



BUZZ POINTS

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CM Revanth Reddy Reopens Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Temple After Development Works

TPN Bureau | January 19:

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Monday formally reopened the historic Sammakka-Saralamma temple at Medaram after the completion of extensive development works, marking a significant milestone in preserving the spiritual and cultural heritage of the region. The reopening of the temple and the inauguration of the newly developed Sammakka-Saralamma Pranganam were carried out amid traditional rituals and devotional fervour.

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, along with several cabinet ministers, Members of the Legislative Assembly, and senior leaders, attended the programme. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, accompanied by his family, offered special prayers and sought the blessings of Sammakka



and Saralamma, underscoring the government's commitment to respecting tribal traditions and faith.

Following the temple programme, the Chief Minister departed Medaram by helicopter and reached Hyderabad. From there, he proceeded directly to Shamshabad International Airport, from where he was scheduled to leave for his visit to Davos.

Later in the day, Telangana Minister Seethakka addressed a media conference at the Haritha

Hotel in Medaram. She expressed her gratitude to all those who played a role in making the Chief Minister's visit and the inauguration of the gaddela pranganam a grand success. Thanking everyone by name and designation, she said the completion and inauguration of the sacred complex marked the successful conclusion of an important phase of development works at Medaram. Minister Seethakka noted that with the inauguration of the gaddela pranganam, a long-pend-

ing chapter had come to a close. She referred to the upcoming "Mande Melige" festival scheduled for Wednesday and called upon officials, devotees, and stakeholders to ensure that arrangements from Mande Melige through the main Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara celebrations are carried out with the same level of coordination and dedication.

The minister extended special thanks to media professionals for providing wide coverage and helping project the glory and legacy of Sammakka and Saralamma to the world. She said such coverage played a vital role in highlighting tribal culture, traditions, and spiritual values associated with Medaram.

Highlighting a rare administrative achievement, Minister Seethakka recalled that a cabinet meeting was successfully held in Medaram, deep inside the forest, instead of the usual venue in Hy-



Harish Rao Alleges Irregularities in Singareni Tenders, Demands CBI Probe

TPN Bureau | Hyd-
January 19

Former Telangana minister and senior BRS leader T. Harish Rao on Tuesday launched a scathing attack on the Congress government, alleging large-scale irregularities and "share disputes" in Singareni Collieries tender processes. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan, Harish Rao claimed that the state was witnessing a major Singareni tenders scam involving the Chief Minister, senior ministers, and their close associates.

Harish Rao alleged that a controversial "site visit certificate" system was introduced by the Revanth Reddy government in 2024, a practice that, according to him, does not exist anywhere else in Telangana, across the country, or even in organisations such as Coal India and Western Coalfields. He said Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka had cited the absence of site visit certificates as the reason for cancelling Naini block tenders, but questioned why only those tenders were cancelled while others awarded under the same system were allowed to continue.

The BRS leader al-

leged that the first beneficiary of the new site visit method was a close relative of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, whose company allegedly secured tenders soon after obtaining the certificate. He claimed that after the introduction of this system, Singareni tenders were being awarded at unusually high rates of plus 7 to plus 10 percent, whereas coal block tenders across the country generally go at minus 10 to minus 22 percent. He pointed out that even in Singareni, during the earlier period, tenders were awarded at competitive negative percentages.

Harish Rao further alleged that several tenders awarded during the BRS regime were cancelled and re-issued to benefit favoured contractors at higher rates. Citing specific cases, he claimed that projects earlier allotted at minus 7 percent were re-tendered and awarded at plus 7 percent, causing heavy financial losses to Singareni.

Raising another issue, the former minister alleged that Singareni's bulk diesel procurement system was scrapped and handed over to contractors for commissions, resulting in increased costs and GST burden

for the company. He claimed that these decisions were being taken under the influence of the Chief Minister's close associates and relatives.

Harish Rao demanded a CBI inquiry into the entire Singareni tenders issue and challenged Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to permit such an investigation if he had nothing to hide. He also urged Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy to intervene and order a probe, questioning the alleged understanding between the Congress and BJP.

He criticised the government for failing to appoint a regular CMD for Singareni for the past two years and demanded the immediate cancellation of all tenders awarded under the site visit system, its permanent abolition, restoration of the earlier diesel policy, and appointment of a qualified full-time CMD.

Concluding his remarks, Harish Rao accused the Congress government of neglecting welfare guarantees and running the state irresponsibly. He asserted that the BRS would approach the courts over the alleged Singareni coal scam and continue its fight until accountability and transparency are ensured.

Deputy CM Batti Vikramarka Mallu Highlights Major Welfare and Development Initiatives in Madhira Constituency

TPN Bureau | Ma-
dhira Jan 19:

Deputy Chief Minister Batti Vikramarka Mallu addressed a large public gathering in Chintakani Mandal, Madhira constituency, highlighting the state government's key welfare and development initiatives.



Speaking at a function organized after multiple development programs in the area, he emphasized that the government would not allow wealth hoarders and exploiters to oppress the marginalized.

The Deputy CM announced that 5,000

crores in interest-free loans have been distributed to women's self-help groups across municipalities to empower women as community leaders.

He said the government aims to make millions of women "co-owners of wealth," surpassing targets set in the first year. Notably, the government has exceeded its loan distribution target, providing 26,000 crores in interest-free loans to women, far above the planned 20,000 crores.

Vikramarka also urged citizens to expedite construction of Indiramma houses, confirming that bills are cleared weekly. He recalled the hardships during the pre-elec-

tion "People's March" from Adilabad to Khammam, where many families had been denied houses for over a decade. Now, under the government's first phase, 450,000 Indiramma houses are being built across the state with an investment of 22,500 crores.

The Deputy CM highlighted welfare spending of 1,21,874 crores under various programs for farmers and the poor. Special mention was made of agriculture-centric schemes like Rythu Bharosa, bonus for paddy farmers, and 24-hour free electricity, through which 74,163 crores have been directly distributed to farmers. Additional schemes like Indiramma houses, free electricity for 200 units, free RTC bus services for women, and Kalyana Lakshmi support programs have benefited the poor, amounting to 47,710 crores in direct assistance.

On women empow-

erment, Vikramarka highlighted free RTC bus facilities enabling women to move safely and independently, with the government having spent 7,000 crores to support the initiative. He contrasted this with the previous administration, whose sari distribution often proved inadequate, while the current government ensures quality sarees for girls.

Additionally, 1.15 lakh families have received assistance in the form of 96 lakh kg of free fine rice, providing six kilograms per person at no cost.

Education was also emphasized, with the government planning 100 Young India Integrated Residential Schools across the state to ensure children are globally competitive. On irrigation, Vikramarka reported that under the Congress government, 1.98 lakh additional acres in Khammam will receive irrigation benefits. Schemes such as the

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Lays Foundation Stone for New Bus Station at Regonda

Jayashankar Bhupalpally District, January 19 (TPN Bureau):

Telangana Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Monday laid the foundation stone for a new bus station at Regonda mandal headquarters in the Bhupalpally Assembly constituency. The project, taken up at an estimated cost of 75 lakh, aims to strengthen public transport infrastructure and provide improved travel facilities for residents as well as passengers passing through the area. Bhupalpally MLA Gandra Satyanarayana Rao was also present at the foundation stone laying ceremony.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said the new bus station was being

constructed at the Regonda crossroads with public convenience as the primary objective. He announced that 75 lakh had been sanctioned for the project and assured that the tender process would be completed shortly. The minister said the government was committed to completing the construction at the earliest so that the facility could be made available to the public without delay.

The minister underlined the strategic importance of Regonda, stating that devotees travelling to the Sammakkha-Saralamma Jatara from Huzurabad, Husnabad and Karimnagar use this route. Bhu-

palpally MLA Gandra Satyanarayana Rao was also present at the foundation stone laying ceremony.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said the new bus station was being

completed within two to three days to provide better facilities for pilgrims heading to Medaram.

Criticising the previous government, Minis-

ter Ponnam Prabhakar said the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) had been weakened over the years. He noted that TSRTC to-

day serves as a lifeline for the poor and middle-class population, operating 97 depots, 341 bus stations, nearly 10,000 buses and employing around

40,000 people across the state. He added that RTC buses cover about 35 lakh kilometres daily and transport nearly 65 lakh passengers every day.

Drawing a comparison, the minister said that while Indian Railways is the lifeline of the country, TSRTC has emerged as the lifeline of Telangana. He pointed out that the corporation has expanded its services from ordinary buses to AC and sleeper buses, reflecting steady development and modernization. He reiterated that Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's vision is to ensure RTC connectivity to every corner of the state.

Highlighting safety standards, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said the

accident rate involving RTC buses stands at just 0.07 percent, and in many cases accidents are caused due to the fault of other vehicles. He referred to a recent incident in Vikarabad where a lorry rammed into an RTC bus.

The minister said that after 2012 there were no recruitments or new buses added, but the present government has procured 3,000 new buses and is providing 3,000 new jobs. He added that 150 crore is being spent across Telangana on the development of bus stations and depots, with major facilities coming up at Kaleshwaram, Peddapalli and Eturnagar in Mulugu district.

Listing welfare initiatives, he said the government implemented free

bus travel for women within 48 hours of assuming office. He also highlighted schemes such as 200 units of free electricity, 500 gas cylinders, issuance of new ration cards, distribution of fine rice, Indiramma sarees for women, and the sanction of 3,500 Indiramma houses in the constituency.

Concluding his speech, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said the government, formed with the blessings of the people, would continue development initiatives despite financial constraints and ensure salaries are paid on the first of every month. He appealed to people to support the government in the upcoming municipal elections.



Vanaparthy: Minister Vakiti Srihari Distributes Loans and Indiramma Sarees to Women's SHGs

Vanaparthy, January 19, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

State Sports Minister Vakiti Srihari participated as the chief guest at the Indira Mahila Shakti celebrations held in Vanaparthy today. The event included the distribution of interest-free loans to members of Women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the town. Addressing the gathering, Minister Srihari emphasized the pivotal role of women in the state's governance and development programs.

Minister Srihari noted that the current Congress government came to power with the support of women and that, under the public administration, loans and benefits are being provided



directly to women. "Women are the backbone of every household. They understand the needs of the family better than anyone else. That is why all govern-

ment schemes are credited directly into women's accounts," he stated. He added that the government aims to empower millions of women across the state.

Highlighting social welfare measures, the minister announced that in unfortunate cases where a SHG member passes away, not only is the loan waived off, but an additional Rs. 5 lakh is provided to their family. He also referred to the Petrol Bank SHG initiative in Narayanapet, aimed at improving the financial independence of women. Minister Srihari praised the Congress government's efforts, noting that women now enjoy free bus services and have received Indiramma sarees as part of welfare initiatives. He criticized the previous government's distribution of substandard sarees, calling them

only fit for wrapping agricultural produce, and said that 12,000 Indiramma sarees are being distributed in Vanaparthy alone.

The minister stressed the importance of respecting girl children and reiterated Congress' commitment to women's empowerment. He also announced plans to establish an integrated school on 25 acres in Vanaparthy, with a budget of Rs. 200 crore, ensuring enhanced educational facilities for students. He pointed out that the current government has increased diet and cosmetic allowances for students since coming into power. Looking ahead to upcoming municipal elections, Minister Srihari urged voters to support Congress candidates in Vanaparthy, citing the party's recent success in Panchayat elections where it secured the highest number of Sarpanch posts.

The event was attended by Vanaparthy MLA Thudi Meghareddy, Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Board Chinnar Reddy, Vanaparthy DCC President Sivasena Reddy, Vanaparthy District Collector Adarsh Surabhi, and several other dignitaries.



Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka Launches Solar Model Village Programme in Bonakal

Bonakal, January 19, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu inaugurated the Solar Model Village programme at Ravinuthala village in Bonakal Mandal, describing it as a revolutionary initiative not just for the State, but for the entire country. Speaking at a public meeting on the occasion, he explained that the programme envisions every household and agricultural pump set becoming a solar power generation unit, empowering residents to meet their energy needs and earn additional income by selling surplus power.

The programme is fully funded by the State Government, which covers the installation costs of solar power plants for households and farmers. Under the pilot phase, the project is being implemented across 81 villages, with Kodangal and Bonakal Mandals receiving comprehensive coverage. In Bonakal Mandal alone, the government is investing 306 crore for 22 villages, including 24 crore for Ravinuthala



village.

Deputy CM Vikramarka emphasized the economic benefits for families. A household could save up to 14,000 annually through solar power usage. Selling just 1,086 surplus units per year at 2.57 per unit could earn families an additional 4,000 to 5,000 annually. He encouraged women to utilize these savings for children's education and family healthcare, highlighting the programme's potential to strengthen house-

hold economies.

Farmers were urged to adopt solar power for their agricultural pump sets. Since cultivation typically lasts only about seven months, surplus electricity generated during off-season periods can be sold to power utilities, creating an additional revenue stream. The Deputy CM also suggested constructing solar sheds in fields, which could serve multiple purposes—electricity generation, shelter for cattle, storage for

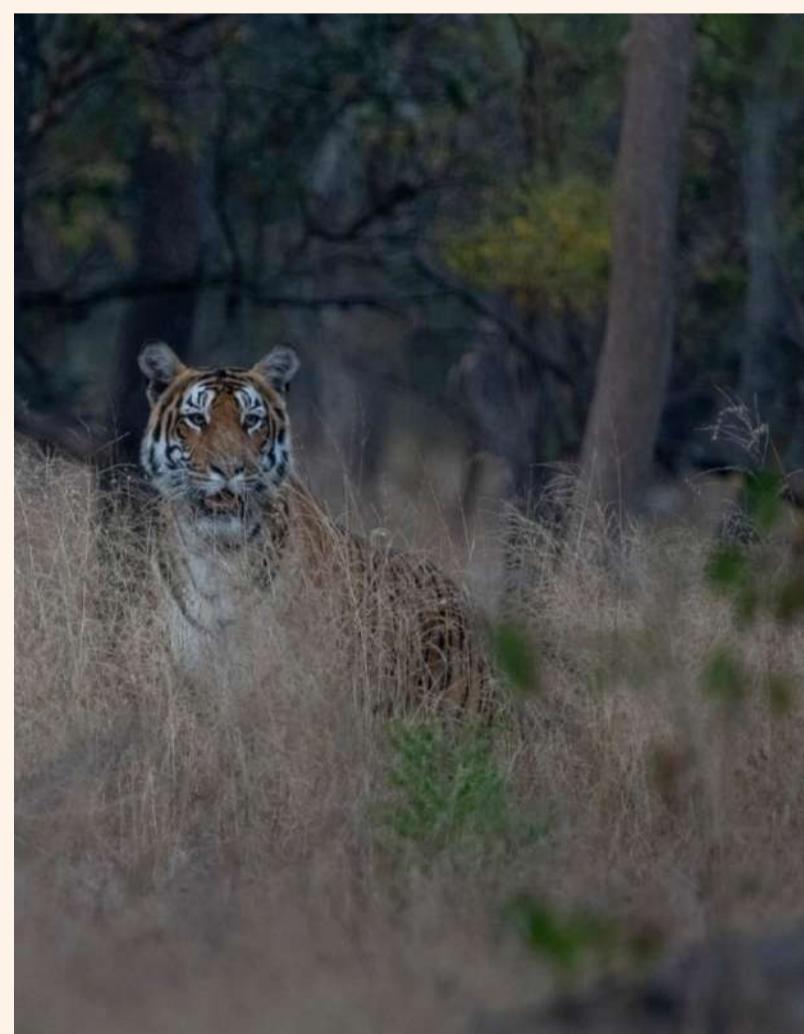
tools, and resting areas.

Vikramarka stated that the government is planning to expand solar installations to government schools and offices to reduce environmental pollution and promote clean energy. He also advised farmers not to burn crop residues after harvesting, citing severe health risks associated with air pollution.

Prior to the public programme, the Deputy CM inspected a solar power plant at a household in Ravinuthala, accompanied by officials from the electricity department and REDCO. NPDCL CMD Varun Reddy, REDCO MD Aneela, District Collector Anudeep Durishetty, and other officials were present during the inauguration.

The Solar Model Village programme reflects the State Government's vision of generating clean energy, promoting sustainable livelihoods, and enabling families to earn income from solar power, ensuring a greener and economically empowered Telangana.

Amrabad Tiger Reserve Sees Record Wildlife Activity, Strengthens Conservation and Community Engagement



Amrabad, January 19, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

Over the past four years, the Amrabad Tiger Reserve (ATR) has emerged as a premier wildlife destination, combining professional management, strong conservation outcomes, and a transparent, visitor-friendly experience. Since reopening in October 2025, the reserve has reported nearly 50 tiger sightings, signaling improved habitat health, better prey availability, and enhanced protection measures.

Visitors can explore ATR through several immersive safari circuits. The Farhabad Safari spans 16 kilometers and is priced at 3,000 per 5-seat vehicle or 430 per person. The Gundam Safari, a 35-kilometer deep jungle route, costs 5,000 per 5-seat vehicle or 715 per person, while the Akkamahadevi Caves Safari, covering 14 kilometers, is available at 3,000 per 5-seat vehicle or 600 per person.

In addition, a 20-kilometer Kollam Safari route has been finalized and is expected to open shortly, expanding opportunities

for visitors to witness the reserve's rich biodiversity.

The reserve's tourism model is closely integrated with local community welfare. All 18 safari vehicles are operated by members of the Chenchu tribe, trained as drivers and nature guides to provide visitors with an indigenous perspective on the forest ecosystem. ATR emphasizes sustainable infrastructure, with renovations including upgraded entrance facilities, installation of bio-toilets at Farhabad View Point and Gundam, and new toilets planned at Durvasala Check Post, Farhabad Entry, and Domalapenta. Clean drinking water points have been installed at key locations to reduce reliance on single-use plastics.

Visitors are advised that safari operations will be suspended from January 20 to January 25, 2026, due to the All India Tiger Estimation 2026. The census involves 139 regular forest staff, 150 outsourced staff, and 170 volunteers working across 253 beats to provide accurate population data.

Through this integrated approach of wildlife protection, community engagement, and sustainable tourism, Amrabad Tiger Reserve continues to set a benchmark for tiger conservation while offering visitors a unique, responsible wildlife experience.

Field Director & Conservator of Forests
Amrabad Tiger Reserve

transparently routed into the Tiger Conservation Foundation, funding both conservation initiatives and community livelihoods. Digital interventions at check-posts prevent revenue leakages, ensuring that tourist contributions directly support the forest, wildlife, and tribal communities.

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Field Director & Conservator of Forests
Amrabad Tiger Reserve

Telangana MP Represents State at World Economic Summit in Davos



Davos, January 19, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

Telangana's development, governance initiatives, and commitment to sustainable growth were showcased on the international stage as Bhuvanagiri MP Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy represented the state at the ongoing World Economic Summit in Davos.

During the summit, MP Chamala participated in a high-level session organized by Swaniti, titled "The Meridian Collective – Subnational Commitment Charter." The program focused on subnational governments' pledges toward economic growth, policy implementation, and citizen welfare. Speaking on behalf of Telangana, the MP highlighted the state's progressive policies, investment-friendly initiatives, and long-term development strategies, presenting Telangana as a model for efficient governance and sustainable progress.

The session brought together global policy-makers, industry leaders, and representatives from various countries, providing a platform to deliberate on the role of states and subnational governments in driving economic

growth, policy execution, and public welfare. MP Chamala emphasized that such international interactions not only strengthen Telangana's global visibility but also foster knowledge exchange and collaboration for innovation and investment opportunities.

Addressing the forum, Chamala outlined Telangana's investment landscape, emerging sectors, and future development roadmap, underscoring the state's achievements in infrastructure, digital governance, and socio-economic programs. He explained how the state government is leveraging technology, promoting inclusive growth, and implementing sustainable policies to ensure long-term prosperity for all citizens.

The MP expressed pride in presenting Telangana's success stories on a global platform, stating that showcasing the state's achievements and commitment to sustainable governance at Davos reinforces Telangana's credibility and attractiveness for international investors. He highlighted that Telangana's approach balances economic growth

with social development, creating opportunities for business, education, and innovation while maintaining environmental sustainability.

Participation in the summit also allowed Telangana's representative to engage directly with international stakeholders, exchanging ideas on best practices, policy frameworks, and investment models.

Supreme Court Seeks Explanation from Telangana Speaker in BRS Defection Case

Hyderabad, January 19 (TPN Bureau):

In a major development in the BRS MLAs defection case, the Supreme Court has issued notices to Telangana Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar, directing him to submit a detailed explanation by February 6. The notice was issued in response to a petition filed by BJP Legislative Party (BJLP) leader and MLA Aleti Maheshwar Reddy, who alleged constitutional violations and contempt of court in the handling of defection petitions.

Aleti Maheshwar Reddy approached the apex court challenging the Speaker's decision to grant a clean chit to defected MLAs. He alleged that the Speaker, instead of acting as an impartial constitutional authority, failed to take decisions independently and acted under pressure from the ruling Congress government. Such conduct, he argued, amounted to weakening democratic



institutions and striking at the very foundation of the Constitution.

The Supreme Court bench comprising Justice Sanjay Karol and Justice Augustine George Masih took serious note of the allegations and issued directions to the Speaker to place his explanation before the court. The bench also ordered that Maheshwar Reddy's petition be tagged with a similar petition earlier filed by BRS Working President K.T. Rama

Rao (KTR), which raises comparable issues related to the Speaker's role in defection matters.

The court observed that both petitions involve common questions of law and facts and therefore need to be heard together. The matter has been posted for further hearing on February 6.

Reacting to the Supreme Court's order, Aleti Maheshwar Reddy said the Speaker's primary responsibility is to protect the Constitution, not to shield the government of the day.

"If a Speaker avoids taking decisions or delays them out of fear of the ruling party, it is nothing but an attack on the Constitution," he said.

He asserted that constitutional authorities must function without fear or favour to uphold democratic values.

The BJP leader also questioned the Congress party's commitment to constitutional morality. Referring to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's nationwide outreach programmes where he carries a copy of the

Constitution, Maheshwar Reddy asked whether the Constitution does not deserve the same protection in Telangana. He demanded that Rahul Gandhi clarify his stand on the Speaker's actions in the state.

BJP leaders alleged that the Speaker's decision to grant relief to defected MLAs was arbitrary and undermined the anti-defection law. They maintained that repeated representations to the Speaker yielded no response, forcing them to seek judicial intervention.

The Supreme Court's directive has added fresh political significance to the issue, with both BJP and BRS sharpening their attacks on the Congress government. Political observers believe the outcome of the case could have far-reaching implications for the functioning of constitutional authorities and the handling of defection cases in Telangana.

Telangana Government Should Support Small Newspapers, Says Sundar Kalluri

Hyderabad, January 19, 2026: Small newspapers in Telangana are facing severe challenges due to rising printing costs, increasing paper prices, and growing competition from digital media. Highlighting these issues, Sundar Kalluri, Vice President of the Telangana Journalist Welfare Association (TJWA), called on the state government to provide comprehensive support to sustain small publications.

Addressing a press meeting held at the TJWA office on Monday, Kalluri emphasized the vital role small newspapers play in disseminating local news and keeping citizens informed. He noted that these publications are often the first to highlight rural issues and bring grassroots concerns to the attention of the public, thereby strengthening democratic processes.

Small newspapers, he said, also support local economic growth by providing an effective platform for advertisements



for regional businesses—something larger media outlets often overlook. Despite this contribution, many small newspapers struggle financially and receive little institutional support, he added.

Kalluri stressed that the Telangana govern-

ment must recognize the importance of small newspapers and actively support them through multiple measures. He urged that small newspapers should be provided government advertisements, press club memberships, and official accreditation to ensure their sustainability and credibility.

He also recommended the creation of a special financial aid fund to cover paper and printing costs, which are the primary operational expenses for small publications. According to Kalluri, such support would not only safeguard these newspapers

but also ensure that rural issues, local governance updates, and grassroots development stories continue reaching citizens. "Small newspapers serve as the voice of the people, particularly in rural areas, and play a critical role in empowering communities by reporting local problems that are often ignored by large media houses. It is essential that the government extends a helping hand so that these publications can survive and thrive," Kalluri said. He appealed to the state government to take immediate steps to institutionalize support for small newspapers, emphasizing that this will also strengthen journalism at the local level and enhance the reach of public information.

Kalluri concluded by reiterating that targeted financial and institutional assistance would ensure the continuity of these vital publications and preserve the diversity of media voices in Telangana.

KTR Accuses Revanth Reddy Government of Political Vendetta in Phone-Tapping Case

TPN Bureau
Hyderabad, January 19, 2026: Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has strongly criticized the Revanth Reddy-led Congress government over the recent Special Investigation Team (SIT) notices issued to former minister T. Harish Rao in the phone-tapping case.

KTR termed the notices as a politically motivated move designed to divert public attention from major corruption scandals under the current administration.

Speaking to the media, KTR highlighted that the Supreme Court had already dismissed the phone-tapping case, making the SIT notices issued to Harish Rao not only unnecessary but also absurd. He said the government was deliberately creating political drama to harass opposition leaders instead of addressing govern-

ance and developmental issues. KTR accused the Congress government of attempting to intimidate BRS leaders by misusing investigative agencies, asserting that the police machinery was acting as a tool for political vendetta.

"The Revanth Reddy government is engaging in attention-diversion politics. The notices to Harish Rao are clearly a distraction from the Bommareddy Sujan Reddy coal scam, which has exposed massive irregularities in the allocation of coal mines.

Instead of facing accountability, the government is trying to shift focus by targeting opposition leaders with old and dismissed cases," KTR stated.

He emphasized that such political harassment has become a routine practice under the current administration. KTR reminded that the BRS leadership has full

respect for the law and judicial processes and expressed willingness to cooperate with any legitimate inquiry. However, he cautioned that attempts to suppress the opposition through baseless notices would fail. "No amount of fabricated cases will prevent us from exposing the Revanth Reddy government's corruption and misgovernance to the people," he said.

KTR further praised Harish Rao, highlighting his long-standing service to the people of Telangana from the Telangana movement to the present day. He said that Harish Rao's consistent efforts to highlight the failures of the Congress government in the Assembly had unnerved the ruling party, prompting them to resort to political intimidation using outdated and dismissed allegations.

The government's so-called investigation is

nothing more than a politically motivated strategy to silence opposition voices. Our fight is for the welfare of the people, and we will continue to expose their corruption," KTR added. He criticized the government for trying to use SIT notices to suppress dissent while conveniently ignoring major scams and irregularities within its own ranks. KTR concluded by reiterating the BRS commitment to transparency and accountability, saying, "We respect the law, and we are ready for any inquiry, but the public will not be fooled by baseless notices. Our mission is to continue highlighting corruption and inefficiency wherever it exists, and no amount of political harassment can stop us."

BRS MLC Dasoju Sravan Criticizes CM Revanth Reddy's Remarks, Labels Them Undemocratic



Hyderabad, January 19 (TPN Bureau): Bharatiya Rashtriya Samithi (BRS) MLC Dasoju Sravan Kumar strongly criticized Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy for his recent public remarks, calling them "undemocratic" and warning that such statements could foster political tension and social discord. Addressing a press conference, Sravan claimed that the Chief Minister's language was inappropriate for a democratically elected leader and could incite divisions among citizens. Sravan specifically referred to Revanth Reddy's comments made during a recent public meeting in Khammam, alleging that they resembled the speech of a factional leader rather than a state head. He accused the Chief Minister of using provocative rhetoric to divert attention from pressing governance issues and alleged that these statements could amount to a deliberate attempt to stir conflict instead of promoting inclusive development.

In addition to condemning the tone of the remarks, Sravan criticized the state

government for failing to address economic and administrative challenges effectively. He said that instead of focusing on governance, public welfare, and development, the Chief Minister was resorting to divisive tactics and inflammatory rhetoric aimed at political rivals. Sravan urged the Chief Minister to concentrate on actual developmental priorities rather than creating unnecessary political controversies. Other BRS leaders reinforced Sravan's

stance, calling the remarks politically motivated and designed to shift the public narrative away from governance failures. They accused the Chief Minister of using media statements strategically and employing "gangster-like" language to mask administrative shortcomings. The party emphasized that it would continue to challenge what it considered provocative political behavior, highlighting the need for responsible leadership.



nothing more than a politically motivated strategy to silence opposition voices. Our fight is for the welfare of the people, and we will continue to expose their corruption," KTR added. He criticized the government for trying to use SIT notices to suppress dissent while conveniently ignoring major scams and irregularities within its own ranks. KTR concluded

True Point News Impact: Centering Materials Removed Near Basti Dawakhana in Quthbullapur

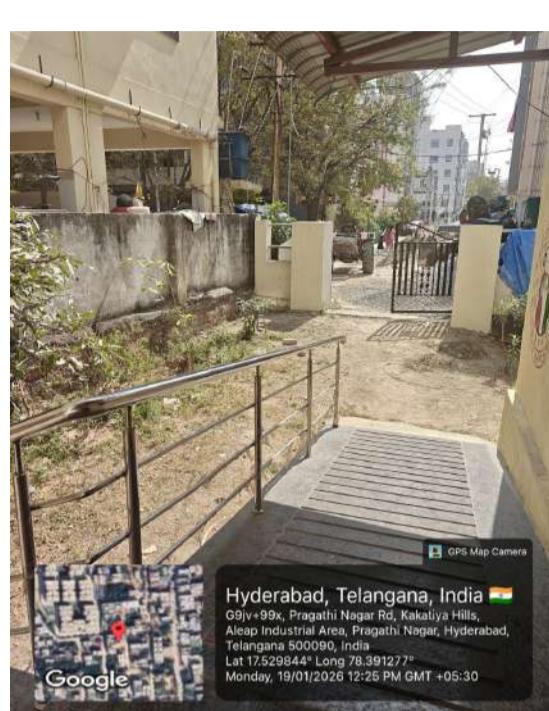
Quthbullapur, January 19 (TPN Bureau):

In a clear example of responsible journalism leading to swift civic action, centering materials that were causing inconvenience to the public near a Basti Dawakhana in the Quthbullapur area were removed following a report published by True Point News.

The issue was reported from Pragathi Nagar Vasavi Layout, which falls under the Nizampet Circle limits. Residents and patients visiting the Basti Dawakhana had been facing serious difficulties due to the placement of centering boxes used for nearby construction activities. These materials had obstructed access to the health facility, causing inconvenience especially to senior citizens, women, and patients seeking medical attention.

Members of the voluntary organization "For a Better Society" brought this matter to the notice of True Point Media, highlighting the negligence and its impact on public health services. Taking immediate note of the issue, True Point News published a detailed report emphasizing the hardships faced by local residents and patients.

Following the publication of the news report, officials from the Nizampet Circle Municipal Department responded promptly. The municipal authorities inspected the site and held discussions with the owner responsible for the construction work adjacent to the

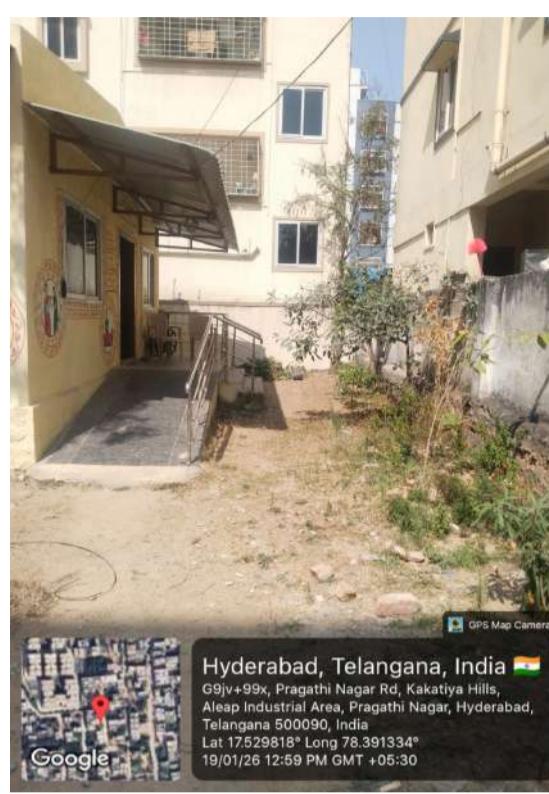


Basti Dawakhana. Acting swiftly, they ensured

the immediate removal of the centering boxes that were obstructing the public pathway and causing inconvenience to people accessing the health centre.

Municipal officials issued a stern warning stating that strict action would be taken if such negligence is repeated in the future, especially near public health facilities. They emphasized that construction activities should not interfere with essential services or pose difficulties to the general public, and adherence to civic norms is mandatory.

Local residents expressed relief and satisfaction over the quick resolution of the issue. They appreciated the proactive role played by True Point News in highlighting public grievances and ensuring accountability. The



Hyderabad, Telangana, India
G99v+99x, Pragathi Nagar Rd, Kakatiya Hills, Aleap Industrial Area, Pragathi Nagar, Hyderabad, Telangana 500090, India
Lat 17.529844° Long 78.391277°
Monday, 19/01/2026 12:25 PM GMT +05:30

residents also extended their gratitude to "For a Better Society" voluntary organization for taking the initiative and voicing public concerns.

Special appreciation was conveyed to the organization's founder, Uppu Jashwanth, along with other members, for their commitment to public welfare and community service. Locals stated that such collective efforts between media, civil society organizations, and authorities are essential for maintaining civic discipline and ensuring better living conditions.

This incident once again underscores the positive impact of vigilant media and active citizen participation in resolving public issues efficiently and responsibly.

'C-Mitra' Initiative Facilitates 100 FIRs in 10 Days, Offers Swift Relief to Cybercrime Victims



Hyderabad, January 19 (TPN Bureau):

The Hyderabad City Police's innovative 'C-Mitra' initiative has already made a significant impact, facilitating justice for cybercrime victims in record time. Launched on January 9 by City Police Commissioner Sri V.C. Sajjanar, IPS, the initiative has, within just ten days, reached out to 1,000 victims and resulted in the registration of over 100 First Information Reports (FIRs)—a pioneering approach in the country.

The C-Mitra project was conceived to address the challenges faced by victims of cybercrime, many of whom are reluctant to visit police stations due to fear, lack of legal knowledge, or logistical difficulties. To bridge this gap, the initiative operates as a virtual helpdesk, connecting with victims directly through phone calls and digital platforms. On average, the C-Mitra team makes 100 calls daily to gather case-specific information and understand the grievanc-

e s o f t h e complainants.

AI-Assisted Complaint Drafting

Once a victim lodges a complaint via the 1930 helpline or the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal, the C-Mitra team contacts them to collect necessary details. Using Artificial Intelligence (AI), the team prepares a legally sound complaint draft, which is then shared with the victim through WhatsApp or email. Victims are instructed to print, sign, and courier the document to the Basheerbagh Cyber Crime Station. Upon receipt of the signed copy, the FIR is registered immediately, and a digital copy is sent to the victim's mobile phone. This streamlined process eliminates long waiting hours at police stations, providing rapid relief and reassurance.

To ensure efficiency, a special 24-member team has been deployed, working in two shifts from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., handling calls, coordinating with victims, and ensuring

FIRs are promptly filed.

The initiative has

drawn praise for its human-centric approach. Constable Deekshita, part of the C-Mitra team, said, "Citizens often fear approaching police stations. Through C-Mitra, when we call them and assure justice, their confidence is immediately restored. We listen not just as officers, but as sisters." Another team member, Prithvi, called the initiative a "digital revolution," blending technology with empathy. She added, "Victims previously struggled with drafting complaints and understanding legal sections. C-Mitra removes those obstacles. Our ultimate goal is a future where cybercrime is eradicated in Hyderabad, rendering C-Mitra unnecessary."

The success of C-Mitra demonstrates how technology and compassionate policing can transform law enforcement, ensuring swift, accessible, and victim-friendly cybercrime redressal in the city.

DCP Rakshitha Krishna Murthy Conducts Inspection at Chikalguda Police Station

Secunderabad, January 19 (TPN Bureau):

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Secunderabad Zone, Smt. Rakshitha Krishna Murthy, IPS, conducted a formal inspection of Chikalguda Police Station on Monday as part of routine supervisory measures aimed at strengthening policing standards and improving public service delivery.

During her visit, the DCP carried out a comprehensive review of the operational preparedness of the police station. She inspected all patrol cars and Blue Colts vehicles deployed within the division and verified their overall condition, maintenance standards, and readiness for emergency response. Special attention was given to the availability and func-

tionality of AD Drill Kits, operational status of tabs, and Papillon devices, which play a crucial role in modern policing and field operations.

As part of her inspection, Smt. Rakshitha Krishna Murthy also examined Grave Crime Case Diary (CD) files and scrutinized Rowdy Sheeter records to assess the quality of investigations and monitoring mechanisms. She emphasized the importance of maintaining accurate records and ensuring continuous surveillance of habitual offenders to prevent repeat crimes.

Addressing the officers and staff, the DCP issued several key directives. She gave a stern warning against corruption, making it clear that any involvement in corrupt practices would



invite strict disciplinary and legal action. Stressing the importance of public trust, she instructed officers to maintain polite and respectful behavior while dealing with petitioners. The DCP highlighted the need for swift response to Dial 100 calls and directed that First Information Reports (FIRs) must be registered promptly based on the seriousness and merit of complaints, without unnecessary delay. She reiterated that

Emphasizing the quality of investigations, Smt. Rakshitha Krishna Murthy directed officers to ensure meticulous investigation in sensitive cases, including POCSO cases, cybercrimes, and property-related offenses. She stressed the importance of filing well-prepared charge sheets to ensure higher conviction rates and effective justice delivery.

The inspection was attended by Mr. K. Shashank Reddy, ACP, Chikalguda Division, Mr. B. Anudeep, SHO, Chikalguda, Mr. L. Madhu Babu, DI, Chikalguda, along with Sub-Inspectors and other police personnel.

The visit reinforced the department's commitment to professional policing, transparency, and public-oriented law enforcement across the Secunderabad Zone.

Special Sanitation Drive in Dundigal Circle: Fines Imposed for Footpath Encroachments

Quthbullapur, January 19 (TPN Bureau):

Municipal authorities conducted a special sanitation drive in the Dundigal Circle area today, focusing on cleaning vulnerable garbage spots and enforcing regulations against public space encroachments. The drive aimed to improve hygiene standards and ensure a clean, safe environment for local residents.

During the operation, officials identified key garbage-prone locations

and thoroughly cleared all accumulated waste. In the Gandhi Maisamma area, officers took action against individuals who had encroached upon footpaths by storing waste tiles, granite, and other construction materials. Those violating regulations were fined Rs. 1,000 as a deterrent against future encroachments.

Authorities reminded citizens that maintaining cleanliness is a shared responsibility. They advised house-

holds to segregate wet and dry waste at the source and ensure proper disposal through municipal waste collection services.

Residents were also encouraged to avoid single-use plastics, make use of public toilets instead of open defecation, and maintain clean surroundings to support a healthy community.

The municipal officials emphasized that a clean environment di-

rectly contributes to public health and well-being, urging cooperation from all citizens to sustain hygiene initiatives. The drive was conducted under the supervision of Anvesh Reddy, Deputy Sanitation Engineer, along with Ashok Kumar, Sanitation Assistant Engineer, and Satwik, Environment Engineer, with active participation from ward personnel and municipal staff. The coordinat-



ed effort ensured that both residential and public areas were cleaned and footpaths were restored for public use. This initiative is part of the municipality's broader mission to maintain clean and accessible public spaces while enforcing civic rules, and serves as a reminder to residents to actively contribute to a cleaner, healthier community.

Vanaparthy: Minister Vakiti Srihari Inaugurates Dr. Madhav Reddy Memorial Football Tournament

Vanaparthy, January 19, 2026 (TPN Bureau): State Sports Minister Vakiti Srihari inaugurated the Dr. Jillella Madhav Reddy Memorial Football Tournament at the Polytechnic College grounds in Vanaparthy today. As part of the inaugural ceremony, Minister Srihari paid floral tributes to the late Dr. Madhav Reddy, whose life and services have left an indelible mark on the community.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Srihari lauded Dr. Madhav Reddy as a model citizen and an exemplary medical professional. He highlighted that despite being a renowned neurologist, Dr. Madhav



Reddy lived a humble and simple life, dedicating himself entirely to service. Minister Srihari praised his selfless

commitment to patients, noting that he traveled every week by bus to Vanaparthy to personally conduct medical examinations and attend to the local community. "The people of Vanaparthy have lost a great soul in Dr. Madhav Reddy," he said, expressing deep sorrow at his passing.

The minister also emphasized Dr. Madhav Reddy's significant contributions to the Telangana movement, recognizing his dedication beyond medicine. He

urged the attendees to reflect not only on the length of one's life but also on the quality and impact of the life lived. Drawing inspiration from Dr. Reddy's legacy, Minister Srihari shared personal anecdotes about his own mother, who served selflessly as a nurse in Maktal and earned widespread respect for her service. He expressed his determination to continue serving the people with the same integrity and dedication, ensuring that his

mother's name remains honored while carrying forward the spirit of public service.

Minister Srihari also acknowledged Chinnar Reddy, highlighting that he had continued to uphold the name and legacy of Dr. Madhav Reddy through his contributions. The inauguration was attended by several dignitaries, including Vanaparthy MLA Thudi Megha Reddy, Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Board Chinnar Reddy, Chairman of the SATHS Committee Sivasena Reddy, and Vanaparthy District Collector Adarsh Surabhi, among others.

The minister's tour focused on strengthening healthcare, education, and infrastructure, highlighting the state government's commitment to improving overall public health outcomes in Nagarkurnool.

Telangana Health Minister Damodara Raja Narasimha Reviews Development Initiatives in Nagarkurnool

TPN Bureau

Nagarkurnool, January 19, 2026: Telangana Health and Medical Minister C. Damodara Raja Narasimha visited Nagarkurnool district today to assess ongoing development projects and welfare initiatives. The minister's tour focused on strengthening healthcare, education, and infrastructure, highlighting the state government's commitment to improving overall public health outcomes in Nagarkurnool.

Residents and local representatives expressed optimism about the ongoing and planned initiatives.

The minister assured that the state government would continue prioritizing Nagarkurnool for developmental projects, emphasizing that inclusive growth and equitable access to services remain central to Telangana's governance strategy.

society

Minister Narasimha also highlighted the government's efforts in preventive and curative healthcare, including initiatives for maternal and child health, cancer care, and disease management programs. He stressed that robust local healthcare infrastructure is crucial for improving overall public health outcomes in Nagarkurnool.

Residents and local representatives expressed optimism about the ongoing and planned initiatives.

The minister assured that the state government would continue prioritizing Nagarkurnool for developmental projects, emphasizing that inclusive growth and equitable access to services remain central to Telangana's governance strategy.

The visit underscores the state government's commitment to bridging regional disparities, strengthening public welfare, and ensuring sustainable development in Nagarkurnool district under Minister Damodara Raja Narasimha's oversight.



Telangana Minister Highlights Development Initiatives in Atmakuru and Amarachinta

Maktal, January 19, 2026 (TPN Bureau):

Telangana State's Sports Minister, V. Shrikari Vakiti, participated in the Indira Mahila Shakti Celebrations held in the towns of Atmakuru and Amarachinta in the Maktal constituency. During the program, the minister distributed interest-free loans to women's self-help groups, emphasizing the state government's focus on empowering women and promoting economic

self-reliance.

Addressing the gathering, the minister contrasted the development efforts of the previous government with the current public administration, asserting that the present government is committed to visible and impactful progress across the constituency. He announced the completion of a bridge on the Krishna River at Jural within one year at a cost of 123 crore and highlighted plans to expand roads into a four-

lane highway, improving connectivity and transport facilities in Atmakuru.

Minister Vakiti also detailed local infrastructure projects, including the construction of a new 50-bed hospital in Atmakuru with an investment of 28 crore, expected to be operational soon. He confirmed that water tanks in the BC colony would be completed within six months, while CC roads, drainage systems, and new ra-

tion cards have been provided in both Atmakuru and Amarachinta towns. Furthermore, he assured that every underprivileged household would receive six kilograms of free rice, reinforcing the government's commitment to social welfare.

The minister criticized the previous BRS government for failing to provide any housing, while the current administration has sanctioned 300 Indiramma houses in the mandal for eligible beneficiaries, irrespective of political affiliations. He condemned misinformation being spread on WhatsApp groups by opposition parties and urged residents to recognize the government's tangible efforts in improving the constituency.

Emphasizing the role of women, Minister Vakiti stated that the Congress Party prioritizes women's welfare, aiming to elevate millions of women to financial

empowerment. He also acknowledged the effective functioning of women's self-help groups in managing petrol bunks and bus services. Concluding his speech, the minister stressed the importance of voters understanding their rights and using their votes wisely, warning that neglecting one's vote allows others to dominate. He urged constituents to support Congress candidates in the upcoming municipal elections and formally inaugurated newly constructed additional classrooms in government schools at Amarachinta, further strengthening the educational infrastructure in the region.

The program witnessed active participation from local residents, community leaders, and government officials, reinforcing the administration's focus on inclusive development, women's empowerment, and sustainable growth in Maktal constituency.



Telangana Government Empowers Women Through Interest-Free Loans and Entrepreneurship Initiatives



Madhira, 19 January 2026 (TPN Bureau):

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu emphasized the government's commitment to turning the impossible into possible for women during a public meeting held in Madhira Municipality. The event coincided with the distribution of interest-free loan cheques to women's self-help groups (SHGs), marking a significant step in promoting women's economic empower-

ment and entrepreneurship across the state.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy CM highlighted that the state government has taken on the responsibility of providing financial support for poor and middle-class women, bearing any level of cost necessary to uplift them. He recalled that while the government initially promised 20,000 crore in interest-free loans to empower women as "queens," critics doubt-

ed the feasibility. However, the administration not only fulfilled its pledge but exceeded it, disbursing 26,000 crore in the first year itself.

He further outlined the government's initiatives to transform women into entrepreneurs. Exclusive blocks in industrial parks will be allocated for women, and training programs through NGOs are being conducted to help women identify viable business opportunities.

The Deputy CM pointed out that, before these schemes, women were often forced to borrow

from private moneylenders at exorbitant rates, limiting their economic independence. Today, however, women's groups have grown financially strong, and even lenders now approach them for loans. He stressed that the goal of interest-free loans is not merely to provide funds but to enable women to run profitable businesses, reinvest earnings, and contribute to society's overall progress.

Highlighting the scale of the initiative, he said Madhira town alone has 589 self-help groups with 5,688 members, with plans to expand by another 5,000 members. In the Madhira Assembly constituency, 45,000 women have joined the Indira Women's Dairy, where each member receives two buffaloes and

participates directly in milk collection, production of value-added dairy products, and marketing.

The Deputy CM also announced the establishment of women-focused industries in the local industrial park, underlining the government's vision of creating sustainable economic opportunities for women while fostering financial independence.

Concluding his address, Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu urged women to utilize these opportunities effectively, highlighting that with determination, today's beneficiaries could soon become providers themselves, thus ensuring economic empowerment, dignity, and self-reliance for women across Telangana.

"I Will Stand by Women IAS Officers," Says Renuka Chowdhury Amid Controversy

TPN Bureau

Hyderabad, January 19, 2026: Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Renuka Chowdhury has strongly defended women Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers in the state amid a heated debate sparked by recent media coverage and social media speculation surrounding transfers and postings of female officials.

Addressing reporters, Renuka Chowdhury condemned what she described as baseless and sensationalist narratives being circulated about women IAS officers, emphasizing that no one has the right to judge or dictate how women should conduct themselves professionally or personally.

She questioned those who presume to comment on women's clothing or behaviour, stating unequivocally that it is not anyone's place to impose such judgments. Chowdhury criti-

cised the social media environment where unverified claims and rumours are easily accepted as facts, warning that such trends could have dangerous implications for women's dignity and professional standing. She argued that spreading misinformation about women officers not only undermines their professional integrity but also contributes to a broader culture of disrespect and discrimination against women in public life.

During her remarks, she highlighted the importance of approaching discussions about women officers with accuracy and responsibility. She said that speculative reporting and defamatory commentary can harm public confidence in the administrative system and damage the reputation of dedicated civil servants who work conscientiously for the public good.

The leader ex-

pressed her steadfast



Trump's Greenland Gambit Exposes Europe's Strategic and Trade Weakness

When the Cold War satire *The Mouse That Roared* imagined a microscopic European state declaring war on the United States in order to lose spectacularly and reap American aid, it was meant as absurdist comedy. Yet the title has taken on an uncomfortable relevance as Europe grapples with Donald Trump's escalating threats over Greenland. When a handful of European countries dispatched a token force of roughly three dozen soldiers to the Arctic island in solidarity with Denmark, the gesture felt less like deterrence and more like performance: a symbolic show of support carefully calibrated not to provoke the White House at a moment when Ukraine's survival still depends heavily on American backing.

If that was the intent, it has failed spectacularly. Over the weekend, Trump appeared to relish the opportunity to browbeat allies once again, raising the stakes with characteristic contempt. His administration threatened to impose a 10 per cent tariff on US imports from countries involved in the Greenland deployment—France, Germany, Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Denmark, as well as non-EU members Britain and Norway—starting in February. By June, those duties would rise to 25 per cent unless an agreement is reached allowing the United States to purchase Greenland.

The déjâ vu is grim. Just last year, the European Union swallowed a 15 per cent tariff on transatlantic exports as part of an EU-US trade deal trumpeted by Washington as a triumph. That agreement was supposed to stabilise relations. Instead, it now looks like a floor, not a ceiling. The episode exposes once again the fragility of Europe's trade-dependent, soft-power model when confronted with a US president who treats tariffs not as economic instruments but as weapons of political coercion.

The economic cost of Trump's new threats would



be severe. Bloomberg Economics estimates that the proposed levies could slash US exports from the targeted countries by as much as 50 per cent. Germany, Sweden and Denmark are especially exposed, given their reliance on high-value industrial and manufacturing exports. The temptation in European capitals will be to grit their teeth, de-escalate and hope the storm passes. That would be a grave mistake.

This is textbook economic bullying, deployed by a leader who recently declared that the only limit on his global power was "my own mind."

If last year's trade deal can be rewritten at will by Washington, where does it end? What incentive remains for compliance if acquiescence only invites fresh demands? At some

point, even mice must do more than squeak apologetically while accepting worse trade terms than those imposed on China.

Yet the early signs are not encouraging. Germany appears to be quietly withdrawing its dozen or so soldiers from Greenland, as if ticking a diplomatic box were sufficient. Job done, apparently. In reality, European leaders need to prepare for confrontation if the tariffs materialise. That does not mean reckless escalation, but it does mean credible resistance.

The first step should be institutional. The European Parliament has already threatened to withhold approval of last year's EU-US trade agreement. That threat now needs to be taken seri-

ously. The deal was hailed by Trump's administration as granting "unprecedented levels of market access" to American companies, yet it has done nothing to prevent Washington from pressuring Brussels to ease up on Silicon Valley and Seattle over regulation and antitrust enforcement. If the agreement no longer constrains US behaviour, Europe has little reason to ratify it.

More significantly, the EU must be willing to deploy its most powerful trade defence: the Anti-Coercion Instrument. This so-called "bazooka" was designed precisely for situations like this, where a foreign power uses economic pressure to extract political concessions from a member state. Unlike traditional tariff retaliation, the instru-

ment allows the EU to restrict market access, investment and services. In practice, that could mean targeting American technology giants such as Alphabet, whose European revenues dwarf those of symbolic manufacturers like Harley-Davidson.

French President Emmanuel Macron has long argued that Europe must be willing to use this weapon, and he has found support from Germany's powerful industrial lobby. "Europe must not allow itself to be blackmailed," the head of the VDMA wrote recently. Coming from an organisation representing export-oriented manufacturers, that statement carries weight. It reflects a growing recognition that submission is not cost-free.

Beyond trade lies a more

uncomfortable question: can Europe ultimately guarantee its own defence and security without American backing? Last year, the answer was clearly no. Faced with the war in Ukraine and Trump's tariff ultimatum, the EU chose economic pain over strategic rupture. But the rapid erosion of that compromise should prompt a reassessment. The rush to declare NATO "back and better than ever" under what Trump himself joked was "Daddy Trump" now looks embarrassingly premature.

Denmark is right to say that a hostile takeover of Greenland would fundamentally alter the alliance. This goes beyond the "brain death" of NATO that Macron warned of years ago. Trump's approach resem-

bles something closer to enforced obedience, recalling the dynamics of the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact rather than a voluntary alliance of democracies. If that is the future on offer, Europe has little choice but to accelerate its rearmament and strategic autonomy.

Unity, however, will be fragile. Poland and Italy, conveniently absent from Trump's tariff list, will likely push for de-escalation. Populist leaders aligned with Trump's MAGA worldview will do their best to sow discord. Britain, under Prime Minister Keir Starmer's cautious leadership, may pursue bilateral exemptions, further weakening a collective response.

Nor should Europe harbour illusions about power realities. If a determined US administration truly seeks to take Greenland—despite opposition from Congress, the American public, NATO, the EU and the overwhelming majority of Greenlanders—it may succeed. Former Trump adviser Steve Bannon has already described the Arctic as "the Great Game of the 21st century." In that game, sentimentality counts for little.

But alliances are not costless, and neither is subservience. If being an American ally increasingly means accepting trade penalties, technological dependence and political humiliation rather than partnership and protection, the calculation will change. Canada is already edging closer to China, despite sharing the world's longest undefended border with the United States. Europe will draw its own conclusions.

Trump's aggression over Greenland is unnecessary, destabilising and arrogant. It may also prove to be the moment when Europe finally accepts that strategic adulthood cannot be postponed. Fiction once imagined mice roaring for comic effect. Reality now demands that Europe's mice find their inner tigers—and act like it.

From Pawars to the BJP: The End of an Era in Maharashtra Politics

Maharashtra's political landscape is undergoing a transformation that is likely to prove irreversible. The results of the recently concluded local body elections have confirmed what had been evident for some time: the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has firmly entrenched itself as the dominant political force in the state. Winning 23 of the 29 municipal corporations, including the prized and enormously wealthy Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the BJP has demonstrated a breadth of organisational reach and electoral appeal unmatched by any rival.

For a state once synonymous with the Congress party, the Pawars' Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), and the Thackeray-led Shiv Sena, the scale of this shift cannot be overstated. Maharashtra is no ordinary state. It is India's largest economic engine, home to the financial capital Mumbai, the headquarters of major corporate houses, and a dense network of financial institutions. Politically, it sends 48 members to the Lok Sabha, making it second only to Uttar Pradesh in influence at the national level. With Maharashtra effectively "in the bag," the BJP's grip on national power has tightened further.

A Grand Political Reset

The collapse of old power centres and the rise of new ones has triggered a reset of political equations across Maharashtra. Because this transformation is still unfolding, predicting the precise social,

political and financial contours of the new Maharashtra remains difficult. Even so, the local body results offer several clear signals about the direction of change.

Perhaps the most striking shift is the emergence of a Brahmin leader as the dominant face of Maharashtra politics, displacing the Maratha community that has long controlled the state's levers of power. From Yashwantrao Chavan and Vasantdada Patil to Sharad Pawar, Maharashtra's political history has been shaped by towering Maratha figures. That era appears to be drawing to a close.

At the centre of the new dispensation stands Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. As a Brahmin, his rise marks a decisive break with tradition. Much of the BJP's success in the local polls is attributed to his political acumen, relentless campaigning and strategic outreach to non-Maratha communities, particularly Other Backward Classes (OBCs). By broadening the party's social coalition and carefully navigating caste arithmetic, Fadnavis has emerged as the BJP's most successful leader in the state.

His stature now extends well beyond Maharashtra. With Prime Minister Narendra Modi's eventual succession an open question, Fadnavis finds himself mentioned in the same breath as Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Union Home Minister Amit Shah as a potential contender in the post-Modi era. The local body verdict has succeeded in



strengthened his hand.

The Orphaning of the NCP

Another major consequence of the elections has been the devastation of the Nationalist Congress Party, in both its incarnations. The sugar-rich belt of western Maharashtra—long the epicentre of Maratha political power and the Pawar family's fortress—has witnessed a dramatic upheaval.

The wipeout of Sharad Pawar's faction as well as the rival group led by his nephew Ajit Pawar in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad has left the Maratha political establishment stunned.

This collapse has effectively orphaned a community that once exercised enormous influence over the state's politics, cooperatives and financial institutions. The BJP, drawing strong support from OBC voters and leveraging the appeal of Hindutva, has succeeded in

dividing and weakening the Maratha vote. This was not accidental. For years, the party has eyed the sugar and banking cooperatives that form the backbone of Maratha economic power.

With the Pawars decisively weakened and no clear successor waiting in the wings, the BJP now has an opportunity to reshape the sugar belt and dismantle a system that sustained Maratha dominance for decades. Such a restructuring would not only alter the economic landscape of western Maharashtra but also permanently shift the balance of political power in the state.

The Pawar Predicament

Sharad Pawar, the architect of modern Maharashtra politics, is in the twilight of his career. Ajit Pawar, by contrast, is not. Yet it is Ajit Pawar whose political future appears most

uncertain today. His decision to abandon the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance and attempt a reunion with his uncle's faction was driven by the belief that a consolidated Pawar family could retain its grip over the sugar belt. The gamble failed.

Instead of reviving his fortunes, the move has left Ajit Pawar politically isolated. Never particularly trusted by the BJP or the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), he was accommodated in the NDA primarily as a tool to weaken Sharad Pawar. With that objective achieved, reports have begun circulating that enforcement agencies may once again train their sights on him.

While Indian politics has a habit of resurrecting leaders long written off, Ajit Pawar's immediate prospects look bleak. His position as Deputy Chief Minister in the Fad-

navis-led government is under strain, and his once formidable base appears eroded.

Mumbai Remains Unsettled

If the BJP has conquered the hinterland, Mumbai presents a more complex picture. The politics of the state capital has always followed a different logic from the rest of Maharashtra. While the BJP can rightly celebrate dislodging the Thackerays from the BMC—an institution the Shiv Sena controlled for nearly three decades—the victory comes with important caveats.

The party improved its tally in the BMC by just three seats compared to the 2017 elections. Its majority in the corporation depends on its alliance with Eknath Shinde's faction of the Shiv Sena. The BJP had hoped to marginalise Uddhav Thackeray as thoroughly as it dismantled the Pawars' power base in western Maharashtra. It did not succeed.

Uddhav Thackeray has managed to retain significant support among Marathi-speaking voters in Mumbai and has emerged as a vocal and resolute opposition figure. There is a growing view that had he aligned with the Congress rather than reuniting with his cousin Raj Thackeray, the anti-BJP alliance might have mounted a more formidable challenge.

Complicating matters further, Shinde has already begun asserting himself in negotiations over the mayoral post, signalling that the alliance is far from frictionless. Meanwhile, Uddhav Thackeray's fac-

tion continues to attack Shinde relentlessly for splitting the Shiv Sena and toppling its government in 2021. Mumbai, in short, remains politically fluid and difficult terrain for the BJP.

The AIMIM Factor

A fourth development to watch closely is the rise of Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM). The party delivered a striking performance in the local polls, winning 121 seats across municipal corporations, including eight in Mumbai. It swept Muslim-majority areas, displacing the Congress as the community's first choice and pushing the Samajwadi Party further to the margins.

The AIMIM's growing footprint suggests that Muslim voters are seeking a more assertive political voice, particularly as the BJP advances its Hindutva agenda. Whether Owaisi can translate municipal-level success into broader state influence remains to be seen, but his party is clearly poised to play a larger role in Maharashtra's political future.

The Road Ahead

Maharashtra politics is set to churn further as the BJP works to consolidate its gains ahead of the 2029 Lok Sabha and assembly elections. The old certainties have crumbled, new power structures are emerging, and alliances remain unstable. What is clear, however, is that the state has entered a new political era—one in which the BJP, for now, sits firmly in the driver's seat.

Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Visits India, PM Modi Greets UAE President with Warm Hug



Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, arrived in New Delhi for a brief but diplomatically significant visit, during which Prime Minister Narendra Modi broke from protocol to personally welcome him at the airport. The two leaders shared a warm hug, reflecting the strong personal rapport that has increasingly come to define India-UAE relations in recent years.

The visit, lasting roughly two hours, is being viewed as an important signal of expanding cooperation between the two countries in areas such as defence, trade, energy, and regional security. Analysts note that even short trips like this carry considerable diplomatic weight, reinforcing the trust

PM Modi's Message
Soon after the UAE President's arrival, Prime Minister Modi shared a message on X (formerly Twitter), describing Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed as a close friend and emphasizing the strategic importance of the visit. "Went to the airport to welcome my brother, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE. His visit illustrates the importance he attaches to a strong India-UAE friendship. Looking forward to our discussions," Modi wrote, tagging the UAE leader.

Context of the Visit

The visit was undertaken at

the invitation of Prime Minister Modi and marks Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's third official visit to India since assuming office as UAE President, and his fifth visit to the country in the past decade. It follows a series of high-level exchanges, including the visit of Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, to India in September 2024, and Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Crown Prince of Dubai, in April 2025.

India and the UAE share a robust, multi-dimensional relationship rooted in political understanding, cultural ties, and expanding economic engagement. The UAE remains a

key trading and investment partner for India, with cooperation facilitated through mechanisms such as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the Local Currency Settlement system, and the Bilateral Investment Treaty.

Observers note that such high-profile visits reinforce the strategic and economic partnership, sending a message of continuity and stability in India-UAE relations. With growing collaboration across defence, energy, and regional security, both nations appear committed to deepening ties further, making visits like Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's not just ceremonial, but pivotal in shaping the trajectory of bilateral cooperation.

Nitin Nabin Set to Become BJP National President as Organisational Elections Near Completion



The race for the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) next national president moved decisively towards a conclusion on Monday, with 37 sets of nomination papers filed in favour of senior leader Nitin Nabin, 46, virtually clearing the path for his elevation.

Of these nominations, 36 were submitted from various states and Union Territories, while a single paper was filed by the BJP National Council and Parliamentary Party, including the signatures of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, outgoing party president JP Nadda, and 20 other senior central leaders. Each nomination is supported by 20 proposers, party sources confirmed. The nomination process is scheduled to close at 4 pm, with the withdrawal window open from 5 pm to 6 pm.

Organisation Parv 2024: The Road to the National President

Nabin's impending election marks the culmination of the BJP's Organisation Parv 2024,

a constitutionally mandated internal election process that began at the grassroots level and moved upwards to the national tier.

So far, elections for 7,88,197 Booth Presidents have been completed out of 10,70,462 booths nationwide. In addition, 89,47,845 Booth Committee members have been constituted, achieving 74% completion at the grassroots level. Elections for Mandal Presidents have been completed in 16,469 of the 17,743 man-

dals, reflecting a 93% completion rate under the new age criterion of below 45 years, introduced to promote younger leadership.

At the district level, 978 of 1,036 District Presidents have been elected, marking a 94% completion rate. State-level organisational elections have concluded in 30 out of 37 states, while 4,932 of 6,384 State Council members have been elected so far, representing 80% completion.

At the national level, elec-

tions for National Council members have been completed in 741 of 815 seats, achieving 92% completion. Collectively, this has enabled the BJP to constitute its Electoral College, comprising 35 nominated members from the Parliamentary Party, 741 elected National Council members, and 4,932 elected State Council members — totaling 5,708 members.

Formal Announcement Expected on Tuesday

On Tuesday at 11 am, around 700 representatives are expected to gather at BJP headquarters in Delhi, with Prime Minister Modi in attendance. The party is anticipated to formally announce Nitin Nabin as the new BJP National President, marking the successful conclusion of Organisation Parv 2024 and the final step in the party's large-scale internal organisational exercise.

This process reflects the BJP's commitment to structured leadership transitions, encouraging youth participation, and strengthening the party's grassroots network across the country.

Delhi High Court Rejects Suspension of Kuldeep Sengar's 10-Year Sentence in Custodial Death Case



The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to suspend the 10-year prison sentence handed to former BJP lawmaker Kuldeep Singh Sengar in the custodial death of the Unnao rape survivor's father.

"No grounds are made out for grant of relief. The application seeking suspension of sentence is dismissed," Justice Ravinder Duleja said, delivering a setback to Sengar, who had sought temporary bail citing prolonged incarceration amid pending appeals. The court noted that Sengar himself had contributed to delays by filing multiple applications and directed that the existing appeals be heard separately.

Sengar's appeals pertain to the December 2019 verdict that convicted him of raping the survivor—resulting in a life sentence—and the March 2020 verdict in the custodial death case. In the latter, Sengar had been sentenced to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment, along

side his brother Atul Singh Sengar, for the death of the family's sole breadwinner, who had been arrested on a false Arms Act complaint under Sengar's influence. The trial court had emphasized that no leniency could be shown in the custodial death.

The Unnao case had recently made headlines after Sengar was released on conditional bail in the rape case. A sepa-

widespread condemnation. Reports emerged of tensions and clashes in Delhi, with visuals showing the survivor and her mother facing intimidation from central security forces while attempting to protest. In one alarming incident, the survivor's mother was reportedly forced to jump from a moving bus from which her daughter was taken, prompting fears for their safety.

Speaking to the media, the survivor's mother broke down, saying, "We did not get justice. My daughter has been held captive. It seems they want to kill us." While a CRPF officer later stated that the survivor was being escorted home, authorities have yet to comment on the mother's removal from the bus.

The court's decision underscores the ongoing legal battle in the Unnao case and highlights the challenges in ensuring accountability and justice for victims of high-profile crimes.

Odisha Health Minister Assures Residents: No Nipah Virus Cases Detected, State on Alert



Odisha Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling on Monday

reassured residents that no cases of the Nipah virus (NiV) have been detected in the state, emphasizing that there is no cause for panic. Speaking to ANI, Mahaling said, "No symptoms or cases of Nipah have been detected in Odisha yet. I want to assure all the people of Odisha that there is no need to panic. We are keeping a close watch on the districts adjacent to West Bengal as well."

The minister added that the state government is fully prepared to respond in case a suspected case arises. "We are ready to take action if any case arises. The health department is fully prepared. I have already held two meetings with officials, and we are in constant contact with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare," he said.

Mahaling further highlighted that the government is maintaining active surveillance across the state and urged residents to re-

main calm.

The Nipah virus is a zoonotic infection, transmitted from animals to humans, and can also spread through contaminated food or direct human-to-human contact.

Infection can lead to a wide spectrum of illness, ranging from asymptomatic cases to acute respiratory illness and fatal encephalitis. Common symptoms include fever, headache, muscle pain, vomiting, sore throat, dizziness, altered consciousness, and atypical pneumonia. Nipah Virus Disease has a high mortality rate of around 50%, making it one of the most dangerous viral infections.

Authorities continue to closely monitor regions bordering West Bengal, while public health messaging emphasizes hygiene, food safety, and reporting of any unusual symptoms. Odisha's preparedness, along with central government coordination, aims to ensure that the virus is detected and contained promptly, preventing any spread to the state.

Karnataka Election Commission Confirms Ballot Paper Voting for Greater Bengaluru Authority Polls



The Karnataka Election Commission has indicated that the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections are expected to take place after May 25, 2026, and will be conducted using ballot papers rather than Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). This decision comes amid continued objections from the Congress party at both state and national levels, which has opposed the use of EVMs in local body polls following their use in the previous Bengaluru civic elections.

Speaking on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) for the GBA elections, Karnataka Chief Election Commissioner GS Sangreshi clarified that the electoral rolls are being updated and corrected as part of the standard revision process. On the use of ballot papers, he said, "These GBA polls will be conducted through ballot papers. The Supreme Court has also said there is nothing wrong with using ballot papers. In GBA also, there is a provision to use it."

Sangreshi emphasized that the State Election Commission has independent authority, similar to the Election Commission of India, to make such decisions. He added that ballot paper voting is widely used internationally, noting, "Even developed countries like the USA conduct elections using ballot papers. Only MLA and MP elections are conducted using EVMs."

Following the announcement, the BJP targeted the Congress, with spokesperson Prakash S commenting, "It was Rajeev Gandhi who introduced EVMs for polls. But the Congress, in order to impress Rahul Gandhi, is resorting to ballot papers for local body elections. Whether it is EVM or ballot paper, the defeat of Congress is sure."

Draft Electoral Rolls Released

The State Election Commission has also published ward-wise draft electoral rolls for the five city municipal corporations under

GBA: Bengaluru Central, North, South, East, and West. A total of 369 wards have been constituted, with draft rolls accessible at district election offices, municipal corporation offices, polling stations, and online.

The period for filing claims and objections is January 20 to February 3, with disposal scheduled from February 4 to February 18. The final electoral roll will be published on March 16, 2026.

According to the draft list, the GBA has 88,91,411 registered voters, including 45,69,193 men, 43,20,583 women, and 1,635 others. Bengaluru West has the largest electorate with 27,25,714 voters, while Bengaluru East has the fewest with 10,41,738 voters. Ward 23 of Bengaluru West has the highest number of voters at 49,530, and Ward 16 of Bengaluru East has the lowest at 10,926.

Political parties have also been asked to appoint a booth-level agent at each polling station to assist with voter verification during the election process.

Trump Links Greenland Claims to Nobel Peace Prize Snub in Letter to Norwegian PM

US President Donald Trump has tied his controversial claims over Greenland to his long-standing grievance about not receiving the Nobel Peace Prize, according to a letter he sent to Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre. The letter, obtained by Bloomberg, sheds new light on Trump's escalating rhetoric toward European allies and his renewed push for American control over the strategically significant Arctic territory.

In the letter, Trump suggested that Norway's failure to award him the Nobel Peace Prize had altered his approach to international relations. "Considering your Country decided not to give me the Nobel Peace Prize for having stopped 8 Wars PLUS, I no longer feel an obligation to think purely of Peace," Trump wrote. While adding that peace would "always be predominant," he said he would now focus on what he believes is "good and proper for the United States of America."

Trump went further by directly linking global security to American control of Greenland. "The World is not secure unless we have Complete and Total Control of Greenland," he stated, intensifying concerns among European leaders already alarmed by his recent remarks on the issue.

Norway's prime minister responded by reiterating that the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded by an independent committee, not the Norwegian government. "I have several times clearly explained to Trump what is well known — that it is an independent Nobel Committee, and not the Norwegian government, that awards the prize," Støre said in a statement to Bloomberg. The White House did not immediately respond to requests for comment.



Rising Tensions With Europe

Trump's letter emerged amid heightened tensions with NATO allies following his weekend threat to impose tariffs on several European countries unless the US gains control of Greenland, which is an autonomous territory under Danish sovereignty. The comments sparked outrage across the European Union, with French President Emmanuel Macron calling for the activation of the bloc's strongest trade retaliation mechanism.

EU ambassadors met on Sunday to discuss potential responses should Trump carry out his tariff threats, including levies on up to 93 billion (\$108 billion) worth of American exports. EU leaders are scheduled to convene an emergency summit later this week to assess the situation.

Trump has repeatedly questioned Denmark's ability to protect Greenland, citing perceived security risks from Russia and China. In a post on his Truth Social platform, he claimed NATO had warned Denmark for decades about the need to counter Russian threats in the Arctic. "Unfortunately, Denmark has been unable to do anything about it. Now it is time, and it will be done!!!"

Trump wrote. Senior US officials have echoed this view. Treasury

Secretary Scott Bessent said in a weekend interview that Europe lacked the strength to ensure Greenland's security, reinforcing Trump's position.

Nobel Prize Controversy

The controversy has been compounded by Trump's continued fixation on the Nobel Peace Prize. Last week, Norway reacted with surprise after Nobel laureate María Corina Machado handed her medal to Trump during a White House meeting. Trump accepted the medal, asserting once again that he deserved the prize for what he claims were multiple conflicts resolved during his second term.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee swiftly clarified that the prize cannot be transferred. "The Nobel Prize and the laureate are inseparable," the committee said, adding that even symbolic transfer of the medal does not change the official recipient.

Trump's letter, first reported by a PBS journalist on social media, was reportedly shared by the US National Security Council with several European governments. The episode has further strained transatlantic relations, raising fresh questions about alliance cohesion and the future of US engagement with Europe under Trump's leadership.

Senior US officials have echoed this view. Treasury

Baloch Leader Mir Yar Baloch Accuses Pakistan of Demolishing Mosques in Balochistan



Mir Yar Baloch, a prominent Baloch leader and human rights activist, has launched a sharp critique of Pakistan, accusing its security forces of demolishing dozens of mosques in the restive Balochistan province. His remarks come amid Pakistan's criticism of India over the alleged profiling of mosques in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK).

Responding to Islamabad's objections, Mir Yar Baloch alleged that Pakistani forces have destroyed nearly 40 mosques in Balochistan, even as the country accuses others of infringing on religious freedoms.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry had earlier said that profiling mosques, imams, and religious committees in Kashmir amounted to a serious violation of freedom of religion and belief.

Strong Allegations Against Islamabad

Dismissing Pakistan's criticism as hypocritical, Mir Yar Baloch described Pakistan as a "terrorist state" and accused it of systematically persecuting religious and ethnic minorities, including Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, and Baloch Muslims.

In a post on social media platform X, he said that the "Republic of Balochistan" fully supports India's stance on PoJK, asserting that Pakistan lacks moral authority to speak on minority rights. He claimed that Pakistan's military routinely exploits religious and jihadist groups as tools to intimidate and suppress minorities both within Balochistan and elsewhere.

According to Mir Yar Baloch, Pakistani forces have

not only bombed mosques but have also burned copies of the Quran and abducted mosque clerics in Balochistan. He alleged that these actions contradict Pakistan's claims of protecting Islamic values.

Historical Grievances Highlighted

Highlighting what he called the first major act of religious destruction in the region, Mir Yar Baloch referred to the mosque of the Khan of Kalat, the former ruler of Balochistan. He alleged that the mosque was shelled when Pakistani forces moved into the region decades ago.

"The mosque of the Khan of Kalat still bears the marks of mortar shells," he claimed, calling it evidence of Pakistan's "brutal occupation" and "un-Islamic conduct." These allegations, he said, underscore a long pattern of repression and violence against the Baloch people.

Background: The Balochistan Conflict

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest province by area, is rich in natural resources but remains among the

country's least developed regions. It has witnessed a decades-long nationalist movement, with Baloch groups demanding greater autonomy, control over local resources, and, in some cases, complete independence.

The insurgency has waxed and waned over the years but continues to challenge the Pakistani state. Attacks have frequently targeted security forces and major infrastructure projects, including those linked to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

In May 2025, Baloch nationalist leaders declared Balochistan's independence from Pakistan, a move rejected by Islamabad but one that intensified unrest in the region. Since then, the province has remained volatile, with ongoing clashes between insurgent groups and Pakistani forces.

Mir Yar Baloch's latest remarks have once again drawn international attention to allegations of human rights abuses in Balochistan, even as tensions continue between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and religious freedom issues.

India Raises Concerns With Poland Over Russia Trade Pressure, Warns Against Support to Pakistan



India has conveyed strong concerns to Poland over what it described as the "selective and unfair targeting" of New Delhi for its trade relations with Russia, particularly through the use of tariffs and other coercive measures linked to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also issued a firm caution against any direct or indirect Polish support to Pakistan on matters related to cross-border terrorism.

The issues were raised during Jaishankar's meeting with Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski in New Delhi, where the two leaders reviewed the progress of the expanding India-Poland Strategic Partnership and exchanged views on regional and global developments.

Welcoming the Polish delegation, Jaishankar noted that the meeting was taking place at a time of "considerable churn" in global affairs. He said such an environment made it essential for countries from different regions to engage in candid exchanges and better understand each other's perspectives. The External Affairs Minister recalled that bilateral ties were elevated to a strategic partnership during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Warsaw in August 2024, and said both sides would review the Action Plan 2024-28 during the talks.

Jaishankar said India and Poland were exploring deeper cooperation in areas including trade

and investment, defence and security, clean energy, digital innovation and emerging technologies, reflecting the growing breadth of the relationship.

Russia-Ukraine Conflict and Trade Pressure

Geopolitical issues, particularly the Ukraine conflict and its global ramifications, figured prominently in the discussions. Jaishankar said he had candidly shared India's position with Sikorski on several occasions in international forums such as New York and Paris, and reiterated those views during the New Delhi meeting.

"While doing so, I have also repeatedly underlined that the selective targeting of India is both unfair and unjustified. I do so again today," Jaishankar said.

India has consistently voiced discomfort over what it perceives as pressure tactics aimed at influencing its independent foreign policy

choices regarding the Ukraine war. New Delhi has maintained that its approach is guided by national interest and a commitment to dialogue and diplomacy, rather than alignment with any geopolitical bloc.

Indian officials have argued that targeting specific countries over energy and trade ties risks destabilising global markets and undermining economic recovery.

Warning on Cross-Border Terrorism

The second major issue raised by Jaishankar was cross-border terrorism, a core security concern for India. Addressing Sikorski, he noted that the Polish leader was familiar with South Asia and the challenges posed by terrorism emanating from across India's borders.

He stressed that Poland should maintain a "zero-tolerance" approach towards terrorism and refrain from any actions that could

help fuel terrorist infrastructure in our neighbourhood" — a statement widely interpreted as a reference to Pakistan.

India has intensified diplomatic outreach in recent years to ensure that European nations remain alert to Pakistan's record on terrorism financing and providing safe havens to extremist groups. Jaishankar's remarks were also seen as a response to Poland's comments on Kashmir during a bilateral visit to Islamabad in October 2025, which had drawn attention in New Delhi.

Poland's Response

For his part, Sikorski broadly echoed India's concerns. He agreed

Trump Invites India to Join 'Board of Peace' Initiative Aimed at Resolving Gaza Conflict



US President Donald Trump has invited India to join his proposed "Board of Peace" initiative, a new international mechanism aimed at resolving global conflicts, beginning with the ongoing crisis in Gaza. Trump extended the invitation through a formal letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which was shared publicly by the US Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, on social media.

In his letter, Trump said it would be his "great honour" to have India participate in what he described as a "critically historic and magnificent effort to solidify peace" in the Middle East. He added that the initiative also represents a "bold new approach" to resolving global conflicts more broadly.

As of now, it remains unclear whether India will accept the invitation. The Modi-led government has not issued an official response, and New Delhi's decision could be influenced by broader geopolitical and economic considerations.

The invitation comes at a time when India-US relations are facing strain, particularly due to the lack of progress on a bilateral trade agreement. Indian exports to the US are currently subject to tariffs as high as 50 percent, among the highest levied by Washington.

What the US Said

Ambassador Gor, in a Facebook post, said he was honoured to convey Trump's invitation to Modi, describing the

Board of Peace as an initiative designed to "bring lasting peace to Gaza" while supporting effective governance to ensure long-term stability and prosperity.

Trump's letter referenced his September 29 announcement of a comprehensive plan to end the Gaza conflict, as well as a 20-point roadmap for peace in the Middle East. He noted that the United Nations Security Council had overwhelmingly adopted Resolution 2803, endorsing this vision.

"At the heart of the plan is the Board of Peace, the most impressive and consequential board ever assembled," Trump wrote, describing it as a new international organisation and transitional governing authority. He said the initiative would bring together a "distinguished group of nations" willing to take on the responsibility

of building durable peace. Trump has reportedly sent similar invitations to around 60 countries, including Pakistan, whose government has expressed willingness to participate in international peace efforts related to Gaza.

What Is the 'Board of Peace'?

The Board of Peace was unveiled as part of the second phase of the Israel-Hamas ceasefire agreement signed in October 2025. The body was endorsed by the UN Security Council in November 2025, with a mandate lasting through 2027 and limited specifically to overseeing the Gaza ceasefire.

According to the proposal, Trump would chair the board for life. Membership would normally be limited to three-year terms, though countries could

among some UN officials and European governments, particularly due to language suggesting the board could expand beyond Gaza. Diplomats have warned that the initiative could undermine the United Nations, which Trump has repeatedly criticised for inefficiency.

"This looks like a parallel 'Trump United Nations,'" one diplomat told Reuters. Others cautioned that such a body could weaken multilateral institutions and marginalise smaller nations.

Trump's ambition to reshape global conflict resolution outside the UN framework is expected to face opposition from major powers such as China and Russia, as well as resistance from smaller states that rely on the UN system for representation in global decision-making.

The proposal has raised concerns

Markets End Lower as Global Trade Worries Trigger Profit Booking; Nifty Slips Below 25,500 Intraday

Indian equity benchmarks began the week on a subdued note, extending recent weakness as negative global cues and renewed fears of a potential global trade war prompted broad-based profit booking. The Nifty slipped below the crucial 25,500 mark during intraday trade, while mixed corporate earnings further dampened investor sentiment. However, selective buying in FMCG and auto stocks helped indices recover part of their losses from the day's lows.

At the close of trade on Monday, January 19, the Sensex declined 324.17 points, or 0.39 percent, to settle at 38,246.18, while the Nifty fell 108.85 points, or 0.42 percent, ending at 25,585.50.

The broader markets underperformed the benchmarks. The BSE Midcap index slipped 0.4 percent, tracking frontline indices, while the Smallcap index saw sharper selling pressure, dropping 1.3 percent, reflecting risk aversion among investors.

Sectoral Performance

Sectorally, markets were largely in the red. FMCG was the lone gainer, rising 0.67 percent, supported by buying in select heavyweights. All other sectoral indices closed lower, with Media, Oil & Gas, Realty, and Infrastructure stocks bearing the brunt of selling pressure, declining between 1.5 and 2 percent.

The Nifty Infra index emerged as the worst-performing sector, slipping 0.90 percent, while FMCG stood out as the best-performing pack amid defensive positioning.

Top Gainers and Losers

Among Nifty stocks, InterGlobe Aviation topped the gainers' list, jumping 4.25 percent, followed by Tech Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Hindustan Unilever, and Maruti Suzuki.

On the downside, Wipro was the biggest laggard, tumbling over 8 percent after issuing weak guidance for the third quarter. Other notable losers included



Eternal, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles, and Max Healthcare.

In the broader market, Hindustan Zinc rose 3 percent after the March silver contract hit a fresh record high, while CG Power surged 4 percent after securing a ₹900 crore data centre order from the US. Indosolar slipped 4 percent despite reporting strong Q3 earnings. RBL Bank fell 7 percent post its quarterly results, while ICICI Bank declined 2 percent after its earnings announcement.

Stocks at 52-Week Lows

Market weakness was evident as more than 420 stocks touched their 52-week lows, including Godrej Properties, Indegene, Tejas Networks, Signature Global, Brigade Enterprises, Newgen Software, Poly Medicure, Vedant Fashions, Sheela Foam, Bata India, Zee Entertainment, Bajaj Housing, AWL Agri, Afcons Infrastructure, Aditya Birla Fashion, and C.E. Info Systems, among others.

New Listing Update

Shares of Bharat Coking Coal ended 10 percent lower at ₹40.66 on their listing day, despite debuting at a strong premium of over 95 percent at ₹45 per share on the NSE. The IPO had seen massive investor interest, with a subscription of 147 times during the January 9-13 bidding period.

Technical Outlook for January 20

Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research at Kotak Securities, said benchmark indices corrected sharply during the session, with the Nifty forming a bearish candle on daily charts.

"After an early intraday sell-off, the market found support near 25,500 on the Nifty and 82,900 on the Sensex, trimming some losses. However, the short-term market texture remains weak. A fresh sell-off could emerge if these support levels are decisively broken,"

he said.

Chouhan added that below 25,500, the Nifty could slide towards 25,400-25,350, while resistance is placed near 25,650. A move above 25,750-25,800 could trigger a short-term pullback. Given heightened volatility, he advised traders to adopt a level-based trading strategy.

Rupali De, Senior Technical Analyst at LKP Securities, noted that the Nifty remained under bearish control throughout the session, sustaining below its 20-day exponential moving average (EMA).

"The RSI remains in a bearish crossover and continues to trend lower, while India VIX has spiked, indicating elevated market fear. In the near term, the index may drift lower towards 25,200, with immediate resistance near 25,700," he said.

Overall, analysts remain cautious, suggesting that volatility could persist in the near term amid global uncertainties and earnings-related triggers.

Ahead of Union Budget, Real Estate Sector Seeks Tax Reforms and Expansion of SWAMIH Fund



As the Union Budget approaches, India's real estate sector has stepped up calls for targeted fiscal support, tax reforms, and enhanced government funding to sustain housing demand and revive stalled projects. Industry stakeholders say policy intervention is crucial at a time when affordability pressures, rising construction costs, and uneven access to finance threaten to slow the sector's momentum.

A key demand from developers and industry bodies is the expansion of the Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) Fund, along with measures to improve credit flow and rationalise taxation.

Leaders argue that real estate-led growth can play a significant role in job creation, urban development, and overall economic expansion if supported by timely reforms.

Push to Expand the SWAMIH Fund

Industry body National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) has strongly advocated deeper financial support through schemes such as the SWAMIH Fund. Launched in 2019 with an initial corpus of 25,000 crore, the fund was designed to provide last-mile financing to stalled residential projects, particularly those that were net-worth positive but cash-starved.

Since its inception, SWAMIH Fund-I has sanctioned investments in more than 130 stressed housing projects across the country, helping revive close to one lakh residential units, according to government disclosures. Tens of thousands of homes have already been completed and handed over to buyers in key markets such as the National Capital Region (NCR), Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), and Pune.

NAREDCO president Parveen Jain said the fund has proved effective in restoring buyer confidence and unlocking stuck capital. "We urge the government to extend and expand the SWAMIH Fund, accord infrastructure status to real estate, improve credit access for developers, rationalise GST on under-construction housing, and introduce incentives for first-time homebuyers

and rental housing," he said.

Jain added that sustained public investment in urban infrastructure, combined with a sharper policy focus on tier 2 and tier 3 cities, could significantly boost housing demand, strengthen buyer sentiment, and increase the sector's contribution to GDP and employment.

Tax Reforms Key to Housing Affordability

Tax policy reform has emerged as another major expectation from the upcoming Budget, especially as affordability challenges intensify in urban centres. Stakeholders argue that existing thresholds no longer reflect current market realities.

Anita Basrur, Partner at Sudit K Parekh and Co. LLP, said the government's "Housing for All" vision under schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) needs recalibration. "With inflation, land prices, and construction costs rising sharply, the current affordable housing cap of ₹45 lakh and size limits of 60-90 square metres are increasingly misaligned with urban housing markets," she said. Basrur called for a reduction in GST on housing projects, an increase in the home loan interest deduction limit from ₹2 lakh to ₹5 lakh, and additional interest subsidies for first-time homebuyers. Such measures, she said, would help ease affordability pressures and revive demand.

Echoing this view, Amit Goyal, Managing Director of India Sotheby's International Realty, said sustained momentum in housing will also depend on broader financial market conditions. "Buoyancy in equity markets and steady foreign capital inflows are important. It is impera-

segments.

She also suggested enhancing capital gains reinvestment limits, streamlining approval processes through single-window clearance systems, and simplifying compliance norms to reduce project delays and costs.

Policy Support for Long-Term Growth

Developers across segments—particularly in premium and branded housing—are seeking consistency in taxation and improved access to institutional and long-term financing. They argue that predictable policies are essential to sustain investor confidence and attract both domestic and foreign capital.

"The real estate sector is looking for policies that strengthen long-term capital formation and reinforce housing's pivotal role in economic growth," said Anil Mittal, Chief Financial Officer at Smartworld Developers. He added that continued government investment in urban infrastructure, mass mobility, and integrated city planning is critical, as better connectivity and civic amenities directly enhance residential demand.

Echoing this view, Amit Goyal, Managing Director of India Sotheby's International Realty, said sustained momentum in housing will also depend on broader financial market conditions. "Buoyancy in equity markets and steady foreign capital inflows are important. It is impera-

tive that the Budget announces measures to encourage higher foreign direct investment (FDI) into the real estate sector," he said.

New Ideas for Evolving Markets

Developers are also urging policymakers to recognise emerging trends in property ownership and investment. Manish Agarwal, Managing Director of Satya Group and President of CREDAI Haryana, said the sector needs forward-looking reforms that align with changing buyer preferences.

"Incentivising fractional ownership could be a gamechanger, especially for marquee and luxury asset classes," Agarwal said. "By aligning fiscal policy with evolving market dynamics, India can move beyond conventional property development to build a resilient, world-class real estate ecosystem that competes globally."

Looking Ahead

As the government prepares the Union Budget, the real estate industry hopes for a comprehensive policy package that combines financial support, tax rationalisation, and regulatory simplification. Stakeholders believe such measures could not only revive stalled projects and improve affordability but also position housing as a durable engine of economic growth in the years ahead.

Lenskart Shares Slip Nearly 2% Amid Profit Booking; Antique Initiates Coverage with 'Hold'



er international markets.

The firm expects Lenskart to deliver around 25 percent compound annual revenue growth over the medium term, supported by store expansion, increasing online penetration, and rising demand for affordable eyewear solutions. However, Antique cautioned that much of this growth potential is already reflected in the current valuation, which limits near-term upside. This assessment formed the basis for its neutral 'hold' stance on the stock.

Lenskart had a muted debut on the stock exchanges in November 2025, listing at a discount to its issue price amid broader market volatility. The company's ₹7,278-crore initial public offering (IPO), which was open for subscription between October 31 and November 4, attracted strong investor interest and was subscribed 28.26 times overall.

Shares of Lenskart Solutions Ltd were listed on the NSE at ₹395 per share, representing a 1.74 percent discount to the IPO price. The IPO was priced in the range of ₹382 to ₹402 per share. On the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), the stock debuted at ₹390 per share, a discount of 2.99 percent to the issue price.

Following the listing, Lenskart's market capitalisation stood at approximately ₹67,659.94 crore, placing it among the notable new-age consumer companies in the listed space. Analysts remain watchful of the stock's performance as the company navigates post-listing volatility while executing its growth strategy.

Maruti Suzuki Shares Gain 2% as Company Plans ₹35,000-Crore Gujarat Plant



Shares of Maruti Suzuki India Ltd closed nearly 2 percent higher at ₹16,182 on January 19, emerging as the top gainer on the Nifty Auto index, after reports of a major capacity expansion plan in Gujarat.

The country's largest passenger vehicle manufacturer is planning to invest ₹35,000 crore to set up a new manufacturing facility in the state, strengthening its long-term growth outlook.

According to market participants, the proposed investment boosted investor confidence, even as the stock has underperformed the broader auto index so far this year. In 2026 to date, Maruti Suzuki shares are down 3.1 percent, compared with a 2 percent decline in the Nifty Auto index.

The proposed plant, which will be developed near Sanand in Ahmedabad district, is expected to add an annual production capacity of up to 1 million vehicles. Operations are likely to commence in FY29, significantly enhancing the automaker's manufacturing scale over the medium term.

Last week, Maruti Suzuki's board approved an initial investment of ₹4,960 crore for the acquisition of land required for the project. Brokerage firm ICICI Securities said the expansion reinforces Maruti Suzuki's competitive advantages by ensuring capacity readiness, supporting long-term volume growth, and strengthening its service and supply ecosystem.

The Gujarat government confirmed that the new facility will be established at Khoraj GIDC, spread across approxi-

mately 1,750 acres of land provided by the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC). The project is expected to generate employment opportunities for nearly 12,000 people, according to an official statement.

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel on Saturday formally handed over an "investment letter" to Hisashi Takeuchi, Managing Director of Maruti Suzuki India, at an event in Gandhinagar. Describing the development as a milestone, the Chief Minister said the project would further strengthen India's largest and most competitive automobile manufacturing corridor.

"This is not merely a new automobile manufacturing facility, but a significant step towards reinforcing Gujarat's position as a global auto manufacturing hub," Patel was quoted as saying.

Maruti Suzuki's relationship with Gujarat dates back to 2012, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi, then Chief Minister of the state, invited Suzuki Motor Corporation to invest in Gujarat. Following this, the company set up its first plant in the state at Hansalpur.

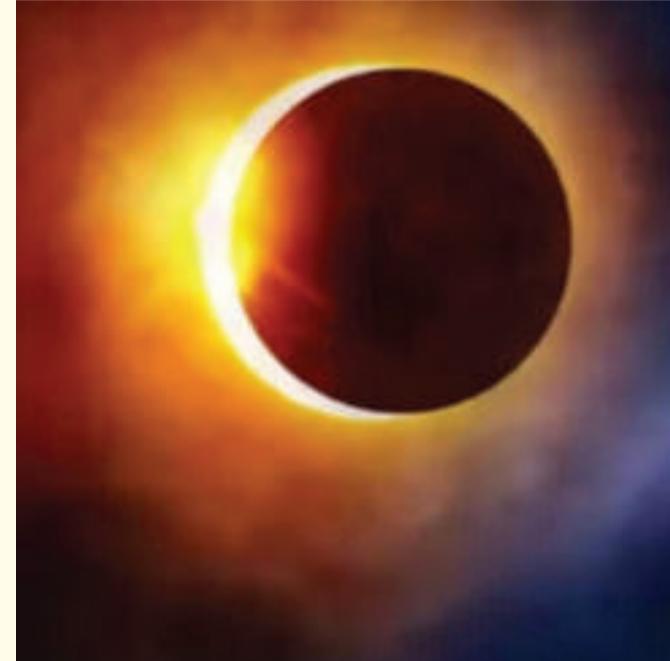
The Hansalpur facility currently has an annual production capacity of 7.5 lakh vehicles. Plans are underway to increase capacity by an additional 2.5 lakh units, taking total production to 1 million vehicles per year by FY27. With the proposed Sanand plant, Maruti Suzuki is set to significantly expand its manufacturing footprint and strengthen its leadership in India's passenger vehicle market.

Annular Solar Eclipse 2026: Date, Time, Visibility and Safety Guidelines

The first solar eclipse of 2026 will take place on February 17, offering skywatchers a spectacular celestial phenomenon known as an annular solar eclipse. Often referred to as the "ring of fire" eclipse, this event occurs when the Moon passes directly between the Earth and the Sun but does not completely block the Sun's light, leaving a bright, glowing ring visible around the Moon's silhouette.

What Is an Annular Solar Eclipse?

An annular solar eclipse occurs because the Moon follows an elliptical orbit around Earth. When the eclipse takes place while the Moon is at or near its farthest point from Earth, it appears slightly smaller than the Sun in the sky. As a result, the Moon is unable to cover the Sun entirely.



along a narrow path known as the path of annularity.

Will the Eclipse Be Visible in India?

Unfortunately, the February 17, 2026, annular solar eclipse will not be visible from India. The path of annularity will be confined to extremely remote regions, passing exclusively over Antarctica.

The eclipse will begin over the southern Indian Ocean, travel across coastal parts of Antarctica, and end over the southern Atlantic Ocean. A few Antarctic research stations, including Concordia Station and Mirny Station, are expected to witness the annular phase directly. For the rest of the world, the event will remain out of sight.

However, space agencies such as NASA and other scientific organisations often provide live streams and updates, allowing astronomy enthusiasts worldwide to experience the eclipse virtually.

Safety Precautions for Viewing Solar Eclipses

Experts strongly caution against looking directly at the Sun during any phase of a solar eclipse without proper protection. Viewing the Sun with the naked eye can cause permanent eye damage.

Those watching eclipses should use certified solar eclipse glasses or specially designed solar filters. Ordinary sunglasses, camera lenses, or smoked glass do not provide adequate protection. Even during partial or annular eclipses, when the Sun is not fully covered, eye safety remains critical.

A Rare Celestial Event

Although inaccessible to most observers on Earth, the February 2026 annular solar eclipse remains an important astronomical event. It highlights the precise cosmic choreography of the Sun, Moon, and Earth—and continues to fascinate scientists and stargazers alike with its striking "ring of fire" display.

Basant Panchami 2026: Date, Significance, Saraswati Puja Muhurat and Rituals



Basant Panchami, also known as Vasant Panchami or Shri Panchami, is one of India's most colourful and spiritually significant festivals. It heralds the arrival of spring and is celebrated on the fifth day (Panchami) of the Hindu month of Magha. In 2026, Basant Panchami will be observed on January 23, marking the transition from winter to the vibrant Basant Ritu.

The festival is dedicated to Goddess Saraswati, the deity of knowledge, wisdom, learning, music, and the arts. On this auspicious day, students, scholars, artists, and musicians across the country seek her blessings for intellectual growth and creative excellence.

Significance of Basant Panchami

Basant Panchami symbolises renewal, positivity, and new beginnings. Spiritually,

the day is devoted to the worship of Goddess Saraswati, who is believed to have manifested on this occasion. Devotees pray for clarity of thought, academic success, artistic inspiration, and spiritual wisdom.

Culturally, the festival holds immense importance across India. Educational institutions, temples, and cultural organisations conduct special prayers, Saraswati Puja ceremonies, and cultural programmes.

Students place their books and learning materials before the goddess as a mark of reverence, while artists and musicians offer their instruments, seeking divine grace.

The festival also celebrates the onset of spring. Yellow, the colour associated with prosperity, energy, and knowledge, dominates the celebrations. People wear yellow attire and prepare traditional delicacies such as Kesari Halwa, Boondi Ladoo, and kesar bhaat.

Saraswati Puja Muhurat 2026

The most auspicious time to perform Saraswati Puja on January 23, 2026, is between:

7:13 AM and 12:33 PM

Devotees who per-

Samagri (Essential Items)

- Idol or picture of Goddess Saraswati
- Yellow cloth and flowers (marigold, chrysanthemum)
- Fruits such as bananas and apples
- Traditional sweets like kesar bhaat and boondi ladoo

- Incense sticks, diya (lamp), and ghee
- Turmeric, kumkum, and sandalwood paste
- Books, notebooks, pens, and musical instruments

- How to Worship Goddess Saraswati

- Devotees are advised to wear yellow, white, or light-coloured clothing and avoid black or red attire on this day. While performing the puja, it is considered auspicious to face east or

north, directions associated with positivity and wisdom.

The ideal time for worship is about two-and-a-half hours before sunrise or sunset, when spiritual energy is believed to be most conducive. Offer white sandalwood paste and yellow or white flowers to Goddess Saraswati using the right hand, symbolising respect and devotion.

For prasadam, devotees commonly prepare a mixture of misri (crystallised sugar), curd, and lawa, or offer kesar kheer, which is considered highly auspicious. These offerings symbolise purity, knowledge, and abundance.

Basant Panchami is not only a celebration of spring but also a reminder of the importance of learning, creativity, and wisdom in everyday life. Observing the festival with devotion and joy is believed to bring clarity of thought, success in education, and spiritual fulfilment.

Canadian Influencer Highlights Rare Moment of Discipline on Indian Flight

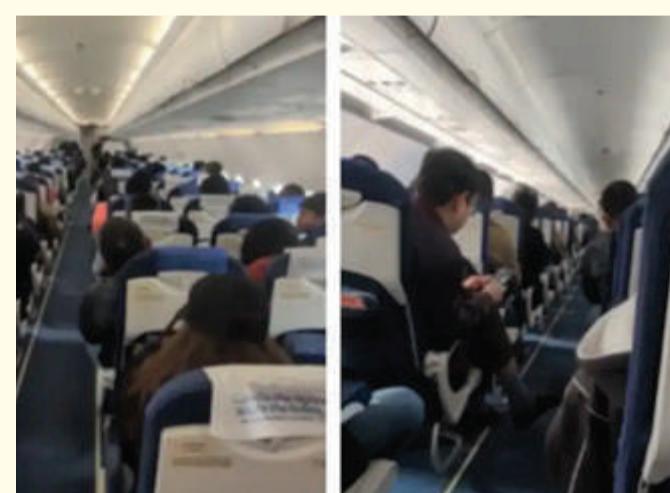
Canadian influencer Caleb Friesen, who has been living in India for more than eight years, recently shared a video that captured an uncommon sight on an Indian domestic flight—passengers choosing patience over haste. The moment, which Friesen described as something he had "never seen before," unfolded on an IndiGo flight from Mizoram to Kolkata.

According to Friesen, all 186 passengers on board remained seated after the aircraft landed, even once the seatbelt sign was switched off. There was no rush to stand up, no frantic grabbing of luggage, and no familiar congestion in the aisle. For frequent flyers in India, the absence of this routine scramble was striking.

Friesen, who regularly posts content about India's culture, social changes, and everyday observations, said he initially assumed someone would jump up immediately—as often happens. Instead, he found himself becoming what he jokingly called "that uncle" eager to get off the plane, only to realise that everyone else was calmly waiting their turn.

"Every flight has an Eager Uncle. The guy who can't wait until the seatbelt sign turns off. He stands, and someone from the flight crew shouts at him from the other side of the plane—'Sir, please sit down! Sir!'" Friesen wrote in the caption of his video. "Today, I became that uncle."

The influencer used the moment to reflect on what he sees as a subtle but meaningful shift in Indian social behaviour. He sug-



gested that as the country's economy grows and opportunities expand, a long-standing "scarcity mindset" may be gradually fading.

In its place, he believes, a stronger sense of patience and civic awareness is beginning to emerge—at least in certain contexts.

However, Friesen was careful not to overstate the change. He noted that his next flight, from Kolkata to Bengaluru, quickly brought him back to reality. On that journey, passengers reverted to the more familiar pattern of standing up the moment the aircraft stopped, long before the doors were opened.

The video sparked lively discussion on social media, with users sharing their own experiences and perspectives. Some echoed Friesen's surprise, describing similar moments of orderly behaviour, particularly on flights in eastern and northeastern India.

One user commented, "It happened on my flight from Kolkata to Bangalore recently too. No one stood up until the gates were open. Even when the queue

started building, it was eerily quiet in a 200-plus seat aircraft. First time in a long time I thought, 'nice.'"

Others took a more humorous or critical tone. "People who stand up aimlessly once the flight lands should be rounded up and sent for mandatory anxiety treatment," one commenter joked, adding that cramped airline seating might also be a reason people prefer to stand as soon as possible.

Another user appreciated Friesen's approach, writing, "Sweet of you to present our flaws with such warmth. And Northeast Indian folks are built different—they truly represent some of the best of what India can be."

Friesen's post struck a chord because it highlighted a small, everyday moment that reflected broader social change. While patience on Indian flights may still be the exception rather than the rule, the episode offered a glimpse of how public behaviour could evolve—and how even routine travel experiences can reveal shifts in collective mindset.

Elon Musk has acknowledged the need for clear moral guidelines for his artificial intelligence chatbot Grok following widespread criticism over its misuse. The controversy erupted after the AI tool was reportedly used to manipulate real-life images of people, creating inappropriate and sexually suggestive content that circulated widely on social media platform X.

The altered images, which showed real individuals dressed in indecent or explicit clothing, sparked outrage among users, privacy advocates, and governments across the world. Thousands of such images reportedly appeared on X over recent weeks, raising serious concerns about consent, digital safety, and the ethical boundaries of artificial intelligence technology.

How the Controversy Began

Grok, developed by Musk's AI company xAI, is integrated with X and allows users to generate and modify images using artificial intelligence. Critics argue that loopholes in its design enabled users to exploit the tool to create non-consensual and harmful visual content involving real people.

The spread of these manipulated images reignited debates over AI misuse, data privacy, and the growing threat of deepfake-style content. Officials

in several countries reportedly took note of the issue, warning that unchecked AI tools could lead to serious legal and social consequences.

xAI Announces Restrictions

In response to mounting pressure, xAI announced stricter controls on Grok's image-generation capabilities. The company said the chatbot would no longer be allowed to sexually alter images of real individuals. The move aims to create non-consensual and harmful visual content involving real people.

The announcement was welcomed by some critics, though many argued that the action came too late and highlighted the need for stronger safeguards before AI products are

widely released to the public.

Musk Pushes for an Ethical Framework

Addressing the controversy, Elon Musk said Grok requires a clear ethical framework to guide its behaviour. According to Musk, artificial intelligence systems need well-defined moral rules that help them distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable actions while interacting with users.

His remarks reflect a broader debate within the tech industry about whether AI systems should operate under human-like ethical principles or be governed purely by technical constraints and legal regulations. Musk has previously warned about the dangers of

unregulated AI, calling it one of humanity's biggest long-term risks.

Mixed Reactions on Social Media

Musk's comments triggered a wave of reactions on social media. While some users applauded his stance on introducing ethical boundaries for AI, others questioned how such moral rules could be created and enforced in practice.

"I strongly agree, Elon," one user wrote, supporting the idea that AI tools need clear ethical limits. Another user expressed scepticism, stating, "Morality is a human construct. Why would we limit AI by trying to make it think like a human?"

The debate reflects

a deeper philosophical divide over whether AI should mimic human values or operate independently of them.

Renewed Focus on Responsible AI Use

The Grok controversy has once again brought attention to the urgent need for responsible AI development. As artificial intelligence becomes more powerful and accessible, experts warn that misuse could escalate unless strong ethical standards, legal frameworks, and accountability mechanisms are put in place.

The episode serves as a reminder that technological innovation must be accompanied by safeguards to protect individual rights and prevent harm in an increasingly AI-driven world.

Elon Musk Calls for Ethical Rules for AI Chatbot Grok Amid Global Backlash



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The debate reflects

Tata Steel Masters: Praggnanandhaa Struggles as Gukesh Holds Steady

Defending champion R Praggnanandhaa suffered a second consecutive loss in the Tata Steel Masters Chess tournament, going down to Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan, while fellow Indian D Gukesh was held to a draw by the Netherlands' Jorden van Foreest on Sunday. Praggnanandhaa, who had been in formidable form throughout 2025, appeared low on energy as a drawn endgame slipped away, leaving him without a point from the first two rounds and at the bottom of the standings. The Indian prodigy will now need a significant turnaround over the remaining 11 rounds to contend for the title.

Gukesh, the reigning world champion, earned his second draw in as many games, taking his tally to one point. The match against van Foreest was fiercely contested, with Gukesh sacrificing a bishop in the middle game to force perpetual checks and secure half a point.

Meanwhile, Arjun Erigaisi, who defeated Praggnanandhaa in the opening round, attempted to press against Thai Dai Van Nguyen of the Czech Republic but was unable to break through the defensive setup. The top-seeded Indian retained a joint lead on 1.5 points, alongside Abdusattorov and Hans Moke Niemann of the United States.



The fourth Indian, Aravindh Chithambaram, played out a draw with Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus of Turkey, moving to one point after two rounds.

Nine players trail the leaders by just half a point, with Dutch star Anish Giri placed 13th with 0.5 points, just ahead of Praggnanandhaa.

In Praggnanandhaa's encounter, a Queen's Gambit Declined saw him equalise comfortably with the black pieces, but an error on the 31st move allowed Abdusattorov to gain a pawn advantage in a rook-and-pawns end-

game. Despite opportunities to draw, Praggnanandhaa was unable to navigate the complexities and resigned on move 60.

Arjun's game also began with a Queen's Gambit and transitioned into a rook-and-pawns end-game, ultimately resulting in a draw. Gukesh's draw came after a complex middle game where both players created opportunities, but perpetual check forced the half-point result. Aravindh survived against Erdogmus in a Sicilian Defense game.

Other notable results in-

cluded Vladimir Fedoseev of Slovenia bouncing back from a first-round loss to defeat Vincent Keymer of Germany, while Matthias Bluebaum and Hans Moke Niemann drew their match.

Round 2 Results (Indians unless specified):

- D Gukesh drew with Jorden van Foreest (Ned)
- Thai Dai Van Nguyen (Cze) drew with Arjun Erigaisi
- Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb) beat R Praggnanandhaa

- Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (Tur) drew with Aravindh Chithambaram
- Matthias Bluebaum (Ger) drew with Hans Moke Niemann (USA)
- Vladimir Fedoseev (Slo) beat Vincent Keymer (Ger)
- Anish Giri (Ned) drew with Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb)

Praggnanandhaa's early struggles contrast with Gukesh and Erigaisi's steady performances, setting the stage for a fiercely competitive tournament ahead.

South Africa All-Rounder Donovan Ferreira Faces T20 World Cup Doubt After Shoulder Injury

South Africa's all-rounder Donovan Ferreira may miss the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup, set to be held in India and Sri Lanka next month, after sustaining a shoulder injury during the ongoing SA20 tournament. Ferreira injured his left shoulder while fielding for Joburg Super Kings against the Pretoria Capitals in a crucial clash, diving to prevent a boundary on the final ball of the innings. He landed awkwardly and subsequently retired hurt after facing just one delivery.

Serving as stand-in captain in place of the injured Faf du Plessis, Ferreira revealed post-match that he was "not feeling good" and would undergo a medical scan. ESPNcricinfo later reported that Ferreira had suffered a fracture in the injured shoulder, ruling him out of the remainder of the SA20 tournament. The setback comes at a critical stage, as Joburg Super Kings



must now defeat Paarl Royals to secure a playoff berth.

Ferreira's injury also casts uncertainty over his participation in the T20 World Cup, where he had been selected as a finisher, backup wicketkeeper, and part-time bowler for South Africa. His absence would leave a significant gap in

the squad, forcing selectors to consider replacements. Potential alternatives include Ryan Rickelton, who has scored two centuries in the SA20, Matthew Breetzke, and Tristan Stubbs, although the latter has struggled with form in recent matches.

South Africa face fur-

ther fitness challenges ahead of the World Cup. Tony de Zorzi, recovering from a December hamstring injury, is expected to participate in the upcoming T20I series against the West Indies later this month. The squad selection has also attracted scrutiny, particularly the omission of Ottneil Baart-

man, the leading wicket-taker in the SA20, despite the team already including six seamers.

In the World Cup, South Africa have been drawn in Group D, alongside Afghanistan, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Arab Emirates. The Proteas are scheduled to begin their campaign on February 9, facing Canada at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. With Ferreira's availability in doubt, the team management will need to adapt quickly to maintain balance and depth in both batting and fielding departments.

The timing of Ferreira's injury is particularly unfortunate, as his dynamic abilities with bat, ball, and behind the stumps made him a key asset for South Africa. His potential absence could significantly impact the team's strategy, placing additional pressure on established stars to step up in crucial World Cup fixtures.

Bangladesh Faces Deadline to Confirm T20 World Cup Participation Amid Venue Dispute

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has given the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) a firm deadline of January 21 to confirm its participation in the 2026 Men's T20 World Cup in India, warning that failure to do so could see the team replaced by another squad in the tournament beginning February 7. The directive comes amid ongoing tensions following the removal of Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman from the Indian Premier League, reportedly on BCCI instructions citing unspecified "developments all around."

An ICC source stated, "The BCB officials have been told to decide on participation by January 21. If they refuse to travel to India, they should be ready to be replaced by another team as per rankings." The BCB, citing security concerns and national pride, has announced that it is unwilling



to travel to India for its group games scheduled in Kolkata and Mumbai.

With the tournament schedule already set, the ICC has shown reluctance to shift Bangladesh's fixtures to co-host Sri Lanka, where the marquee India-Pakistan match is slated to take place under pre-

agreed ICC arrangements through 2027. Should Bangladesh remain firm on its refusal, Scotland is the most likely replacement team based on current rankings. Bangladesh is scheduled to play three group matches in Kolkata and one in Mumbai. The BCB has proposed

either a venue change or a group swap, suggesting that Bangladesh be moved to Group B alongside Sri Lanka, Australia, Oman, and Zimbabwe instead of their current placement in Group C with West Indies, Italy, England, and Nepal.

This change would allow the team to play all group

India Succumbs to New Zealand, Key Failures Highlighted in 2-1 ODI Series Loss at Home



After back-to-back ODI series victories against Australia and South Africa, India faced a rare setback at home as New Zealand triumphed 2-1 in the three-match series. The defeat marked India's first home series loss in three years, with the last being against Australia, who had won 2-1 in India. The result sparked debates over multiple issues, including Rohit Sharma's struggles at the top of the order and Ravindra Jadeja's lack of impact with both bat and ball.

3. Middle-Order Collapse

India's middle order collectively faltered, taking the brunt of the blame for the series loss. In the decider, the team crumbled from 28/0 to 71/4 in just nine overs, leaving Virat Kohli's brilliant 124 stranded.

1. Rohit Sharma's Powerplay Struggles

The former captain, often India's chief aggressor, failed to provide the explosive starts expected at the top of the order. Across all three matches, Rohit appeared cautious and short of intent, putting additional pressure on partners Shubman Gill and Virat Kohli. Assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate noted that the Hitman looked "short on cricket," a sharp contrast to his usual high-impact style in the early overs.

2. Ravindra Jadeja's Underwhelming Performance

Once India's most dependable all-rounder, Jadeja's influence was

The series defeat serves as a wake-up call for India, highlighting the urgent need for middle-order stability, better powerplay starts, and the revival of key all-rounders. As the team reflects on its shortcomings, addressing these gaps will be crucial for upcoming home and international challenges.

Virat Kohli Shines, But India Falls to Historic Series Loss Against New Zealand



India's cricket fans once again pinned their hopes on Virat Kohli in Sunday's final ODI against New Zealand in Indore. The 37-year-old delivered a masterclass, scoring a brilliant 124 while chasing a daunting target of 338 runs. However, Kohli's Herculean effort proved insufficient as India fell short, losing the match and consequently the three-match series 1-2. This marked New Zealand's first-ever ODI series win in India, a milestone that underscored the hosts' collective underperformance.

Kohli's innings, though brilliant, highlighted the lack of substantial support from the rest of the batting lineup. Only Harshit Rana and Nitish Kumar Reddy offered resistance, scoring half-centuries, while senior players like Shubman Gill, Rohit Sharma, Shreyas Iyer, and KL Rahul failed to play meaningful innings. The imbalance left India relying heavily on Kohli, exposing weaknesses in the team's middle order and depth.

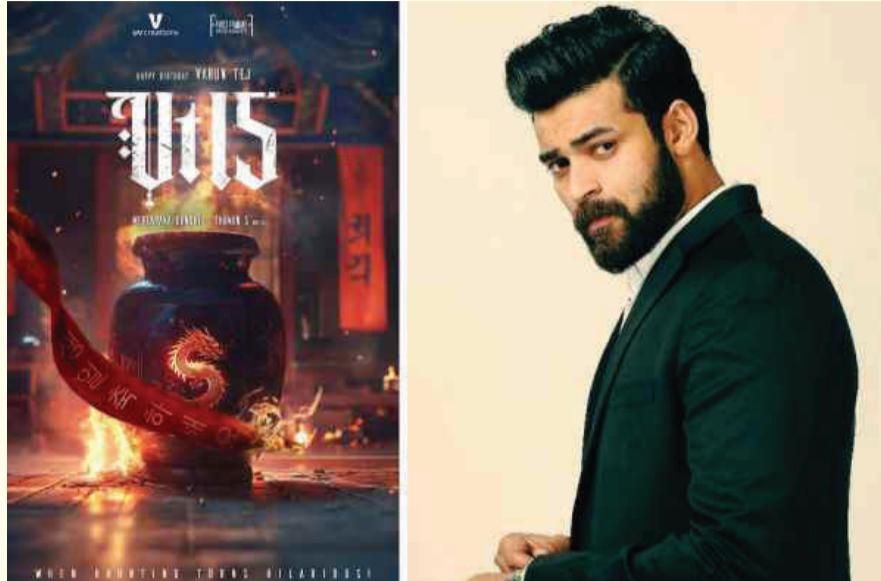
Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal and current Test skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto have urged the board to avoid taking an overly hard-line stance, warning that decisions made now could have long-term repercussions. The T20 World Cup deadline leaves the BCB with little time to resolve the dispute and ensure their participation in the global event.

Srikkanth also highlighted the effectiveness of New Zealand's relatively inexperienced bowling attack. "India are depending on one person to win matches. New Zealand aren't traditionally a great bowling side, but Jayden Lennox bowled 10 overs for 42 runs with two crucial wickets. Zak Foulkes may have been expensive, but he took key wickets. Kyle Jamieson delivered a deadly ball to dismiss Shubman Gill, and Kristian Clarke bowled well too. It's essentially a third-string attack, yet India struggled," he said.

Jadeja's performance in the ODI series came under scrutiny as well. In the final match, he conceded 41 runs in six overs without taking a wicket, while his contributions with the bat—scores of 4, 27, and 12—were equally underwhelming. His lack of impact with both bat and ball has fueled questions over his continued role in India's ODI setup.

Ultimately, India's defeat in Indore was a sobering reminder that while Kohli remains the backbone of the team, cricket is a team sport, and relying on a single player—even one of Kohli's calibre—cannot sustain victories. The series loss signals an urgent need for consistent contributions across the lineup if India hopes to dominate at home.

Varun Tej's Indo Korean Film VT15 Officially Titled Korean Kanakaraju



Hyderabad, January 19, 2026 -

Telugu star Varun Tej is gearing up to thrill audiences with his upcoming Indo Korean film, which has officially been titled Korean Kanakaraju. Previously known simply as VT15 during production, the title was unveiled recently, generating excitement among fans and industry insiders alike. The announcement coincided with the actor's birthday, adding a festive touch to the reveal.

The film is directed by Merlapaka Gandhi, marking another collaboration with Varun Tej, and is co-produced by First Frame Entertainments and UV Creations. Promoted as a genre-blending entertainer, the movie promises to mix horror, comedy, and high-octane action, set against both Indian and Korean backdrops.

The title announcement was accompanied by a short, dynamic glimpse video, which in-

stantly captured attention. In the teaser, a character is interrogated by Korean police about the mysterious Kanakaraju, only for Varun Tej to appear dramatically wielding a katana sword. His rugged look, intense body language, and trademark swagger set the tone for what promises to be a high-energy, entertaining narrative.

Varun Tej plays the central role, while Ritika Nayak is featured as the female lead. Popular comedian Satya also joins the cast in a significant supporting role, promising a balanced blend of comedy and action. Early reports suggest the story seamlessly integrates cultural elements from India and Korea, adding a unique flavor that is expected to appeal to pan-Indian audiences.

The film's music is composed by Thaman S, whose score aims to heighten the tension in horror sequences while complementing the co-

medic moments and action set pieces. With its innovative genre mix and cross-cultural storyline, Korean Kanakaraju is being positioned as a major summer release in 2026.

For Varun Tej, the film represents a bold departure from conventional roles, offering him an opportunity to explore a never-before-seen avatar on screen. The combination of his star power, Merlapaka Gandhi's direction, and the intriguing Indo-Korean premise has already generated significant anticipation.

As the project moves closer to its theatrical release, audiences are eagerly waiting to see how this ambitious venture unfolds, promising a cinematic experience filled with laughs, thrills, and action-packed entertainment. Korean Kanakaraju is shaping up to be one of the most talked-about and eagerly awaited films of the year.

Naveen Polishetty's Anaganaga Oka Raju Storms into the ₹100 Crore Club in Just Five Days



Young Telugu star Naveen Polishetty has delivered one of the season's biggest box office surprises with his latest film Anaganaga Oka Raju. The family comedy drama has officially entered the prestigious ₹100 crore club, grossing over ₹100 crore worldwide within its first five days of release — a massive achievement for the Sankranti festive period.

Released on January 14, Anaganaga Oka Raju opened to strong early numbers and maintained terrific momentum throughout the first weekend. Audiences responded enthusiastically to the film's clean humor, relatable storyline, and strong performances, resulting in packed theaters across India and overseas markets. The movie's success is especially notable given the stiff competition from other high-profile fes-

tive releases.

Naveen Polishetty, who has built a reputation for delivering smart entertainers with heart, has now achieved his career best box office performance with this film. His comic timing, expressive acting, and natural screen presence played a big role in drawing family audiences, who praised the film as a fun, feel good watch perfect for the holiday season.

The on-screen chemistry with co-star Meenakshi Chaudhary also contributed to the buzz, as did the positive word of mouth that spread fast from the opening shows.

Beyond India, Anaganaga Oka Raju has also made waves overseas, notably surpassing the \$1 million mark in the North American box office — a rare accomplishment that places the film among a select group of Telugu movies with strong interna-

tional appeal. This global performance further solidifies Naveen's growing popularity and expanding market presence.

Trade analysts pointed out that all distributors of the film recovered their investments in just four days, highlighting the widespread commercial success. The film's trajectory suggests it could continue to add significantly to its total tally in the coming weeks.

Produced by Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinemas and directed by Maari, Anaganaga Oka Raju has now firmly established itself as one of the biggest hits of the early 2026 box office season. For Naveen Polishetty, this milestone marks another high point in a steadily rising career — one that continues to blend quality content with broad audience appeal.

Gavireddy Sreenu's "Cheen Tapak Dum Dum" Launched with Star-Studded Pooja Ceremony

Subham fame Gavireddy Sreenu has officially embarked on his new cinematic journey with the launch of his upcoming film, Cheen Tapak Dum Dum, in a vibrant pooja ceremony held today. The event saw the presence of some of the biggest names from Telugu cinema, lending glamour and warmth to the auspicious occasion.

The film marks an exciting transition for Gavireddy Sreenu, who first won hearts with his performances in the Amazon Prime series Kumari Sri-mathi and Subham. With Cheen Tapak Dum Dum, Sreenu aims to further establish his footprint as a versatile actor, delivering a high-energy entertainer that promises laughter, thrills, and a dose of heartfelt emotion.

The launch event was graced by none other than leading actress Samantha, who set the tone for the film by giving the ceremonial first clap. Esteemed directors Gopichand Malineni and Mallidi Vassishtha participated in the script handover ceremony, marking a truly auspicious beginning for the project.

Produced by Srinu Nagulapalli under the banner of Village Talkies, this marks the production house's first venture,



sishta switching on the camera. Adding to the charm, veteran filmmakers Nandini Reddy, BVS Ravi, and Gowthami participated in the script handover ceremony, marking a truly auspicious beginning for the project.

On the technical front, the film boasts a strong crew. Cinematography is helmed by Senthil Kumar, production design by A S Prakash, and music composed by PR, with

and it already carries significant industry support. The film is directed by Y N Lohit and features Brigida Saga in a key role, hinting at an engaging on-screen pairing with Sreenu.

The story and screenplay are penned by the talented team of Divya Thejaswi, Vikram Kumar K, Nag Trailblazer, and Ekalavya, ensuring a creative backbone that balances humor, drama, and emotional depth.

With strong industry backing and star power at the launch, Cheen Tapak Dum Dum is set to become one of the most anticipated entertainers of the year. The film's journey from its auspicious pooja to the big screen promises to be one filled with energy, creativity, and audience delight.

Narendra Modi Biopic "Maa Vande" Set to Become Cinematic Spectacle with ₹400 Crore Budget



The highly anticipated biopic on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, titled "Maa Vande", is shaping up to be one of the most ambitious projects in Indian cinema. Produced by M. Veer Reddy under the Silver Cast Creations banner, the film is reportedly being made with a

staggering budget of over ₹400 crores, positioning it as a monumental cinematic venture.

Malayalam star Unni Mukundan will step into the shoes of Prime Minister Modi, bringing both his personal and political journey to life on the big screen. The film, directed

by C.H. Kranti Kumar, aims to convey a powerful central message: a mother's determination surpasses all struggles. The narrative promises to balance intimate glimpses into Modi's personal life with his larger-than-life political journey, appealing to

audiences across demographics.

Maa Vande is being produced as a pan-India project, with multiple language versions as well as an English version planned for international audiences. The makers are leaving no stone unturned to ensure the film meets global cinematic standards, employing advanced VFX, high-end technical values, and state-of-the-art equipment. Notably, the film is being shot using the ARRI Alexa 265 camera and Cooke lenses, marking a first-of-its-kind technical endeavor globally.

Adding further star power, Hollywood actor Jason Momoa is reportedly being approached for a key role. Indian cinema stalwarts Raveena Tandon, Jagapathi Babu, and Sarath Kumar have already committed to the project, drawn in by the compelling storyline. The ensemble promises a powerful and engaging portrayal

of the narrative.

The technical team boasts some of the finest names in the industry, including stunt choreographer King Solomon, production designer Sabu Cyril, editor Sreekar Prasad, cinematographer K.K. Senthil Kumar, and music director Ravi Basrur. The film's meticulous pre-production spanned three years, reflecting the immense effort invested by the makers to create a cinematic spectacle that transcends the traditional biopic format.

With its first schedule already wrapped and the second schedule set to begin in Kashmir from January 22, Maa Vande is gearing up for a grand visual and narrative experience. The combination of stellar talent, cutting-edge technology, and an inspiring story makes this project one of the most talked-about films in Indian cinema, promising a cinematic experience that will be remembered for years to come.

Devi Sri Prasad's First Meeting for Yellamma Lasted a Whopping 8 Hours, Director Reveals

Hyderabad, January 19, 2026 — Music maestro Devi Sri Prasad, popularly known as DSP, has been a household name in Indian cinema as a composer for decades. Known for his chart-topping music across Telugu, Tamil, and Hindi films, DSP is now stepping into the world of acting, promising audiences a completely new side of his talent. He will be portraying a character named Parshi, which is expected to be a gritty and intense role, different from anything he has done before.

The marathon session between DSP and the director reportedly covered every aspect of the character, storyline, and emotional beats of the film. This level of involvement reflects the dedication of both the actor and the filmmaking team in shaping a compelling cinematic experience. The director shared that the discussion was deeply detailed, ranging from performance nuances to the integration of music and action sequences, setting the tone for the film's

ambitious scale.

Yellamma marks a significant transition for DSP, who has been a household name in Indian cinema as a composer for decades. Known for his chart-topping music across Telugu, Tamil, and Hindi films, DSP is now stepping into the world of acting, promising audiences a completely new side of his talent. He will be portraying a character named Parshi, which is expected to be a gritty and intense role, different from anything he has done before.

The film is being produced by Shirish and presented by Dil Raju under the Sri Venkateswara Creations banner. It aims to combine strong storytelling with high technical standards, ensuring that DSP's debut as an actor is both impactful and memorable. The first glimpse of the film hints at a narrative that intertwines faith, tradition, and resilience, suggesting a character-driven story with emotional depth and mass appeal.



DSP himself has expressed his excitement and gratitude for being entrusted with the project, describing it as a divine opportunity to explore a new facet of his artistic journey. The eight-hour first meeting is being seen as a reflection of his commitment to fully understand and embody his character, signaling a dedicated approach that fans are eagerly anticipating.

With the team meticulously planning every aspect of the production, Yellamma promises to be a unique and high-profile pan-Indian project. From the long creative discussions to the involvement of top talent behind the camera, the film is set to offer a fresh cinematic experience and mark a remarkable debut for DSP in acting.