonds, added to the negative sentiment. Persistent selling pressure dragged benchmark indices below their 200-day moving averages on an intraday basis for the first time in nearly eight months.

The market opened on a subdued note and remained under pressure through the session. The Nifty slipped below the 25,000 level intraday for the first time since October 6, 2025. However, buying interest in select value stocks helped the index recover from its day's low, allowing it to close above the 25,100 mark.

At the close, the Sensex fell 270.84 points, or 0.33 percent, to settle at 81,909.63, while the Nifty declined 75 points, or 0.30 percent, to end at 25,157.50. Broader markets continued to underperform, with the BSE Midcap and Smallcap indices each shedding around 1 percent.

In the previous session, the total market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies dropped by nearly Rs 1.45 lakh crore, falling to Rs 454.37 lakh crore from Rs 455.82 lakh crore. Sectorally, metal and oil & gas stocks were the only gainers, while all other indices ended in the red. Pharma, IT, private banks, realty, and PSU banks declined between 0.5 percent and 1 percent.

On the Nifty index, stocks such as Trent, Bharat Electronics, ICICI Bank, Tata Consumer, and Apollo Hospitals were among the top losers. On the other hand, Eternal, Max Healthcare, Inter-Globe Aviation, Hindalco, and JSW Steel featured among the gainers.

The Indian rupee also weakened sharply during the session, hitting a

fresh all-time low of 91.74 against the US dollar before closing at 91.70, compared with its previous close of 90.97.

Stock-specific action remained volatile. Highway Infrastructure shares slipped 3 percent despite securing an order from NHAI. Shoppers Stop plunged 6 percent after its Q3 profit declined 69 percent. IndiaMART InterMESH rose 6 percent following a 55 percent jump in Q3 profit. Vikram Solar fell 8 percent despite a five-fold rise in consolidated profit, while SRF declined 6 percent even after reporting better-than-expected Q3 earnings.

More than 900 stocks touched their 52-week lows, including Kalyan Jewellers, C.E. Info Systems, Tata Chemicals, Poly Medicare, Godrej Properties, Havells India, Dixon Technologies, Trent, and Tube Investments of India, among others.

In the primary market, shares of Amagi Media Labs ended higher at Rs 348 after a weak debut. The stock listed at a 12 percent discount at Rs 317 on the BSE, compared with its IPO price of Rs 361.

Market Outlook for January 22
Rupak De, Senior Technical Analyst at LKP Securities, said the Nifty slipping below the 200-day moving average has increased market nervousness. He expects heightened volatility in the coming sessions, with support at 25,125 and resistance at 25,200 on a closing basis.

Nagaraj Shetti, Senior Technical Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, noted that the formation of a doji-type candle on the daily chart reflects ongoing volatility. While a confirmed reversal could lead to a bounce above 25,200, further weakness below 24,900 may drag the Nifty towards 24,500 in the near term.

Weak Global Signals Drag Markets Lower, Recovery Before Budget Uncertain



Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty continued their downward trajectory on Wednesday, extending losses after the sharp sell-off seen in the previous session. Weak global cues and mounting geopolitical concerns kept investor sentiment fragile, pushing markets deeper into the red during early trade.

The Sensex fell as much as 1,056.02 points, or 1.28 percent, to hit an intraday low of 81,124.45. The Nifty declined 312.7 points, or 1.23 percent, slipping to 24,919.80 and breaching the key 25,000 level for the first time in more than four months. The sustained correction has raised concerns over whether the markets can stage a meaningful recovery ahead of the Union Budget scheduled for February 1.

Market experts have advised investors to remain cautious, citing persistent global and domestic headwinds. Santosh Meena, Head of Research at Swastika Investmart, said the pre-Budget sell-off has pushed investors to seek safety and value-oriented opportunities. He recommended a defensive strategy combined with selective long-term investments to navigate the current volatility.

"Given the sharp pre-Budget correction, investors should consider a defensive rotation along with strategic long-term bets. Currently, large-cap private banks and select public sector undertakings (PSUs) appear to offer the most attractive value," Meena said. He pointed out that private lenders such as HDFC Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, and Federal Bank are trading at relatively moderate valuations, making them appealing compared to their historical averages.

Meena also highlighted PSUs like ONGC, Bharat Electronics (BEL), and Hindustan Copper, noting that their

alignment with themes such as energy security, defence indigenisation, and industrial demand strengthens their long-term outlook. In addition, he suggested that exposure to FMCG stocks could act as a defensive hedge, offering earnings stability amid heightened volatility.

From a technical standpoint, Meena said the 25,000 mark is a crucial support level for the Nifty. He explained that this level coincides with the index's 200-day moving average and serves as an important psychological threshold. Holding above it could trigger a relief rally, while a decisive break may open the door to deeper correction and increased selling pressure.

Sharing a cautious outlook, Sunny Agrawal, Head of Fundamental Research at SBI Securities, said it is difficult to predict a market rebound ahead of the Budget due to overpowering global factors. He cited geopolitical tensions and recent statements by US President Donald Trump as contributors to a risk-off environment across global markets, including India.

Agrawal added that continued selling by foreign institutional investors, a weakening rupee, and the unwinding of leveraged positions by retail and high net-worth investors have further weighed on sentiment. He also noted that a strong rally in gold and silver may have led to a shift of funds away from equities.

Ajit Mishra, Senior Vice-President (Research) at Religare Broking, echoed similar concerns, pointing to currency weakness, sustained FII outflows, and a lacklustre earnings season as key drags on the market. With the Nifty slipping below its long-term 200-day exponential moving average near 25,150, Mishra warned of potential further downside towards the 24,900 level unless global cues improve.

Excessive Concentration Threatens India's Clean Energy Goals, Experts Warn

In early December 2025, India's aviation sector faced a major disruption when IndiGo, which commands over 65% of the domestic market, cancelled thousands of flights. The crisis prompted intervention from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, forcing the airline to cut its winter schedule. More importantly, the Competition Commission of India began investigating whether IndiGo had violated the Competition Act, which prohibits its abuse of dominant position. The incident highlighted the risks of excessive market concentration: when a single player becomes indispensable, operational issues can escalate into systemic crises.

This pattern is not unique to aviation. The telecommunications sector has experienced similar challenges. Once a vibrant and competitive market with multiple operators, India's telecom industry has consolidated into a duopoly as of September 2025, according to TRAI data. The consequences of this concentration were evident in August 2025, when the most affordable entry-level plans were discontinued, forcing consumers onto higher-priced alternatives. Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia acknowledged that excessive concentration among a few carriers is unhealthy for the market. Spectrum caps—limiting operators to 50% of spectrum in a single band and 25% across all bands—were introduced to prevent dominance, based on lessons learned from past market failures.

The airport sector, too, is showing similar patterns. Consolidation among a limited number of operators has raised concerns over systemic vulnerability. While the Finance Ministry and NITI Aayog have flagged these risks, no regulatory caps have been imposed, unlike in the UK, where the Competition Commission forced BAA to



divest three airports in 2009 after it controlled 81% of London's runway capacity.

India's power transmission sector is now displaying comparable concentration risks. Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. (PGCIL) has secured more than half of all inter-state transmission projects awarded under competitive bidding and currently handles 46 of the 91 ISTS projects under construction, worth over Rs 1.27 lakh crore. While PGCIL has the expertise and scale to lead the national transmission expansion, this dominance has created delays ranging from 18 to 30 months in critical projects across Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh. For example, a scheme to evacuate 8.1 GW of solar energy from Rajasthan remains incomplete,

leading to curtailment levels rising from 8.5% to over 50% between March and August 2025. Similar delays have been observed in Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu.

The issue is not about efficiency but risk management. Excessive reliance on a single institution exposes the sector to structural vulnerabilities. Just as IndiGo's operational problems paralysed aviation and the telecom duopoly exercises pricing power without competition, concentration in transmission threatens to bottleneck India's clean energy transition.

A practical solution exists: market share caps. India already applies such caps in multiple sectors to prevent over-concentration while preserving leadership roles. For transmission, capping

any single developer's under-construction project share at around 50% would distribute execution responsibilities, reduce bottlenecks, and accelerate the clean energy rollout. Large players would continue existing projects but pause on new awards until their share falls below the threshold, spreading risk across multiple capable firms.

Concentration can drive efficiency, but beyond a certain point, it becomes a systemic risk. Lessons from aviation, telecom, and transmission delays show that when one entity controls a dominant portion of a sector, the costs are borne by the entire system. Introducing market share caps now ensures that India's clean energy ambitions remain on track and are not constrained by a single entity's capacity.

From Returning a Lost Phone to CRPF Selection: Heartwarming Videos Move Internet



Two heartwarming videos from India have recently gone viral on social media, reminding viewers that honesty, kindness, and emotional human connections continue to thrive despite the often cynical tone of online spaces. Both clips, though unrelated, struck a powerful chord by showcasing simple yet deeply moving moments of humanity.

The first video captures a touching incident that took place at Indore Railway Station, where a man named Raghu Ahirwar returned a lost mobile phone to its distressed owner. Ahirwar not only ensured the phone was safely returned but also recorded the entire process, showing how he tracked down the owner. The video begins with Ahirwar explaining that he found an unlocked phone at the station. Using the call log, he tried contacting people listed on the device to locate its rightful owner.

After some effort, Ahirwar managed to find the woman outside the station. When he handed the phone back to her, she was visibly overwhelmed and broke down in tears. Deeply emotional, she blessed him repeatedly, saying, "Bhagwan tera bhala kare" (May God bless you). The moment resonated with millions online, highlighting how a small act of honesty can make a huge difference in someone's life.

The video quickly went viral, garnering over 3 million views and more

than 281,000 likes. Social media users flooded the comment section with praise for Ahirwar's integrity. "Acha kaam kiya brother" (Good work, brother), one user wrote, while another commented, "If everyone does this, the world will be a better place." A third user added, "Humanity is still alive, my brother," echoing the sentiment shared by many viewers.

In another viral moment that touched hearts across the country, a video from Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district showed an emotional exchange between a young man and his mother. The clip features Gopal Sawant sharing the news of his selection into the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) with his mother, who earns a living selling vegetables on the roadside.

The Instagram video shows Gopal approaching his mother at the very footpath where she works every day to support their family. As he tells her about securing the CRPF job, she listens quietly at first. Moments later, her composure breaks, and her eyes fill with tears of joy. The understated yet powerful reaction captured the sacrifices of a hardworking mother and the fulfillment of a son's dream.

Together, these viral videos serve as a reminder that compassion, honesty, and perseverance continue to define everyday heroes, restoring faith in humanity one moment at a time.

Dubai or Gurugram: Viral Reddit Post Highlights Cost of Living vs Salary Debate



An Indian professional has turned to social media for advice after finding themselves at a career crossroads—whether to relocate to the United Arab Emirates for work or continue their job in Gurugram. The dilemma was shared in a now-viral Reddit post titled, "Need Advice: 8000 AED per month in Dubai or 72000 in hand in Gurugram", which quickly sparked debate among users.

In the post, the employee revealed that they had received a job offer in Dubai with a monthly salary of 8,000 UAE dirhams. While the opportunity to work abroad initially seemed appealing, the individual admitted that the role itself was "not that great." Despite this, the salary, at least in nominal terms, made them seriously consider making the move overseas.

"I recently got offered 8K Dirham for a role in Dubai. The role in itself is not that great, but do you think since at least in nominal terms I am getting offered pretty good money, so maybe worth moving," the user wrote. They further asked fellow Redditors for honest opinions, seeking clarity on whether relocating to Dubai would be a sensible decision or if staying in Gurugram would be the wiser choice.

As the post gained traction, social media users weighed in with mixed but largely cautionary responses. Many commenters pointed out that while 8,000 AED may sound attractive when converted to Indian currency, the high cost of living in Dubai could

significantly reduce savings. Expenses such as rent, utilities, transportation, fuel, food, and internet were repeatedly highlighted as major financial burdens.

"8k in Dubai is not going to cut it for savings. Rent, food, gas, electricity, Wi-Fi, and transportation will eat away your earnings," one user warned. Another commenter suggested that remaining in India might be more beneficial in the long run, especially early in one's career. "9 LPA in India with proper budgeting can give you a pretty decent lifestyle, and assuming you are just at the start of your career, this amount is bound to grow," they wrote.

Others provided more detailed breakdowns of expenses in Dubai. One user noted that renting even a modest studio apartment could cost around 3,000 AED per month in cheaper, distant areas. This would likely necessitate owning a car, adding another 1,000 to 1,500 AED in monthly expenses depending on the vehicle.

Some users also highlighted differences in salary growth between the two countries. "Salaries in Dubai don't grow at the 10% standards that we have in India. Usually it is 2-3%," one person explained, though they added that the absence of income tax in the UAE was a notable advantage.

The discussion reflects a broader dilemma faced by many Indian professionals, balancing the allure of international exposure against financial realities and long-term career growth.

Viral Post Sparks Debate After Australian Man Compares Friendships in India and Australia

An Australian man's reflections on the contrast between friendships in India and Australia have struck a chord online, sparking widespread discussion across social media platforms. Andy Evans, who shared his thoughts in a video posted on Instagram, spoke candidly about how his experience of friendship in India felt markedly different from what he was accustomed to back home.

In the video, Evans explained that friendships in India appeared far more intense and emotionally invested. According to him, Indian friends show a deep and genuine interest in each other's lives, celebrating milestones and successes in ways he had rarely encountered in Australia. He noted that while friendships in Australia tend to be friendly and relaxed, they are often more casual and less demonstrative.

"It took me a while to realise this," Evans said in the video. "Indian people love to celebrate the



success of their friends. This is not normal, by the way. Like in Australia, this is not normal." He went on to describe how common it is in India for people to publicly acknowledge personal moments such as anniversaries, promotions, or achievements, often sharing them on social media and celebrating

enthusiastically.

Evans admitted that this culture of openly celebrating friends was something entirely new to him. "You come to India, your friend's anniversary, you're posting it on your Instagram story and celebrating. I've never seen this in my life until I came to India," he added. For him, the collective

joy and emotional involvement stood out as a defining feature of Indian friendships.

The video quickly gained traction online, amassing over 103,000 views and more than 4,000 likes. Many users took to the comments section to share their own perspectives and experiences, with the post resonating

strongly across cultures. Several viewers agreed with Evans' observations, noting that Indian communities tend to express support and pride for friends more openly.

One commenter wrote, "So true! I love this about the Indian community. As an American, I'll congratulate a person but I'm not about to gloat about them all over the internet or party unless we're super close." Another user simply added, "Yeah, we show support to each other."

Interestingly, some Indian users expressed surprise at the observation. "As an Indian, I thought this was normal everywhere," one commenter remarked, highlighting how cultural norms around friendship can vary significantly across countries.

Evans' post has sparked a broader conversation about how different societies express friendship, support, and celebration, reminding many viewers that what feels ordinary in one culture can feel extraordinary in another.

From Rs 21,000 a Month to Rs 2 Crore a Year: Diploma Holder's Inspiring Rise Goes Viral

A mechanical engineering diploma holder has gone viral on social media after sharing his remarkable journey from earning a modest monthly salary of Rs 21,000 to building an annual income of Rs 1-2 crore. The story, posted on Reddit, has inspired thousands by highlighting resilience, adaptability, and an unconventional path to success.

In his post, the user explained that his intention was to shed light on how the professional "system" works and how he "accidentally found a way to beat it." After completing his diploma, he struggled to find stable employment, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, when job opportunities were scarce. With what he described as "zero options" available, he accepted a position titled "Document Executive" at a financial firm.

Despite the formal-sounding designation, the role involved physically collecting documents from clients, verifying paperwork, and submitting files to banks. "Document Ex-

ecutive is a fancy word for a delivery boy," he wrote. For four and a half years, he worked relentlessly, navigating Delhi's harsh summers and dense winter fog. Yet, his financial growth remained stagnant, with his salary increasing by only Rs 2,000—from Rs 18,000 to Rs 21,000—over the entire period.

The post, which received close to 200 upvotes, struck a chord when the user described the emotional toll of those years. He recalled standing in the rain with a backpack full of documents, unable to afford even a decent raincoat. That moment, he said, symbolized the lowest point of his journey.

The turning point came when he crossed paths with a Chartered Accountant (CA) who recognized his on-ground experience and offered him an opportunity. The deal involved sourcing funding cases independently, processing them through an established network, and splitting the earnings equally. Taking a leap of faith, the user embraced the oppor-



tunity—and it changed everything.

Over time, he built expertise in financial consulting, moving far beyond document collection. Today, he runs his own firm and handles deals worth hundreds of crores. "I realized that the market doesn't care about your degree. It cares if you can deliver," he wrote. His current work includes com-

plex debt instruments such as project funding, equity funding, mergers and acquisitions, and high-value B2B loans.

Recently, he has also expanded into commercial real estate after learning about India's booming hospitality sector. He now facilitates the buying and selling of hotels and hospitals, further diversifying his portfolio.

The story has received overwhelming praise on social media. Users described it as inspiring and motivating, with many reflecting on how a single decision can transform one's life. Others even reached out, hoping to collaborate or seek guidance, proving that the journey has resonated deeply with aspiring professionals across the country.

Indian Content Creator Breaks Down Reality of Driving Uber in Australia in Viral Video



An Indian man living in Melbourne, Australia, has gone viral on social media after sharing a transparent account of his earnings from driving an Uber for an extended shift.

Content creator Tushar Bareja posted a video documenting what he described as a "raw, unfiltered" 12-hour UberX driving challenge, aimed at showing the real-life

grind behind cab driving in Australia.

In his post, Bareja explained that the challenge was meant to answer a common question many people have about overseas gig work—whether driving Uber in Australia is truly worth it. "I took on a 12-hour UberX driving challenge to see what the grind really looks like," he wrote. He added

that the experience was physically demanding and far from easy, but important to share for those curious about the reality of the job.

Bareja also spoke about his early struggles after moving to Australia. He revealed that before becoming an Uber driver, he worked as an Uber Eats delivery executive and later took up jobs at Dom-

ino's and a fuel station to make ends meet. His journey, he said, reflects the challenges many international migrants face while trying to establish themselves in a new country.

The video shows Bareja beginning his day as early as 4 am, after getting little to no sleep the night before. To increase his chances of securing rides, he drove toward the city and the airport. His first significant trip of the day was a \$47 airport ride, giving him a promising start. However, he soon realised that such high-paying fares were not frequent and that most rides required long hours for comparatively modest returns.

By around 7 am, Bareja had earned close to \$100, but the early momentum came with additional costs, including fuel expenses. As the hours passed, fatigue began to set in, making the challenge increasingly difficult. Although he initially planned to complete the full 12-hour shift, Bareja was forced to stop after 10 hours due to exhaustion and the need for rest.

Despite cutting the challenge short, he managed to earn a total of \$330, which roughly translates to Rs 20,000. While the figure caught widespread attention online, Bareja's video sparked a broader discussion about cost of living, work-life balance, and the realities of gig economy jobs abroad.

The video has amassed over 5.2 million views and hundreds of comments, with users offering mixed reactions. Some pointed out that while Rs 20,000 in a day sounds impressive, Australia's high rent and living expenses significantly reduce the actual value of the earnings. Others compared it to India, noting that many people do not earn that amount even in a month. A few viewers jokingly expressed a desire to move to Australia, citing their own exhausting experiences driving Uber in Indian cities.

Bareja's viral post has reignited conversations around migrant work, financial expectations, and the true cost of earning abroad.

RCB Faces Hurdles in Hosting IPL 2026 Home Matches Amid State Government Conditions

BENGALURU — The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has asked Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) to confirm their host cities for IPL 2026 by January 27, but certain conditions set by the Karnataka state government may complicate the franchise's plans. While RCB remains eager to host their home matches at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, the state government has outlined additional responsibilities for the franchise that extend beyond the stadium itself.

The conditions reportedly include managing stadium-related arrangements, as well as taking responsibility for the surrounding roads, adhering to restrictions on DJ usage, and providing for a dedicated fire brigade unit. Sources close to RCB suggested that the franchise sees these requirements as a shift of administrative liabilities onto them, and they are hesitant to assume full responsibility.

RCB plans to hold discussions with both the Karnataka state government and the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) before conveying their final decision to the BCCI. The franchise has



also requested that the KSCA mediate talks with the government to ensure smoother coordination.

Speaking on the matter, KSCA president Venkatesh Prasad said that the state cricket body is actively working to secure an unconditional clearance from the Karnataka government to host IPL and international matches at Chinnaswamy Stadium. "We are working to get an unconditional clearance by the end of

February so that we can hand it over to the BCCI," Prasad said.

He added that the onus now lies with RCB to move the process forward. "It is RCB's responsibility to hold talks with the Karnataka government and take this forward. It is their responsibility to come back to Bengaluru and play, and not take the game away from Bengaluru," he said.

The situation highlights the delicate balance between franchise ambi-

tions and government regulations, with RCB needing to ensure compliance while maintaining their preference for playing at their iconic home ground.

Meanwhile, the Rajasthan Royals have already confirmed that they will host their IPL 2026 home matches in Pune, with no games planned in Jaipur this year. This underscores the broader logistical planning challenges fran-

chises face as they navigate venue approvals, local regulations, and the IPL schedule ahead of the tournament.

As the January 27 deadline approaches, RCB's discussions with the state government and KSCA will determine whether the Chinnaswamy Stadium can remain their home venue or if alternative arrangements need to be made, setting the stage for a critical decision in the lead-up to IPL 2026.

PCB Offers to Host Bangladesh's T20 World Cup Matches Amid Security Standoff with India

ISLAMABAD — The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has expressed support for Bangladesh's refusal to play its T20 World Cup matches in India, citing security concerns, and has offered to host the matches as an alternative. The development comes ahead of the ICC Board meeting on Wednesday, where a final decision is expected on Bangladesh's participation and whether the team will travel to India for the tournament starting February 7.

Bangladesh is scheduled to play all four of its group-stage matches in India, with the first three in Kolkata and the fourth in Mumbai. However, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), backed by its government, has remained firm on not sending the team to India and has requested that its matches be shifted to co-host Sri Lanka.

According to sources close to the PCB, the board sent a communication to the ICC stating that Bang-

ladesh's concerns are justified and should be accommodated. The PCB further added that if moving the matches to Sri Lanka is not feasible, Pakistan is ready to host all of Bangladesh's games. While the ICC and BCB have engaged in multiple discussions, including a recent meeting in Dhaka, neither side has altered its position.

The ICC has consistently stressed that the tournament should proceed according to the existing schedule, but the BCB maintains that sending its team to India is not possible under current circumstances. PCB officials have not issued a public statement, but insiders confirmed that Bangladesh's government approached Pakistan for support in discussions with the ICC.

Pakistan itself will play all its T20 World Cup matches in Sri Lanka under a hybrid hosting model agreed with the BCCI and ICC, valid until 2027.

The current crisis esca-



lated after Kolkata Knight Riders released Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman, following a directive from the BCCI that cited "recent developments all around." In response, the Bangladesh government banned the broadcast of the IPL, and the BCB formally in-

formed the ICC of its refusal to travel to India for the tournament.

The situation has created a diplomatic and sporting impasse, with the ICC seeking to balance tournament logistics and security considerations, while Bangladesh remains unwavering in pri-

oritizing the safety of its players. With the ICC Board set to meet this week, all eyes are on whether a resolution can be reached, either by shifting matches to Sri Lanka or Pakistan or by compelling Bangladesh to adhere to the original schedule.



Harry Brook Apologises for Nightclub Incident, Focuses on England's ODI Series in Sri Lanka



COLOMBO — England white-ball captain Harry Brook has publicly apologised for his involvement in an altercation with a nightclub bouncer in Wellington, New Zealand, describing it as "not the right thing to do" and insisting he has "learnt from my mistakes." The 26-year-old was fined £30,000 (\$40,000) by the

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) following the incident, which occurred the night before a one-day international against New Zealand. England went on to lose the match, with Brook managing only six runs.

Speaking to reporters in Colombo ahead of England's three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka,

Brook reflected on the episode and its aftermath. "I've reflected a lot and I know it wasn't the right thing to do," he said. "I want to apologise to my team-mates, the fans, and the ECB for putting them in a tricky situation. It will never happen again. I'm extremely sorry."

Brook, who will lead England in next month's

T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, admitted that the incident drew unwanted attention but vowed to move on and focus on cricket. His comments come after a turbulent period for England's white-ball side, highlighted by a 4-1 Ashes defeat and allegations of poor preparation, inconsistent team selection, and a perceived "drinking culture" within the camp. Video footage of players socialising during a mid-series beach break, including an apparently inebriated Ben Duckett, intensified scrutiny on the squad.

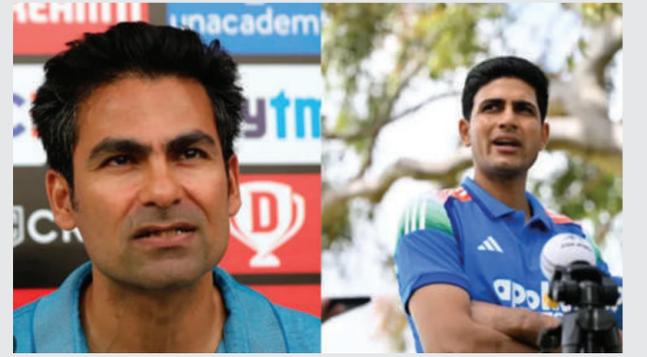
Looking ahead, Brook said the ODI series against Sri Lanka would provide a valuable opportunity to regain form and build momentum ahead of the T20 World Cup, which starts on February 7. "It's important to get used to the conditions, the climate, and the heat. We are looking forward to a competitive series," he said. Brook also acknowledged the team's recent struggles: England have lost six of their last seven bilateral series and endured a disappointing Champions

Trophy campaign, failing to win any group-stage matches. "We would like to be a little more consistent, absorb pressure, and stay in the game for longer periods. Yes, we've lost a few series, but I feel we're heading in the right direction," he added.

Sri Lanka, meanwhile, are dealing with selection challenges ahead of co-hosting the World Cup. Charith Asalanka, recently removed as T20 captain, continues to lead the ODI side, while key bowlers Dushmantha Chameera and Wanindu Hasaranga remain unavailable due to injury or fitness concerns. "I would have liked to have both in the team, but we have to look at the bigger picture, which is the World Cup. No final call has been made on Hasaranga yet," Asalanka said.

The three-match ODI series in Colombo, followed by three T20 internationals, will serve as England's last warm-up for the World Cup, offering Brook and his squad a chance to restore confidence and fine-tune their strategies.

Mohammad Kaif Criticises BCCI Over Burden on Shubman Gill After Back-to-Back ODI Series Losses



NEW DELHI — Former India cricketer Mohammad Kaif has slammed the BCCI and the Gautam Gambhir-led team management for placing too much responsibility on Shubman Gill, following the young batter's struggles as India's ODI captain. Gill has now lost both of his first two series in charge, 2-1 against Australia away and 2-1 at home against New Zealand, sparking debates over whether the 26-year-old was overburdened at such a young age.

Speaking on his YouTube channel, Kaif described the decision to back Gill so heavily as "the biggest mistake." He argued that the captaincy load across formats has put immense pressure on Gill, affecting his form and overall performance.

"The reason Gill is not in the T20I team currently is not because of him. The reason is that a lot of load has been put on him. He is a good player, but he wasn't ready to bear all the burden," Kaif said. He added a vivid analogy, saying, "Just like elevators have a weight limit, Shubman Gill also has a capacity. It is not possible to expect him to carry all the responsibilities at once."

Kaif emphasised that the young captain has been overloaded with expectations. "He has been told 'You do the Test captaincy', 'You can become better than Virat Kohli', 'You will break records', 'You will play every format'," Kaif explained. "I

feel Gill's career is being shortened due to the pressure being put on him. He has the pressure of getting dropped on him and is unable to bat freely in ODIs either. The fluency in his batting is not there."

The former cricketer also stressed that the blame lies squarely with the team management and the BCCI, stating, "Whoever made the decisions to hand Gill so much load must be held responsible." Kaif suggested that a more measured approach would have been to retain Rohit Sharma as captain while assessing his willingness and mental readiness to step down or continue leading the team.

"It would have been smarter to keep Rohit Sharma as the captain, and ask whether he is mentally tired or not. A smart management should have stayed with Rohit and supported him. Moving on from him was the wrong move," Kaif remarked. He added that the decision to appoint Gill as captain across multiple formats seemed driven by the desire to gain credit for building a new team, rather than prioritising the player's well-being and development.

Kaif's comments underscore the challenges faced by young cricketers thrust into leadership roles too early, and highlight concerns over workload management, team strategy, and player support within the Indian cricket setup.

Daryl Mitchell Tops ICC ODI Batting Rankings After Stellar Series Against India



NEW DELHI — New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell has overtaken Virat Kohli to claim the top spot in the latest ICC ODI batting rankings, following a spectacular run of form in New Zealand's historic series win in India. The Hamilton-born batter scored heavily during the three-match series, which New Zealand won 2-1, marking their first ODI series victory on Indian soil in 37 years.

Mitchell, 34, smashed two centuries in the series and became the fourth-fastest male cricketer to reach nine one-day international hundreds, achieving the milestone in just 54 innings, behind only Imam-ul-Haq (48 innings), Hashim Amla (52), and Quinton de Kock (53). Across the three ODIs, he accumulated 352 runs, the most ever by a New Zealander in a three-match ODI series and the third-highest total in ODI history for such a series, trailing only Babar Azam (360 against West Indies, 2016) and Shubman Gill (360 against New Zealand, 2023).

The ICC confirmed that Mitchell now has 845 ranking points, surpassing Kohli, who drops to No.2 with 795 points. The rest of the chasing pack includes Ibrahim Zadran, Rohit Sharma, Shubman Gill, and Babar Azam. Mitchell has now held the No.1 ODI ranking twice, though his previous spell lasted only three days in November 2025 before he was overtaken by Rohit Sharma.

Mitchell's dominance in India is particularly notable. He has scored four ODI centuries on Indian soil, second only to South African legend AB de Villiers, who has five. Another remarkable statistic is that Mitchell has yet to register a duck in 54 ODI innings, the second-long-

Wessels, who went 105 innings without being dismissed for zero between 1983 and 1994.

Son of rugby coach John Mitchell, currently in charge of England's women's World Cup-winning team, Daryl spent much of his twenties honing his skills in over 200 domestic matches in New Zealand before breaking into international prominence.

Other notable movements in the rankings saw Afghanistan's Ibrahim Zadran move into third place (764 points), swapping spots with Rohit Sharma, who now sits fourth with 757 points. In the same series, Glenn Phillips contributed to New Zealand's historic win, scoring 106 off 88 balls and forming a 219-run partnership with Mitchell in Indore — the second-highest ODI partnership in New Zealand's history. Phillips climbed 16 places to 20th in the ODI batting rankings and rose 14 spots to equal 31st in ODI all-rounders rankings, while Afghanistan's Azmatullah Omarzai remains at the top.

In bowling, Michael Bracewell was the biggest mover for New Zealand, rising six spots to 33rd following his performance in the first two games against India. The top of the bowling charts remains stable, with Afghanistan's Rashid Khan (710 points) leading ahead of England's Jofra Archer (670 points). Rashid also climbed two spots to second in the T20I bowling rankings after taking two wickets in Afghanistan's series opener against the West Indies in Dubai.

Mitchell's rise to the top highlights his remarkable consistency and adaptability, cementing his place among the world's elite ODI batters and signaling that New Zea-

Powerful 'Bhaga Bhaga' Song from Unique Spy Drama "China Peace" Ignites Buzz

The upcoming Telugu spy drama China Peace is steadily emerging as one of the most talked-about films in recent times, thanks to its unique concept and engaging promotional content. Starring Nihal Kodhati and Surya Srinivas in the lead roles, the film is written and directed by Akki Vishwanadha Reddy and produced under the Moon Light Dreams banner. With every new update, the makers are successfully building strong anticipation among audiences.

Earlier promotional material, including the teaser, created a solid buzz by showcasing a refreshing blend of action, thrill, humor, and a distinctive narrative style. The film's unique presentation and intriguing storyline immediately set it apart from conventional spy dramas. Adding further momentum to the promotions, the makers have now released a powerful song titled Bhaga Bhaga, which has quickly captured attention.

Composed by Karthik Rodriguez, Bhaga Bhaga is a high-energy patriotic number designed to stir emotions and ignite a sense of pride. The composer has crafted the song with intense beats and a rousing arrangement that perfectly matches the film's spy-action backdrop. Renowned singer Kaala Bhairava's powerful and commanding vocals elevate the track to another level, making it both impactful and memorable. The lyrics, penned by Rehman, are sharp and thought-provoking, turning words into weapons and resonating strongly



with listeners. The song not only enhances the film's promotional appeal but also hints at the larger thematic depth of China Peace.

The film features a strong ensemble cast, with Kamal Kamaraju, Raghu Babu, Rangasthalam Mahesh, Srinivas Vadlamani, Srikanth Iyengar, Harshitha Bandlamoori, and Tulasi playing key roles alongside the lead actors. Each character is expected to add layers to the narrative, contributing to the film's gripping spy-drama framework.

On the technical front, China Peace is backed by an experienced and skilled crew. Cinematography is handled by Suresh Raguthu, whose

visuals are expected to enhance the film's scale and intensity. Editing is taken care of by Mart-hand K. Venkatesh, ensuring a crisp and engaging narrative flow. The film's overall technical finesse is aimed at complementing its bold concept and stylish execution.

Scheduled for a theatrical release towards the end of February, China Peace promises a fresh cinematic experience with its unique spy-drama angle, powerful music, and compelling storytelling. With the release of Bhaga Bhaga, the film has further strengthened its position as one of the most awaited releases of the season.

Tovino Thomas' "Palli Chattambi" Motion Poster Out, Release on April 9

Malayalam star Tovino Thomas is all set to enthrall audiences with his upcoming prestigious big-budget film Palli Chattambi, whose motion poster was officially released on Tuesday. Along with the striking motion poster, the makers also announced that the film will hit theatres worldwide on April 9, marking one of the most anticipated pan-Indian releases of the year.

Palli Chattambi is being produced on a lavish scale by Naulfal, Brijeeesh, and Chanakya Chaitanya Charan under the banners of Worldwide Films and C Cube Bros Entertainment. The film is directed by Dijo Jose Antony, known for his strong storytelling, while Kayadu Lohar plays the female lead opposite Tovino Thomas.

Set in the backdrop of the 1950s and 1960s, Palli Chattambi is a period drama that promises to showcase Tovino Thomas in a completely new and unseen avatar. The motion poster, rich in period detailing and intense visuals, has already generated significant buzz across social media and film circles. Industry insiders believe the film has the potential to appeal to audiences far beyond Kerala, firmly positioning it as a pan-India entertainer.

Adding to its wide reach, the producers have confirmed that Palli Chattambi will release si-



multaneously in five languages—Malayalam, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, and Kannada—ensuring a grand theatrical rollout across the country and overseas markets. The announcement has further raised expectations among fans and trade analysts alike.

The film boasts a strong supporting cast, including Vijayaraghavan, Sudheer Karamana, Baburaj, Vinod Kedamangalam,

and Prashanth Alexander, among others, promising powerful performances and depth to the narrative.

The technical crew behind Palli Chattambi is equally impressive. Cinematography is handled by Tijo Tomy, while the music is composed by Jakes Bejoy, whose background score is expected to elevate the film's period setting. The film's visual authenticity is enhanced by pro-

duction designer Dileep Nath, with costumes designed by Manjusha Radhakrishnan and makeup by Rasheed Ahmed. Editing is overseen by Sreejith Sarang, and the script is penned by S. Suresh Babu.

With its compelling premise, grand scale, and Tovino Thomas' transformation, Palli Chattambi is shaping up to be one of the most awaited theatrical releases of April.

Athreyapuram Brothers Launched with Grand Puja, Concept Poster Sparks Curiosity



With audience tastes evolving rapidly, filmmakers are increasingly focusing on fresh, relatable narratives that resonate with today's viewers. Director Rajesh Jagannadham is stepping into this space with Athreyapuram Brothers, a film that promises a distinctive story tailored for the new-generation audience. The project was officially launched in a grand manner, with its

intriguing concept poster unveiled at the same time.

The film is being produced under the banners of S2S Cinemas and The Fervent Indie Productions by VSK Sanjeev, Vangapalli Sandeep, Vangapalli Sankeerth, Praveen Gadde, Rajesh Gadde, and Rakesh Gadde. Athreyapuram Brothers features a notable ensemble cast that includes Rajeev Kanakala, Ga-

vireddy, Sunny Patsa, Raghu Babu, Geeth Sayini, Neha Pathan, and Siddharth Gollapudi in key roles.

The puja ceremony was held grandly at Annapurna Studios in Hyderabad, marking the formal commencement of the film. Several prominent filmmakers attended the event as chief guests, adding to the occasion's significance. Director Vassishtha gave the

clap for the auspicious first shot, while Vijay Kanakamedala switched on the camera. Directors Praveen Kandregula and Aditya Hassan handed over the script, and director Anudeep provided honorary direction for the opening shot, wishing the team success.

A major highlight of the launch was the release of the film's concept poster, which immediately caught the

attention of those present. Carrying the tagline "A Sweet Rivalry," the poster visually depicts two individuals locked in a test of strength. At first glance, it hints at an unusual and engaging narrative, suggesting that Athreyapuram Brothers will move away from routine storytelling and offer a refreshing cinematic experience. The poster has already sparked curiosity and discussion, raising expectations around the film's theme and treatment.

The technical crew backing the film is equally promising. Cinematography is handled by Ramiz Naveeth, while Santhu Omkar serves as the music director. Editing responsibilities are taken up by Anil Pasala. With a strong creative and technical team in place, the makers aim to deliver a film that balances entertainment with a contemporary sensibility.

More details about Athreyapuram Brothers, including its storyline and release plans, are expected to be announced soon.

Ranveer Singh's 'Dhurandhar' Set for OTT Premiere



Bollywood star Ranveer Singh's high-octane action thriller Dhurandhar is all set to make its much-awaited digital debut soon, following a successful run in theatres. The film, which marked Ranveer Singh's powerful return in a gritty espionage avatar, is scheduled to stream on a leading OTT platform from January 30, 2026, creating fresh buzz among movie lovers and fans of the actor.

Directed by Aditya Dhar, Dhurandhar hit cinema screens in December 2025 and emerged as one of the major box-office successes of the year. The film received strong appreciation for its intense storyline, slick action sequences, and layered narrative rooted in espionage and national security. Ranveer Singh's transformation into a ruthless intelligence operative was widely praised by critics and audiences alike, with many calling it one of

the most mature performances of his career.

The film also boasts an impressive ensemble cast, including Sanjay Dutt, Akshaye Khanna, R. Madhavan, and Arjun Rampal, each delivering impactful performances that added depth to the story. The gripping screenplay, combined with a powerful background score and realistic action choreography, played a key role in the film's theatrical success.

With its OTT release now confirmed, Dhurandhar is expected to reach a much wider audience, including viewers who missed the film in theatres. The digital version is likely to be available in multiple languages, allowing fans across regions to experience the action-packed thriller from the comfort of their homes. Industry insiders believe the film's strong word-of-mouth and Ranveer Singh's star power will help it trend prominently on

streaming platforms.

The timing of the OTT release is also significant, as it comes ahead of growing anticipation for the film's sequel, which is already under discussion. The makers have hinted that Dhurandhar is envisioned as a franchise, and the positive response to the first part has strengthened those plans.

For Ranveer Singh, Dhurandhar marks another milestone in his career, reaffirming his ability to balance mass appeal with intense, performance-driven roles. As the film gears up for its digital premiere, excitement among fans continues to soar, with many eager to relive the adrenaline-filled experience once again.

With its OTT arrival, Dhurandhar is set to find a new wave of viewers and further cement its place as one of the stand-out action thrillers in recent Hindi cinema.

Krithi Shetty Bags a Mega Opportunity in Chiranjeevi's Upcoming Film

Young and talented actress Krithi Shetty has reportedly secured a major breakthrough in her career by landing a key role in megastar Chiranjeevi's upcoming film. The development has generated considerable buzz in Tollywood, as the project is expected to be one of the most high-profile ventures in recent times. Industry circles believe this opportunity could mark a turning point for the actress, who is looking to regain strong momentum in mainstream Telugu cinema.

Krithi Shetty shot to fame with her impressive debut and quickly became a household name. However, despite her popularity and acting potential, she faced a mixed run at the box office in the subsequent phase of her career. While she continued to receive appreciation for her performances, a major commercial success elud-

ed her. The latest development, therefore, comes as a much-needed boost and places her back in the spotlight.

According to sources, the upcoming Chiranjeevi starrer is being directed by Bobby, known for his commercial sensibilities and emotional storytelling. The film is said to revolve around strong emotional elements, with a narrative that highlights family relationships. Krithi Shetty is expected to play a crucial role with substantial screen presence, giving her ample scope to display her acting range alongside the legendary actor.

The project is likely to go on floors in the coming months, with pre-production work progressing at a brisk pace. Reports also suggest that the makers are assembling a powerful ensemble cast, with a few prominent names from South Indian cinema expected to be part of

the film. Though official confirmations are awaited, the anticipation surrounding the cast and technical crew continues to grow.

For Krithi Shetty, sharing screen space with Chiranjeevi is not just a prestigious opportunity but also a chance to reinvent herself in the industry. Films featuring the megastar often enjoy massive reach across generations, offering young actors a rare platform to connect with a wide audience. Trade analysts believe that a strong performance in this film could open doors to bigger and more diverse roles for the actress in the future.

Fans of both Chiranjeevi and Krithi Shetty are eagerly waiting for an official announcement from the production team. As expectations soar, all eyes are now on how this promising collaboration will shape up. If the project lives up to the hype, it could well be-



come a milestone film in Krithi Shetty's career and add another memora-

ble chapter to Chiranjeevi's illustrious journey in cinema.