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# TRUE POINT



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**Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Backs MLA Ganesh's Protest for Cantonment Merger with GHMC**



## T-Hub to Continue Exclusively as Startup and Innovation Hub: Revanth Reddy

Hyderabad, January 24, 2026

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has categorically directed that T-Hub in Hyderabad should continue to function exclusively as a hub for startups and innovation, putting an end to speculations about relocating government offices into the facility. The Chief Minister's decision comes in response to concerns raised by entrepreneurs, startup founders, and industry stakeholders regarding the future of T-Hub.

T-Hub has been established as a flagship institution to promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and technology-driven startups in Telangana. Over the years, it has emerged as a vibrant ecosystem offering incubation, mentorship, funding access, and networking opportunities to early-stage companies. Any move to convert parts of the building for administrative purposes had



triggered apprehensions that the core purpose of the institution could be diluted.

Taking serious note of these concerns, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy held discussions with senior officials and instructed that no government departments should be shifted into the T-Hub premises. He made it clear that the facility must be fully utilised for startups, innovators, and technology enterprises, in line with its

original vision.

The Chief Minister also directed officials to explore alternative government-owned buildings for accommodating departments currently functioning from rented spaces. He stressed that cost-cutting measures should not come at the expense of institutions that play a crucial role in economic growth and employment generation. Revanth Reddy reiterated that strengthening the startup ecosystem is a

key component of the state's development strategy. He stated that T-Hub symbolizes Telangana's commitment to innovation-led growth and global competitiveness. The government, he said, is keen on expanding support systems for startups rather than restricting them.

Industry representatives and startup founders have welcomed the Chief Minister's clear stance, terming it a positive and reassuring signal. Many

noted that uninterrupted access to infrastructure and collaborative spaces is vital for young entrepreneurs, especially in a highly competitive technology landscape.

Officials indicated that the government will further review ways to enhance T-Hub's capacity and outreach, ensuring that more startups from diverse sectors benefit from its facilities. Plans are also being discussed to strengthen partnerships with academic institutions, industry leaders, and global innovation networks.

With this decision, the Telangana government has reaffirmed its focus on fostering entrepreneurship and innovation. By keeping T-Hub dedicated solely to startups, the administration aims to preserve its identity as a catalyst for new ideas, job creation, and sustainable economic growth, reinforcing Hyderabad's position as one of India's leading startup destinations.



**KTR Issues Legal Notices to Bandi Sanjay and Arvind Over Defamatory Remarks**

Hyderabad, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President and former minister K.T. Rama Rao (KTR) has issued legal notices to Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Dharmapuri Arvind, accusing them of making defamatory and baseless allegations against him and his family. The notices, sent through KTR's legal counsel, demand an unconditional public apology within a stipulated time, failing which further legal action will be initiated.

According to sources close to the BRS leadership, the legal notices pertain to statements made by the two BJP leaders during recent public meetings and media interactions. KTR has alleged that the remarks were made with malicious intent and were aimed at damaging his personal reputation as well as his political standing. The notices reportedly state that the allegations are entirely false, unsubstantiated, and designed to mislead the public.

In his communication, KTR has asserted that political criticism should be based on facts and policy differences, and not descend into personal attacks and character assassination. He has warned that spreading unfounded accusations under the guise of political rhetoric amounts to defamation under law and cannot be tolerated. The BRS leader has made it clear that he is prepared to pursue both civil and criminal remedies if the matter is not resolved amicably.

Party sources said that KTR decided to take legal recourse after repeated attempts to counter what he described as "reckless statements" through political channels failed to yield results. They added that the notices seek a formal retraction of the remarks along with a public apology, emphasizing accountability in political discourse.

Reacting to the development, BRS leaders remained silent when its leadership is targeted with false allegations. They accused the BJP leaders of resorting to smear campaigns due to their inability to counter BRS politically in Telangana. The leaders maintained that such legal action sends a strong message against irresponsible statements in public life.

Meanwhile, political observers view the move as an escalation in the ongoing war of words between the BRS and BJP in Telangana. With political tensions already high, the legal notices are expected to add a new dimension to the rivalry between the two parties.

As of now, there has been no official response from Bandi Sanjay Kumar or Dharmapuri Arvind regarding the notices. The coming days are likely to be crucial in determining whether the issue will be settled through an apology or move into a prolonged legal battle.

## Bandi Sanjay Slams Telangana Govt. Over Phone-Tapping Probe

Karimnagar, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and Karimnagar Member of Parliament Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Saturday strongly criticised the Telangana state government, accusing it of deliberately obstructing the investigation into the alleged phone-tapping case. Speaking to the media during an informal interaction, Sanjay alleged that political pressure was being exerted to weaken the probe and protect influential leaders from the previous regime.

Bandi Sanjay said the Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted to probe the alleged illegal surveillance had failed to make meaningful progress despite the availability of substantial evidence. He questioned why arrests had not been made even after statements from officials and witnesses reportedly confirmed large-scale



heavy smoke, but immediately began controlling the fire to prevent it from spreading to nearby shops and buildings. Police personnel and disaster response teams worked in coordination to ensure the area was cordoned off and residents evacuated safely. Reports indicate that several people, including children, may have been inside the building when the fire

would be safely rescued.

Traffic in the busy Nampally area was heavily disrupted as police diverted vehicles to alternate routes to allow unobstructed access for fire trucks and emergency responders. Authorities urged the public to avoid the area to facilitate rescue and firefighting operations. The cause of the fire is still under investigation, but officials suspect that the highly flammable furniture and wooden items stored in the shop contributed to the rapid spread of the blaze. Firefighters have prioritized extinguishing the fire completely while ensuring that no one remains trapped inside the building. Local authorities have praised the quick response of fire personnel and police, noting that their coordinated efforts

prevented the fire from spreading to neighboring structures, potentially averting a much larger disaster. Meanwhile, emergency teams continue to assess the damage to property and ensure the safety of the residents who were temporarily evacuated.

As the situation remains under control, authorities emphasized the importance of fire safety measures for commercial establishments, especially those storing highly combustible materials. The incident highlights the need for strict adherence to safety protocols to prevent such accidents in densely populated areas. Rescue operations and post-fire assessment are ongoing, with the primary focus on ensuring the safety of everyone involved and restoring normalcy to the affected area.

## Permanent Vehicle Registration Now Available at Dealerships: Ponnambal

Hyderabad, January 24 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Friday announced a major citizen-friendly reform in the transport department, stating that from today onwards, permanent vehicle registration will be completed directly at vehicle showrooms and dealerships. With this initiative, new vehicle owners will no longer be required to visit Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) for permanent registration.

The phone-tapping controversy continues to remain a major political flashpoint in Telangana, with opposition parties intensifying pressure on the state government to ensure a transparent and time-bound probe. As allegations and counter-allegations escalate, the case has assumed significant political importance, shaping the narrative ahead of upcoming political developments in the state.



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Ponnam Prabhakar said the transport department has been steadily transitioning towards a fully digital service model. "All types of transport-related services are being brought online. Our objective is to eliminate unnecessary procedures, reduce physical visits to offices, and provide hassle-free services to the people," he stated. The Minister highlighted that Telangana has integrated itself with the national 'Sarathi' platform, which will further streamline driving licence and vehicle-related services. Through this digital integration, citizens can access transport services easily from anywhere, enhancing transparency and efficiency in the system.

He also noted that the transport department has already implemented several progressive policies, including the Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy and the Vehicle Scrapping Policy. These initiatives, he said,

improve overall efficiency. Ponnam Prabhakar urged vehicle dealers to strictly follow the prescribed guidelines while registering vehicles and ensure transparency in the process. He also appealed to the public to cooperate with the department and make effective use of the new digital services being offered. "This government is committed to delivering governance at the doorstep of the people. Transport reforms are a crucial part of that vision," the Minister said, adding that more technology-driven initiatives would be introduced in the coming days to further enhance public convenience.

With the introduction of permanent vehicle registration at showrooms, Telangana has taken another significant step towards citizen-centric governance, reinforcing its focus on ease of living and efficient public service delivery.



focusing on governance and public welfare, the state leadership was using investigations selectively to manage political narratives. Responding to the criticism, Congress leaders dismissed Bandi Sanjay's remarks as politically motivated and aimed at diverting public attention. They maintained that the investigation was being conducted strictly in accordance with the law and denied any interference in the functioning of the SIT.

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## Telangana Sports Minister Unveils Poster for 72nd Senior Women's National Kabaddi Championship

Hyderabad, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Sports Minister Vakiti Srihari formally unveiled the poster for the 72nd Senior Women's National Kabaddi Championship, an event organized by the Telangana Kabaddi Association, aimed at promoting women's participation in sports and providing a platform for talented athletes to showcase their skills. The poster launch ceremony was attended by several dignitaries, including Telangana Sports Authority Chairman Sivasena Reddy, Sports Department MD Sony Balaji, and Telangana Kabaddi Association President Kasani Veeresh, among others, emphasizing the significance of the championship at both state and national levels.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Srihari highlighted the importance of the championship as a stepping stone for women athletes to excel in kabaddi at higher levels. He emphasized that the event will help athletes prepare for the Asian



Games scheduled in Ja-

pan in September 2026, making it a crucial platform for identifying potential international players. The minister urged female athletes to fully utilize this opportunity to gain experience, exposure, and recognition in competitive sports. The championship, scheduled to be held at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium from January 27 to 30, 2026, will see participation from 464 athletes, including seasoned players, international par-

To ensure a seamless

best.

Minister Srihari also appealed to kabaddi enthusiasts and the general public to attend the championship, experience the excitement of the sport, and encourage women athletes. He underlined that events like the Senior Women's National Kabaddi Championship play a pivotal role in promoting women's sports, building confidence among young athletes, and strengthening India's presence in international kabaddi competitions.

The poster unveiling and related preparations highlight the Telangana government's commitment to promoting sports at all levels, particularly empowering women athletes, and ensuring that national-level events are conducted with excellence and professionalism. The 72nd Senior Women's National Kabaddi Championship is set to become a significant event in India's sports calendar, inspiring aspiring athletes and drawing attention to women's contributions in competitive sports.

## Congress Flag Must Fly in Torrur Municipality Elections, Says Minister Vakiti Srihari



Palakurthi (Mahabubabad District), January 24 | TPN Bureau

this momentum must be carried forward at the local body level as well," he said.

The Minister emphasised that since Congress is in power at the state level, having a Congress-backed chairperson in Torrur Municipality would help in faster approvals, better coordination, and effective implementation of development programmes. He said alignment between the state government and local bodies is essential to bring infrastructure projects, welfare schemes, and civic amenities to municipalities.

Vakiti Srihari assured the people that he would extend full cooperation for the overall development of the Palakurthi constituency. He stated that the Congress government is committed to strengthening municipalities by improving roads, drainage systems, drinking water supply, sanitation, and other basic facilities.

"Torrur Municipality can witness real progress only if Congress candidates are elected," the Minister asserted. He appealed to voters to ensure the victory of Congress candidates in all 16 wards and extend their support for what he termed a development-oriented administration.

Criticising the previous BRS government, Vakiti Srihari said it had burdened the state with unnecessary loans and emptied the treasury. He noted that the present Congress government is gradually restoring financial stability and putting the state's economy back on track. "The financial condition of the state is now improving, and

Local MLA Yashaswini echoed the Minister's views and urged residents to seize the opportunity to elect a Congress-led municipal council for sustained development.

Other Congress leaders present also appealed to voters to reject what they described as "failed leadership" of the past and support Congress candidates to transform Torrur into a model municipality.

The Congress leadership expressed confidence that the people of Torrur would vote decisively in favour of the party, paving the way for accelerated development and better governance at the municipal level.

## Harish Rao Targets Deputy CM Bhatti Over Singareni Coal and Solar Tenders, Alleges Scam

Hyderabad, January 24 | TPN Bureau



Former Minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao on Friday launched a sharp attack on Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka over the Singareni coal and solar tender issue, alleging large-scale corruption and accusing the Congress government of attempting to divert public attention from serious irregularities.

Reacting to a press meet held by Bhatti Vikramarka on the Singareni coal and solar tenders, Harish Rao took to social media platform X to question the government's silence and actions. He alleged that the Deputy Chief Minister failed to clearly state that there was no corruption in the coal tenders and instead tried to "beat around the bush" by presenting half-truths.

Harish Rao argued that the cancellation of the Naini tender was proof that a scam had taken place. "If there was no wrongdoing, why was the Naini tender cancelled? And if it was wrong, why are the remaining tenders not being cancelled?" he questioned. He accused the government of selectively cancelling tenders while shielding those allegedly involved.

The BRS leader further alleged that the entire episode was orchestrated to benefit Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's brother-in-law, claiming he played the role of a "ring man" in what he described as the coal scam. "No matter how many excuses are given, the truth remains that corruption occurred in the coal tender process under the Congress government," Harish Rao asserted.

Raising another issue, Harish Rao criticised Bhatti Vikramarka for not uttering a single word about the alleged solar power

## Forensic Audit Uncovers Irregularities in Siddipet and Sircilla- Ponguleti

Hyderabad, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

pand forensic audits to all 31 districts to detect and address malpractices systematically.

During a meeting with the high-level committee set up to probe Dharani portal irregularities, Minister Srinivas Reddy inquired about the extent of individual involvement, any behind-the-scenes influence, and the role of revenue officials. Committee members presented a preliminary report, highlighting discrepancies in 4,848 transactions out of over 35 lakh processed on the portal, with approximately Rs. 4 crore in pending government payments for 1,109 documents. The minister emphasized that these irregularities would be thoroughly investigated, and criminal cases have already been registered against 48 individuals across 35 mandals in nine districts.

Minister Srinivas Reddy also addressed criticisms from opposition leaders, who alleged large-scale corruption ranging from crores to tens of crores.



He rejected these claims as politically motivated, clarifying that the government is committed to transparency and legal accountability rather than partisan narratives.

In addition, the minister announced that licenses would be issued to the second batch of 2,000 trained surveyors in Khammam district, following the first batch of 4,000, enabling them to conduct re-surveys in 373 villages across the state.

The high-level committee meeting was attended by senior officials including Revenue Secretary Lokesh Kumar, Stamps & Registration IG Rajeev Gandhi Hanuman, Additional DG Intelligence Vijay Kumar, DIG M. Subhashini, CMRVO Makrand, ACB SP Sindhu Sharma, Cyber Crime DSP A. Sampath, NIC representative Srinivas, and Home Department Advisor P. Sharath Kumar.

Minister Srinivas Reddy also criticized former Telangana IT Minister K.T. Rama Rao's remarks on the municipal elections as baseless and inconsistent, stating that the government will conduct elections in a scientific and transparent manner, reflecting public opinion, despite opposition attempts to create confusion.

This initiative reflects the Telangana government's commitment to curbing corruption, ensuring accountability, and implementing rigorous auditing mechanisms across the state.

## Revanth Reddy Accused of Favoring Brother-in-Law: Dr. Sravan Dasoju

Hyderabad, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

BRS MLC Dr. Sravan Dasoju launched a strong attack on Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, alleging that the tendering process for Singareni coal mining contracts was manipulated to benefit the CM's brother-in-law and close associates. Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Saturday, Dr. Sravan said that Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka's defensive statements inadvertently confirmed the existence of a massive scam.

Dr. Sravan highlighted that Bhatti's attempt to counter the BRS party only reinforced the claim that irregularities took place in the Singareni coal tenders. "If the tender process was transparent, why is there hesitation in ordering a full investigation?" he questioned, demanding clarity on the government's delay in conducting a proper inquiry.

The MLC alleged that Revanth Reddy sought to hand over coal mines to his brother-in-law, prioritizing personal



interests over the state's welfare. He urged Deputy CM Bhatti to explain why the tenders were cancelled following BRS opposition and public outcry. Dr. Sravan further accused the CM of orchestrating negative media reports and leaks against Bhatti, questioning why the Deputy CM is hesitant to identify the source of these planted stories.

while Bhatti cites his 40-year political career, he remains silent when Revanth Reddy reportedly uses foul language against KCR, who has a 50-year political legacy. "Respect must be mutual," he asserted.

Dr. Sravan also criticized the CM's real estate-focused governance, referencing attempts to convert T-Hub into a registration office. He remarked, "Telangana is rising, but governance is falling," highlighting the growing public appreciation for KCR's administration.

According to the MLC, the government's sole agenda over the past two years has been "looting policy", with no constructive measures introduced, systematically draining the state's resources.

Concluding the press meet, Dr. Sravan urged Revanth Reddy to prioritize good governance and public welfare over personal enrichment, warning that the people of Telangana are watching closely and will hold the government accountable for exploitation of the state's natural and financial resources.

scam that he claimed to have exposed earlier. He questioned why the Deputy Chief Minister avoided addressing the solar tender issue during the press conference, despite it being a serious allegation.

Responding to the government's claims regarding the site visit certificate requirement, Harish Rao said shifting the blame onto the previous BRS government would not change facts. He dismissed the argument that the site visit norm was introduced in 2018 and followed by central government agencies, asking why the Naini tender was cancelled if the procedure was legitimate.

Harish Rao argued that the cancellation of the Naini tender was proof that a scam had taken place. "If there was no wrongdoing, why was the Naini tender cancelled? And if it was wrong, why are the remaining tenders not being cancelled?" he questioned. He accused the government of selectively cancelling tenders while shielding those allegedly involved.

The BRS leader further alleged that the entire episode was orchestrated to benefit Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's brother-in-law, claiming he played the role of a "ring man" in what he described as the coal scam. "No matter how many excuses are given, the truth remains that corruption occurred in the coal tender process under the Congress government," Harish Rao asserted.

Raising another issue, Harish Rao criticised Bhatti Vikramarka for not uttering a single word about the alleged solar power

# Glukem Biocare Pvt Ltd Adopts Mugger Crocodiles at Nehru Zoological Park

Hyderabad, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

In a significant move supporting wildlife conservation, M/s Glukem Biocare Pvt Limited, Hyderabad contributed Rs. 1,00,000 towards the adoption of two Mugger Crocodiles at Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad. The donation was presented to Smt. J. Vasanthi, IFS, Curator of the zoo by Mr. Rakesh Chinnala, Director, Glukem Biocare, along with his US delegates Mr. Philip, Mr. Shyam, and Mr. Sushanta Hazra, Managing Director, Glukem Biocare. The adoption is valid for a period of one year.

Addressing the occasion, Mr. Chinnala

praised Nehru Zoological Park as a world-class zoo, highlighting the remarkable maintenance and successful breeding programmes implemented in recent years. He emphasized the importance of such initiatives in preserving wildlife and educating the public about conservation.

Curator Smt. Vasanthi expressed her gratitude to Mr. Chinnala and the Glukem Biocare team for their generous contribution, which will directly support the care, maintenance, and breeding of the adopted crocodiles. She also noted that earlier, Mr. Chinnala had adopted a Panther for one year,



reinforcing the company's commitment to wildlife preservation.

Nehru Zoological Park currently houses four species of crocodiles – Mugger, Long-

Snouted, Siamese, and Saltwater crocodiles – and actively runs several breeding programmes aimed at increasing population and protecting endan-

gered species. Smt. Vasanthi appealed to citizens and organizations to participate in the Animal Adoption Scheme or contribute through Corporate So-

## Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Expresses Concern Over Fire at Nampally Station Road Furniture Mall

Hyderabad, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Hyderabad In-Charge Minister Ponnam Prabhakar expressed serious concern following a fire that broke out at a furniture mall on Nampally Station Road. Reacting promptly to the incident, the minister contacted the District Collector and Hyderabad Police Commissioner to assess the situation and gather details about the possible causes of the fire. He sought a comprehensive understanding of the incident to ensure swift and effective action to prevent escalation and damage.

Minister Ponnam Prabhakar instructed officials to take all nec-



essary precautions to prevent the fire from spreading to nearby buildings. He emphasized that adjacent structures should be evacuated immediately to safeguard residents and employees in the vicinity. The minister's in-

structions also included close coordination between police and fire officials to effectively manage the emergency and ensure public safety. Authorities were directed to deploy all available resources, including fire engines and specialized

firefighting equipment, to bring the flames under control as quickly as possible. He highlighted the importance of proactive measures to minimize losses and prevent injuries. The minister's intervention underlines the government's commitment to the safety and well-being of citizens during unexpected emergencies. This fire incident serves as a reminder of the need for strict adherence to safety protocols in commercial establishments. Minister Ponnam Prabhakar urged officials to conduct a thorough investigation to determine the exact cause of the fire and to take appropriate steps to pre-

vent similar incidents in the future.

The coordinated efforts of the fire and police departments, guided by ministerial oversight, were aimed at bringing the situation under control efficiently and ensuring that all safety measures were strictly followed. Citizens in the area were advised to remain calm and cooperate with authorities while emergency services managed the situation.

The swift response and proactive directives reflect the government's focus on protecting lives and property while addressing emergencies with urgency and efficiency.

## Massive Police Security Deployed for Sri Chittaramma Devi Utsav at Gajularamaram



Quthbullapur, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

The Sri Chittaramma Devi Utsav being held at a function hall in Gajularamaram saw the deployment of extensive police security to ensure the safety and convenience of devotees, officials said. The arrangements were aimed at maintaining law and order, controlling crowds, and ensuring smooth traffic flow throughout the festive celebrations.

The security setup was overseen by Quthbullapur Zone DCP Kotireddy, along with Additional DCP Purushottam and ACP Quthbullapur Bal Gangireddy. According to police sources, the security team included two ACPs, 10 inspectors, 30 sub-inspectors, and 15 con-

stables, supported by specialized units such as armed guards, bomb squads, and AR teams. The coordinated deployment was designed to address any eventuality, including crowd management, emergency response, and potential security threats during the event.

In addition, authorities deployed approximately 100 traffic personnel to manage vehicular movement and prevent congestion in the vicinity. The aim was to ensure that devotees could attend the festival without facing any inconvenience while maintaining smooth traffic flow on the surrounding roads.

Inspector Gaddam Mallesh of the local police stated that the security arrangements

were meticulously planned to allow every devotee to have darshan of the deity without disruption. He emphasized that both public safety and convenience were the top priorities, and the police team would remain vigilant throughout the event.

The police also coordinated with local volunteers and community leaders to ensure orderly entry and exit of devotees and to provide guidance on parking and movement within the festival area. The presence of bomb squads and armed personnel was highlighted as a precautionary measure to address any potential threat and instill confidence among visitors.

The massive security deploy-

ment reflects the administration's commitment to maintaining peace and public safety during large-scale religious celebrations. Officials assured that the police would respond promptly to any emergencies and provide necessary assistance to devotees while ensuring that the festival proceeded smoothly.

With the combination of crowd management, traffic control, and specialized security units, authorities hope to create a safe and enjoyable environment for the thousands of devotees attending the Sri Chittaramma Devi Utsav in Gajularamaram, reinforcing the importance of proactive planning and coordination during major public events.

## Minister Ponnam Prabhakar Backs MLA Ganesh's Protest for Cantonment Merger with GHMC

Hyderabad, January 24 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Friday expressed full support for the protest led by Cantonment MLA Ganesh, demanding the merger of the Cantonment area with the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). Speaking on the occa-

sion, Minister Ponnam emphasized that the MLA's dharna aims to address long-standing disparities in development between the Cantonment and surrounding GHMC areas. He highlighted that the merger is crucial to ensure uniform infrastructure, civic amenities, and equitable growth for residents of

the Cantonment. Letters have been sent to Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh and Central Ministers representing Telangana, including Kishan Reddy and Bandi Sanjay, urging them to take immediate steps to facilitate the merger. Minister Ponnam stressed that the Telangana government fully supports the merger and is pushing for a swift decision by the Central government so that the grievances of Cantonment residents are addressed promptly. "The people of Cantonment deserve equal development and access to municipal services. The merger with GHMC is essential to remove existing administrative dis-

parities and ensure uniform progress," Minister Ponnam said. He called on the Union government to take prompt action and complete the merger process at the earliest, aligning with the aspirations of the local population and the Telangana government's commitment to equitable development.



## Congress Holds 'MGNREGA Bachao Sangram Yatra' in Hyderabad Against Alleged Dilution of Employment Scheme

Hyderabad, January 25 | TPN Bureau

impact rural employment, food security, and economic stability at the grassroots level. The Congress leadership reiterated its commitment to defending the scheme both on the streets and in Parliament.

Speaking at the rally, PCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud said the Congress would not remain silent while policies that affect the poorest sections of society are diluted. He accused the Centre of neglecting rural distress and prioritizing corporate interests over the welfare of common people. AICC Secretary Sachin Sawant echoed similar sentiments, stating that the nationwide MGNREGA Bachao movement reflects the Congress party's resolve to protect the rights enshrined in the Constitution.

The rally commenced at 6.00 pm from the Rajiv Gandhi Statue opposite the Telangana Secretariat and concluded at the Indira Gandhi Statue, passing through prominent areas of the city. Party workers, leaders, and supporters participated in large numbers, raising slogans in support of MGNREGA and accusing the Modi-led Central government of undermining one of India's most significant social security programmes.

Senior Congress leaders, including Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) President Mahesh Kumar Goud and AICC Secretary and Telangana in-charge Sachin Sawant, took part in the rally. Addressing party cadres, the leaders alleged that reduced budgetary allocations, delayed wage payments, and restrictions on workdays under MGNREGA were causing severe hardship to rural workers and migrant labourers.

They asserted that MGNREGA is not merely a welfare initiative but a legal and constitutional guarantee that ensures livelihood security for the poor. Any attempt to weaken the scheme, they said, would directly

## CITU Serves Strike Notice to Nizampet Circle Manager Ahead of Nationwide General Strike



Quthbullapur, January 24 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana Municipal Workers and Employees Union (CITU) on Friday served a strike notice to the GHMC Nizampet Circle Manager in connection with the nationwide one-day general strike scheduled to be held on February 12. The notice was formally submitted to Circle Manager Ramesh at the GHMC Nizampet Circle Office in Pragathi Nagar.

Leaders of the municipal union stated that the strike is being organized as part of a countrywide protest called by national trade unions and independent federations against what they described as anti-worker policies of the Central government. The unions have called upon workers from various sectors to participate in the strike to highlight their perceived grievances. Speaking on the occasion, Nizampet Circle Municipal Union President G. Venkata Rajyam, Circle Municipal President Rathod Santosh, and General Secretary Pentala demanded the immediate withdrawal of the four Labour Codes introduced by the Central government in place of the earlier 29 labour laws.

They specifically opposed the notification issued on November 21, 2025, aimed at implementing these labour codes, stating that the new laws dilute workers' rights and protections. The union leaders also demanded the rollback of the Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2025, alleging that it adversely affects both employees and the general public. They further urged the government to continue the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), which they said provides as-

ured employment and livelihood security to the poor and marginalized sections of society.

According to the CITU leaders, the economic and industrial policies being pursued by the Central government have resulted in increased hardships for workers, employees, and common citizens. Rising unemployment, price inflation, and reduced job security were cited as major concerns that prompted trade unions to mobilize workers for the general strike.

They informed that national trade unions, along with several independent federations, have jointly given a call for the one-day nationwide general strike on February 12 to press for their demands. As part of this initiative, municipal employees and workers under the Nizampet Circle were urged to participate in large numbers and ensure the success of the strike.

The strike is aimed at protecting labour rights and opposing policies that weaken job security and public welfare," the leaders said, appealing to all municipal workers and employees to stand united and actively take part in the protest. Several municipal union leaders, including Lingamma, Nagalakshmi, Naga Seshu, Swamy, Tirupati, and others, were present during the submission of the strike notice and expressed their solidarity with the nationwide call for protest.

The CITU leadership reiterated that the February 12 strike would be a decisive step in highlighting workers' issues at the national level and warned that further agitation would be intensified if the government failed to address their demands.

## Breastfeeding Room Inaugurated at Medaram Jatara to Support Mothers

Medaram, January 23, 2026 | TPN Bureau

In a significant step to promote the welfare of infants and support mothers attending the Medaram Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara, the government inaugurated a Breastfeeding Room at the festival grounds. The facility is designed to provide a safe and comfortable space for mothers to feed their babies without any inconvenience during the massive tribal festival.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by State Minister for Women and Child Welfare, Mrs. Danasari Anasuya Seethakka, District Collector Divakar T.S., SP Sudheer Ramnath Kekhan, and senior officials from the Child Welfare Department, among others.

Addressing the

gathering, Minister Seethakka highlighted the importance of supporting mothers and infants during large public gatherings. She said, "We are opening this Breastfeeding Room to ensure that mothers visiting the Medaram Jatara with young children can feed their babies comfortably without any difficulties. I urge all mothers to make full use of this facility for the benefit of their children."

The facility has been set up with proper seating, privacy arrangements, and hygienic conditions to make breastfeeding convenient and stress-free for mothers. It is part of the government's larger initiative to enhance maternal and child welfare during major public events, ensuring that



women and children are given adequate care and attention.

Officials also stated that volunteers and staff will be present to assist mothers in using the facility, maintaining cleanliness, and providing guidance as needed. The initiative has been widely welcomed by attendees, as it emphasizes both women's convenience and child health during one of Asia's largest tribal gatherings.

With this step, the government aims to ensure that public festivals are inclusive, family-friendly, and supportive of maternal and child needs, reflecting a broader commitment to welfare-oriented governance and women empowerment in Telangana.

The inauguration of the breastfeeding room at Medaram Jatara marks a milestone in public event management, setting an example for future festivals across the state to prioritize women and child-friendly facilities.

## Congress Prepares for Dornakal Municipal Elections in Mahabubabad

Mahabubabad, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Congress leaders convened a strategic preparatory meeting for the upcoming municipal elections in the Dornakal constituency of Mahabubabad district. The meeting was chaired by Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar and attended by key party leaders, including Chief Minister's Advisor Vem Narendra Reddy, MP Balaram Naik, Government Whip Ramachandra Naik, MLA Murali Naik, DCC President Uma Murali Naik, and other senior leaders of the constituency.

Addressing the gathering, Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar emphasized that

the importance of consolidating party efforts across the seven municipalities under the Mahabubabad parliamentary constituency. He stated that 156 councilor seats across these municipalities are crucial, and while party leaders have secured victories in previous elections, the focus now is on mobilizing party workers and grassroots cadres to ensure complete success.

He urged the leaders and workers to act in unity and coordination, stressing that if reservations or nominations were not in favor, the party must actively support its candidates. Referring to the party's achievements, Prabhakar highlighted that

Congress had successfully defeated a decade of autocratic governance, won parliamentary seats, and empowered local leadership by electing sarpanches in the region.

The minister reminded the attendees of Congress's commitment to public welfare, citing programs implemented in the constituency, including distribution of 3,500 Indiramma houses, supply of San rice, issuance of ration cards, 200 free electricity units, LPG connections for 500 households, interest-free loans for women's associations, free RTC bus travel for women, and significant government funding of Rs. 9,000 crore to RTC. He

also highlighted initiatives like Rythu Bharosa, loan waivers, and employment opportunities, emphasizing that these welfare programs must be communicated effectively to voters.

Regarding candidate selection, Prabhakar instructed coordinators, advisors, MLAs, and district leaders to ensure local councilor candidates are chosen and elected by the people. He reiterated that in municipal elections, 75 candidates win primarily due to grassroots efforts, while party influence accounts for 25%, urging everyone to actively campaign for every candidate.

He announced that on January 26, party flags

would be hoisted across all seven municipalities to symbolize unity and to launch an intensive voter outreach campaign.

Minister Prabhakar concluded by urging party members to ensure that until the elections, every day, every Congress worker commits to reaching 50 voters each to strengthen the party's prospects and secure victories in Dornakal and surrounding municipalities.

The meeting marked a focused strategy session to mobilize the Congress cadre, strengthen grassroots coordination, and enhance voter engagement across the Dornakal constituency ahead of the municipal polls.

## BRS Responsible for Singareni's Decline, Says Ramagundam MLA Raj Thakur

Godavari Khan (Ramagundam), January 24 | TPN Bureau

Ramagundam MLA M.S. Raj Thakur on Friday came down heavily on the previous BRS government, accusing it of pushing the Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) into financial and administrative decline.

Addressing a press meet at his camp office in Godavari Khan, the MLA alleged that the policies adopted during the BRS regime left Singareni in a situation where it struggled even to pay salaries to its workers.

Speaking to the media, Raj Thakur squarely blamed former Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao for the deterioration of the coal major. He challenged the BRS leadership to agree to the appointment of an inquiry commission to investigate all decisions taken since 2014, asserting that such a probe would reveal who looted Singareni and wreaked havoc on the institution.

The MLA expressed strong resentment over the handling of mining operations in the Ramagundam region. He alleged that underground mines were deliberately shut down and surface mining was expanded in the middle of

populated areas, turning the town into what he described as a "graveyard." Such decisions, he said, caused irreparable environmental damage and created severe hardships for local residents.

Warning the BRS leadership, the Ramagundam MLA said the party should change its approach and stop indulging in irresponsible politics. "If they continue on the same path, the people will teach them an appropriate lesson at the right time," he cautioned.

Raj Thakur reiterated that the Congress government remains committed to protecting Singareni, safeguarding workers' interests, and ensuring sustainable development in coal mining regions.

He emphasized that public sector institutions like Singareni belong to the people of Telangana and should not be sacrificed for political or personal gain.

The press meet was attended by senior Congress leaders, former corporators, presidents of various party wings, and party workers, who expressed solidarity with the MLA's views and criticized the BRS for what they termed years of misrule and neglect of Singareni and mining areas.

Thakur said. He asserted that the decline of the BRS had begun in Telangana and that people were no longer willing to believe false narratives propagated for political gain.

Raj Thakur accused BRS leaders of spreading false propaganda as they were unable to tolerate the developmental initiatives being undertaken by the Congress government. He said that efforts to bring new power and industrial projects to the constituency were being opposed by the BRS, which, according to him, was indulging in petty politics under the pretext of rates and contracts.

He further alleged that cheap and baseless accusations were being leveled against Congress leaders who are working to expand and strengthen Singareni. The MLA claimed that the opposition was deliberately misleading the public and resorting to diversionary tactics with an eye on gaining political mileage in the upcoming elections.

"As the Congress government is focusing on development and strengthening public sector institutions, the opposition has chosen the path of lies and misinformation," Raj

## Narayanapet Youth Leader Distributes School Uniforms to Students



Narayanapet, January 24, 2026 | TPN Bureau

A school uniform distribution program was held for students in Gorlonibavi and Gollagadda villages of Kothapalli mandal, Narayanapet district. Local youth leader Satya Kavali personally handed over the uniforms to the students, emphasizing his commitment to supporting education and community welfare.

Addressing the gathering, Satya Kavali said he plans to organize more service initiatives in the future. He announced that soon, village libraries will be established and schools will be pro-

## Temporary RTC Bus Stand Inaugurated at Medaram Ahead of Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara 2026



Tadvi (Mulugu District), January 24 | TPN Bureau

In a major step towards strengthening transport infrastructure for the Sammakka-Saralamma Medaram Jatara 2026, State Transport and BC Welfare Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar on Friday inaugurated a temporary RTC bus stand at Medaram in Tadvi mandal of Mulugu district. The initiative aims to ensure safe, smooth and permanent transport solutions for devotees and the general public visiting the world's largest tribal congregation.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar said the government is committed to providing hassle-free transportation, keeping in view the massive influx of devotees expected during the Jatara.

He announced that around 4,000 RTC buses are being operated in a planned manner, with readiness to deploy additional buses immediately if required. He added that hundreds of RTC officials and staff have been specially assigned to manage the Jatara transport services, which officially commenced on January 20 and will continue uninterrupted till February 1.

The Minister stated that along with transport services, arrangements have

been made to ensure safety, medical assistance and emergency support for passengers.

He noted that the RTC Managing Director, Special Chief Secretary, Executive Directors and senior officials are working round the clock to ensure the success of Jatara transportation. Urging devotees to prefer RTC buses, he said those using private vehicles may face inconvenience due to distant parking and long walking distances, while RTC buses would drop passengers close to the gaddelu (shrines). RTC travel, he asserted, is safer and more reliable.

Addressing concerns over missing children during the Jatara, the ministers appealed to parents to mandatorily use the Child Tracking System implemented by the police department, which helps in quickly tracing lost children and reuniting them with their families.

Minister Seethakka recalled that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy had envisioned permanent transport infrastructure for Medaram as early as 2024 to overcome recurring hardships faced by devotees due to temporary arrangements. She thanked Minister Ponnambalam Prabhakar for personally reviewing the transport arrangements on the

ground and reaffirmed that ensuring convenience for devotees remains the government's top priority.

Highlighting long-pending demands, Minister Seethakka expressed gratitude for sanctioning a permanent RTC bus depot at a cost of nearly 5 crore. She also said a 7 crore RTC bus depot has been approved at Eturunagaram, which would effectively serve forest and agency areas including Bhadrachalam, Mangapet, Wazeed and Venkatapuram. Mini bus stations have also been sanctioned for Mangapet, Mulugu and other mandals.

Mahabubabad MP Balram Naik thanked the Chief Minister for approving the Eturunagaram RTC depot, stating it would provide a permanent solution to transport issues in the agency areas. He also appreciated steps taken for road development in Medaram and termed free bus travel for women a historic decision benefiting tribal and rural women.

Senior RTC officials and representatives participated in the programme, underscoring the government's commitment to developing Medaram in accordance with a comprehensive master plan and ensuring long-term infrastructure for devotees and local residents.

## Congress Vows to Fight New MGNREGA Policy, Says It Threatens Workers' Security

Adilabad, January 24 | TPN Bureau

The Congress party has intensified its attack on the Union government over changes proposed to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), alleging that the new policy undermines the security and livelihoods of rural workers.

Congress district official spokesperson Pasula Chanti on Friday asserted that protecting the rights, wages, and safety of MGNREGA workers remains the party's top priority.

Addressing a MGNREGA Sangram Bachao meeting at Andur Gram Panchayat in Both mandal of Adilabad district, Pasula Chanti accused the Narendra Modi-led Central government of turning the employment guarantee scheme into what he described as an "employment-less law."

The meeting was held under the chairmanship of village sarpanch Pendur Prithviraj, with participation from villagers and Congress leaders.

Speaking on the occasion, Pasula Chanti said the Centre had introduced a new law stating that employment would be guaranteed only up to the year 2047, which, he alleged,

severely dilutes the spirit of the original Act. He further criticized the move to withdraw the power of state governments to decide minimum wages under MGNREGA, stating that the authority has now been centralized.

He warned that such changes would adversely affect states like Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, where minimum wages are traditionally fixed based on inflation and local economic conditions by state-level wage fixation boards. "Stripping states of this authority and handing it over entirely to the Centre will result in unfair wage determination and financial losses to several states," he said.

Pasula Chanti also expressed concern that the Central government could selectively allocate funds, favouring states where it is in power while neglecting others. He alleged that this could lead to discrimination and deepen regional inequalities in rural employment opportunities.

Referring to the renaming of the scheme and the removal of Mahatma Gandhi's name, he said that merely deleting the name cannot erase Gandhi's ideals from the hearts of the people. "No government can remove the

values, vision, and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi that are deeply rooted in the minds of rural workers," he asserted.

The Congress leader announced that the party would continue its agitation in various forms until what he termed the "VBG Ramji Act" is withdrawn and the original spirit of MGNREGA is restored.

He reiterated that the Congress would fight to protect minimum wages, job security, and the dignity of labour for rural workers across the country.

The programme was attended by Youth Congress mandal vice-president and Kuchlapur deputy sarpanch Sudula Arun Reddy, Adiavasi Congress mandal vice-chairman Umesh Jadhav, senior mandal leaders Chauhan Devidas, village patel, ward members, youth activists, and local residents, who expressed solidarity with the Congress party's stand on safeguarding MGNREGA.

The Congress leader stated that similar awareness meetings and protest programmes would be conducted across the district as part of a broader campaign to defend rural employment rights and social justice.

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# Trump's Gaza Peace Plan and India's Dilemma in a Shifting Middle East

Peace in the Middle East has rarely emerged organically from within the region. Instead, it has almost always been shaped—if not imposed—by the interests, leverage, and persistence of external powers. Among these, the United States has played the most consequential role, acting variously as mediator, guarantor, enforcer, and partisan stakeholder. The proposed Gaza peace plan, to be implemented through a newly constituted Board of Peace (BoP), once again bears the unmistakable imprint of Washington's influence. What distinguishes this moment, however, is not merely the centrality of the United States, but the outsized role of an unusually unpredictable American president.

Unlike earlier peace initiatives that were anchored in relatively stable US foreign policy doctrines and institutional continuity, the BoP places extraordinary authority in the hands of President Donald Trump himself. The executive structure of the body effectively casts Trump as its chair, vesting him with sweeping powers over implementation, enforcement, and future direction. Whether such a personalised arrangement can deliver durable peace remains uncertain. The jury is very much still out.

Critics of the BoP argue that the model is fundamentally flawed. With a hard sunset deadline of 2027, they contend that the body is unlikely to oversee a transition that is both effective and sustainable, particularly in Gaza, where years of blockade, repeated wars, institutional collapse, and humanitarian devastation have hollowed out governance capacity. Others, however, offer a countervailing view. In a conflict as historically entrenched, culturally charged, and violently polarised as Gaza—especially in the aftermath of a catastrophic war between Israel and Hamas—an overarching, externally imposed framework may be the only viable mechanism capable of enforcing peace and preventing relapse.



India now finds itself at the centre of this debate. Among several countries invited by President Trump to join the BoP, India's response has been cautious. While 22 nations have already signed on as members, New Delhi has opted to pause, weigh its options, and think strategically before committing to what is, at best, a quasi-international body. This restraint may well be prudent. Although the BoP charter describes it as an international organisation, there appears to be a broad—if tacit—consensus that it does not fully meet the criteria typically associated with such entities, particularly those rooted in the UN Charter-based international order.

One of the most controversial aspects of the BoP is its “pay-to-stay” provision, which requires a contribu-

tion of \$1 billion for inclusion. This feature raises fundamental questions about legitimacy versus urgency. For countries like India, which place significant normative value on multilateralism, sovereignty, and rules-based global governance, the idea that membership hinges on financial contribution rather than legal mandate or moral authority is deeply problematic. It risks transforming peacekeeping into a transactional enterprise, undermining the very principles it purports to uphold.

Yet, despite these concerns, the temptation for India to join the BoP may be strong, and timing plays a crucial role. India-US relations are currently experiencing something of a winter. A long-pending trade agreement remains mired in negotiations, the Quad leaders' summit un-

der India's chairship has been postponed, and India continues to face some of the highest tariff burdens globally. In this context, joining the BoP could be viewed as a gesture of strategic accommodation, potentially easing bilateral frictions and restoring political momentum in the relationship with Washington.

There is also a structural argument in favour of India's participation. This could be New Delhi's moment to step up on global governance, particularly against the backdrop of its long-standing demand for reform of the UN Security Council. Active involvement in a high-profile peace initiative in the Middle East would allow India to project itself as a responsible stakeholder, capable of contributing to conflict resolution beyond its immediate

neighbourhood. Such a role would align with India's aspiration to be seen as a leading voice of the Global South.

Moreover, India's stakes in the Middle East are both deep and multifaceted. Millions of Indian citizens live and work across the region, forming a large and vulnerable diaspora. India also enjoys robust bilateral relationships with key Middle Eastern states—relationships that have often transcended the region's fractured politics. Beyond immediate interests, there is the broader strategic promise of linking the Middle East with the Indo-Pacific, a vision that holds significant implications for trade, connectivity, and the future of the Global South. Participation in the BoP could, in theory, strengthen India's role in shaping this emerging geopolitical arc.

However, the arguments against India joining the BoP are equally compelling and largely stem from the lack of clarity surrounding the body itself. While the initiative flows from United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803 of November 2025—which created the BoP to ensure implementation of the second phase of the Gaza peace plan—there is a discernible imbalance between urgency and legitimacy. Under the Trump presidency, urgency appears to eclipse legitimacy, with speed and decisiveness prioritised over institutional robustness and broad-based consensus.

Several unresolved questions persist. The BoP charter makes no explicit reference to Gaza, an omission that raises concerns about mandate creep. The sweeping authority vested in the Presi-

dent of the United States further amplifies these anxieties, as does the possibility that the BoP could extend its remit to other conflicts around the world. For India, which has traditionally guarded its strategic autonomy and resisted externally imposed security architectures, this ambiguity is troubling.

The sunset clause presents another dilemma. While the BoP is slated to conclude its work in 2027, two years may prove grossly insufficient to stabilise, reconstruct, and politically normalise Gaza. If the mandate were to be extended, questions would inevitably arise about future leadership—particularly in the period after Trump's presidential tenure ends in 2028. A body so closely tied to a single individual risks losing coherence and credibility once that individual exits the scene.

Finally, optics matter. The BoP already includes countries such as Pakistan and Turkey, whose regional agendas often run counter to India's interests. At the same time, notable Global South powers—including China, South Africa, and Brazil—have chosen to remain outside the arrangement. India's participation in such a grouping could complicate its diplomatic positioning, especially if the BoP comes to be seen as a US-dominated instrument rather than a genuinely multilateral initiative.

Given these complexities, New Delhi would be wise not to rush its decision. The choice India makes at this juncture will carry long-term implications for its role in the Middle East, its relationship with the United States, and its broader vision of global order. Strategic autonomy has been a cornerstone of Indian foreign policy, and preserving it will require careful calibration rather than impulsive alignment. In the end, India's future influence in the Middle East may depend less on whether it joins the BoP, and more on how judiciously it navigates the opportunities and risks this moment presents.

## The Exhaustion of Absolutism: Women, Power, and Revolution in Iran

Every revolution produces its heroes. Some rise organically from within the crowd; others are manufactured, elevated, and mythologised after the fact. They may be real or imagined, flawed or flawless, lionised on posters and podiums alike. Yet history suggests a paradox: successful revolutions do not depend on heroes. They succeed without them, and often despite them. They succeed when the will to change emerges not from stages of spectacle but from the quieter, harsher spaces of everyday life—where heroism is not aspirational but unavoidable.

It is in precisely these spaces that Iranian women have long existed.

Whether Iran is on the brink of overthrowing the Ayatollah regime is, at this moment, almost beside the point. What matters more is what is already visible in fragments and flashes—grainy videos and whispered testimonies that slip through a state-imposed digital blackout. These images tell a clear story: a threshold has been crossed. The common Iranian has crossed the Rubicon. A society that has endured decades of surveillance, coercion, and ritualised fear is unlikely to return to the old normal of everyday terror administered by Islamic militias and state authorities.

The regime may yet survive. It may not fall without external intervention—whether in the form of financial pressure, diplomatic isolation, or even military force. History suggests that revolutions abetted

from outside rarely heal cleanly. Iran itself bears the scars of such interventions. The 1979 revolution against a corrupt monarchy—one that was deeply entangled with Western powers—promised emancipation but delivered a different kind of confinement. In overthrowing imperial influence, the revolution reversed Iran's socio-cultural and geopolitical clock. Religious dogma soon eclipsed political pragmatism, and the new regime acquired enemies at a faster pace than it issued fatwas. As Crane Branton famously warned, revolutions have a tendency to replace one orthodoxy with another.

This historical memory tempers any easy optimism. The Iranian state will not back down easily. But what distinguishes this moment is that the protesters will not either.

What sets the current uprising apart from earlier spasms of dissent—the student protests of 1999, the Green Movement of 2009, or even the fuel-price demonstrations of 2019—is its depth. Those movements, while significant, were either sectoral or episodic. They could be contained through a mixture of repression, selective concessions, and fatigue. What is unfolding now is different. This is not a protest that can be appeased with cosmetic reforms or silenced by brute force alone. It represents, to borrow Hannah Arendt's language, a rupture in the realm of the “given”—a moment when obedience itself loses its self-evidence.

At the heart of this rupture

stand Iranian women. They are not merely symbols or meme-friendly visuals circulating on global social media. Nor are they expendable scapegoats in a broader political contest. They are willing this moment into being. For decades, the Iranian state has invested disproportionate ideological and coercive energy in regulating women's bodies, recognising—correctly—that controlling women is central to controlling society itself. From the mandatory veiling laws imposed shortly after 1979 to the routine humiliations meted out by the morality police, the Islamic Republic has systematically denied women full personhood.

Sociologist Asef Bayat has described this system as “social control through everyday life,” a form of power that reproduces itself not primarily through grand proclamations but through constant, minor coercions—small humiliations, routine threats, and enforced conformity. What is now unfolding in Iran is the inversion of this logic. It is everyday resistance—diffuse, decentralised, and relentless—that is eroding the regime's authority through a thousand small cuts.

In this context, acts that might appear mundane elsewhere acquire radical political significance. The removal of the hijab, the cutting of hair, the decision to dance in pub-

lic—these are not merely cultural gestures. They are profoundly political acts in a system where the personal has long been forcibly nationalised. The state's attempt to sacralise control over private life has made even the smallest assertion of autonomy a form of rebellion.

Michel Foucault, writing with admiration—if not without controversy—about the Iranian Revolution of 1978, observed that a form of “political spirituality” had mobilised the masses against a technocratic state. What he underestimated was how that same spiritual absolutism, once institutionalised, would hollow out political legitimacy. The protests today

mark the exhaustion of that absolutism. The moral vocabulary that once justified repression has lost its persuasive power.

This does not mean the state is weak. The Islamic Republic continues to command formidable instruments of violence. History offers no guarantees that moral clarity or popular resolve will prevail. The Paris Commune was drowned in blood. Anti-colonial revolutions across parts of Africa replaced European rule with domestic autocracy. The Arab Spring curled into counter-revolution, civil war, and renewed authoritarianism. Even Iran's own 1979 revolution, often romanticised as a popular triumph, quickly devoured its pluralism. Intellectuals such as Jalal Al-e Ahmad and Ali Shariati—whose critiques of Westernisation shaped revolutionary consciousness—would scarcely recognise the clerical authoritarianism that followed.

And yet, something irreversible has occurred.

As Charles Tilly argued, revolutions are not singular events but processes—prolonged negotiations between state capacity and popular contention. By this measure, Iran is already in a revolutionary situation, regardless of how or when it ends. The regime may persist institutionally, but it has lost something far harder to recover: consent.

Fear remains, but it is no longer monopolised by the state. When unveiled teenage girls confront armed men with slogans rather than stones, the

symbolic economy of power collapses.

Demography reinforces this shift. More than sixty per cent of Iran's population was born after the 1979 revolution. Their historical memory is not shaped by monarchy or imperial meddling, but by sanctions, censorship, and the daily dissonance between official piety and lived reality. For them, the regime's founding myths offer little solace and even less legitimacy.

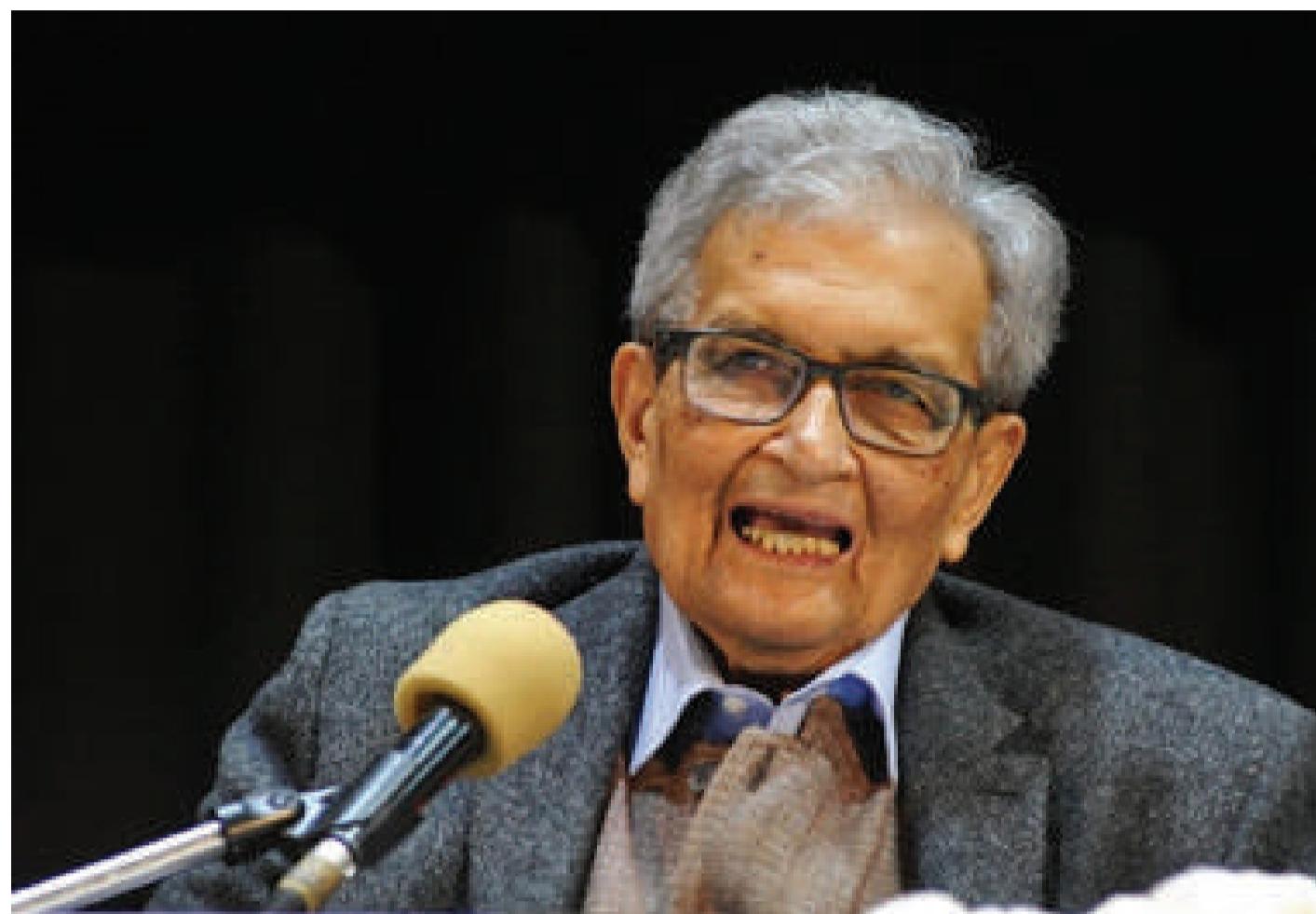
What is emerging, then, is not a movement with a manifesto but a society reclaiming authorship. There are no singular leaders, no charismatic figures to arrest, exile, or assassinate. This frustrates both the regime and foreign analysts accustomed to negotiating with faces rather than forces. Yet it is precisely this horizontality that gives the uprising its durability. As James C. Scott observed in his studies of everyday resistance, power is most vulnerable when defiance becomes normalised.

Whether the Islamic Republic falls next year or lingers for another decade is, in a sense, secondary. The moral universe on which it depends has been punctured beyond easy repair. Iranian women, long relegated to the margins of official history, have moved from the corners to the centre. They have withdrawn their compliance once and for all.

In doing so, they have revealed a truth that revolutions often grasp too late: history is not changed by heroes. It is changed by persistence.



## Amartya Sen Raises Concerns Over 'Hasty' Electoral Roll Revision in West Bengal Ahead of Polls



Nobel laureate economist Amartya Sen has expressed serious concerns over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal, warning that the process is being conducted with "undue haste" and could undermine democratic participation ahead of the state's assembly elections, which are due in a few months.

Drawing on his personal experience during the SIR in Bengal, Sen said even Election Commission officials appeared constrained by time pressures. He recalled being questioned about his eligibility to vote from Santiniketan, his home constituency, where he has voted in the past and where his details are already on record.

"Sometimes, the officials of the Election Commission themselves seem to lack enough time," he said. "They questioned my right to vote from my home constituency and even asked about my late mother's age at my date of birth, despite the fact that both my mother's and my own details are available in official records."

Asked whether the SIR process could politically benefit any party in West Bengal, Sen said he could not offer a definitive judgment. "I am not an election expert," he said. "I have been told by those who seem to know more that the BJP may benefit from undercounting. I don't know whether that is true, but the real issue is that the Election Commission should not insist on a faulty arrangement, regardless of who benefits."

On which sections of society are most vulnerable to exclusion, Sen pointed to the poor and underprivileged. "The documents required for inclusion in the new electoral roll are often difficult to obtain for the underdogs of society," he said, warning that class bias inherent in documentation requirements could disproportionately affect the indigent.

Although the issue was eventually resolved, Sen said his experience left him deeply concerned about voters who lack access to similar support

systems. "I could happily say, like the Beatles, 'I get by with a little help from my friends,'" he remarked. "But I worry about others who do not have so many loyal friends. My friends helped me get through the rigid gates of the formidable Election Commission."

Sen was asked to appear for a hearing after officials flagged what they described as a "logical discrepancy" related to the age difference between him and his mother.

"The Election Commission and the Supreme Court must ensure that no adult Indian citizen faces difficulty in qualifying to vote," he emphasised.

Despite these concerns, Sen said he remains eager to cast his vote in the upcoming assembly elections, depending on logistical constraints. As a professor at Harvard University and former Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, he said professional commitments abroad require careful planning.

Recalling an earlier election, Sen described making an intense 48-hour journey across continents to vote in Santiniketan. "But I am 92 now—more elderly," he said reflectively. "I was then only around 82."

Concluding on a contemplative note, Sen said he hoped to once again reflect on Rabindranath Tagore's writings on India's plural cultural heritage—if I manage to do what I should, if I could."

## Heavy Snowfall Disrupts Life in Jammu and Kashmir; Jammu–Srinagar Highway Remains Closed for Second Day



snow-clearing operations in key areas, including Sonamarg, Kullan and Gagangir, in an effort to restore road connectivity. However, officials acknowledged that the intensity of the snowfall has slowed restoration work in several locations.

In Ramban district, local authorities struggled to cope with the sudden and heavy accumulation of snow. Officials said that the available snow-clearing machinery and manpower from the Jammu Power Development Corporation Limited (JPCL) and the Jal Shakti Vibhag were inadequate to address the scale of the disruption. As a result, several remote tehsils, including Batote, Banihal, Gool, Ukhral and Rajgarh, remained cut off from the Ramban district headquarters for

the second day.

Movement on NH-44 was halted at multiple safer locations, including Jakhani Chowk in Udhampur district, as a precautionary measure. Traffic remained suspended up to Ramsoo due to continued snowfall and ice accumulation, officials said, adding that the highway would reopen only after weather conditions improved and the road surface was deemed safe.

Air travel was also hit hard by the adverse weather. Srinagar Airport, along with IndiGo Airlines, announced multiple flight cancellations and a temporary suspension of operations. However, flight services gradually began to resume later in the day, with the first flight landing at Srinagar Airport around 11:00 am.

Railway operations, however, continued in parts of the Kashmir Valley. In Anantnag district, Indian Railways maintained train services despite snow-covered tracks, ensuring limited connectivity for commuters.

Amid the harsh weather conditions, the Udhampur Police on Friday rescued 12 people, including women and children, who were stranded in deep snow in the Chochru Galla area. The individuals, reportedly belonging to nomadic families, were trapped due to the sudden deterioration in weather.

Police said a distress call was received at the Sangh police post, located nearly 12 kilometres from Chochru Galla. Rescue teams were immediately dispatched and took nearly three hours to reach the site due to difficult terrain and heavy snow.

Photos and videos shared by the Udhampur Police on social media platform X showed officers guiding stranded locals down snow-covered slopes. In one video, police personnel were seen carrying elderly women and helping them carefully navigate the treacherous terrain.

Authorities have advised residents and travellers to avoid unnecessary movement, remain indoors, and follow official weather and traffic advisories as snowfall continues across the region.

## Shashi Tharoor Declines Public Comment on Skipping Congress Meet, Says Issues Will Be Taken Up Internally

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has firmly declined to engage in public speculation over his absence from a recent high-level Congress meeting in Delhi, stating that the matter has already been sufficiently discussed and will be addressed directly with the party leadership. Speaking at the Kerala Literature Festival, Tharoor made it clear that he would not use a public platform to discuss internal party issues.

"I am not here to make any political declarations. This is a literary festival," Tharoor said when asked about the controversy. "These are issues I need to take up with my own party leadership and not in a public forum."

Senior leaders of the Congress's Kerala unit were



not. I will not publicly clarify my reasons," he said, adding that the party leadership had been informed well in advance about his unavailability.

Senior leaders of the Con-

gress's Kerala unit were scheduled to meet party president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi in Delhi as part of preparations for the upcoming Kerala Assembly elections. As one of the party's most prominent leaders from the state, Tharoor was widely expected to attend. However, sources cited by NDTV said he skipped the meeting due to a prior commitment, which had been communicated to the leadership beforehand.

Reiterating his commitment to the party, Tharoor said he would continue to play an active role in Parliament and convey his views directly to party leaders rather than through public commentary or media statements.

Addressing another area of debate, Tharoor defended his remarks on Operation Sindoora, asserting that he had not deviated from the Congress's official position in Parliament. While acknowledging that there had been public disagreement on certain principles, he

## Air India Cancels New York, Newark Flights Amid Severe Winter Storm Warning in US



Air India has issued a travel advisory and cancelled all of its flights to and from New York and Newark for January 25 and 26, citing a severe winter storm forecast to impact the US East Coast. The airline said the decision was taken to ensure the safety and well-being of passengers and crew as extreme weather conditions are expected to disrupt flight operations across the region.

In a statement posted on social media platform X, Air India warned that heavy snowfall is forecast across New York, New Jersey, and adjoining areas from early Sunday morning through Monday. The airline said the storm is expected to have a significant impact on air travel and airport operations.

"A severe winter storm with heavy snow is forecast for New York, New Jersey and adjoining areas in the US East Coast from early Sunday morning to Monday, which will have a significant impact on flight operations," Air India said in its advisory. "In view of the safety, well-being and convenience of our passengers and crew, all Air India flights to and from New York and Newark have been cancelled on 25 and 26 January."

The airline added that dedicated teams are in place to assist affected passengers. Travellers booked on flights during the affected dates have been advised to contact Air India's 24x7 call centre or check the airline's official website for further updates and rebooking options.

The cancellations come as a powerful winter storm sweeps across large parts of the United States, bringing heavy snow, ice, and danger-

ously cold temperatures. According to CNN, nearly two-thirds of the US population is currently facing the impact of the massive weather system, which is stretching over 2,000 miles from Texas to New England as it moves eastward through the weekend.

The storm is expected to produce crippling ice accumulations in several regions, posing serious risks to power infrastructure. Authorities have warned that hundreds of thousands of people could lose electricity, with outages potentially lasting several days in some areas. Travel conditions across much of the storm's path are expected to range from extremely difficult to impossible, with both road and air travel severely disrupted.

Thousands of flights across the US have already been cancelled or delayed ahead of the storm as airlines attempt to manage operational challenges caused by snow-covered runways, icy conditions, and limited visibility. Airports along the East Coast are bracing for further cancellations as the storm intensifies.

In response to the looming crisis, at least 15 US states have declared a state of emergency to mobilise re-

sources and prepare emergency services. These include Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, New York, Kentucky, Maryland, New Jersey, and Kansas. Texas Governor Greg Abbott announced a disaster declaration covering 134 counties, while Washington, DC Mayor Muriel Bowser declared a state of emergency for the nation's capital.

CNN also reported that more than half of all Americans are expected to experience subzero wind chills over the coming week, increasing the risk of frostbite and hypothermia. Ahead of what officials have described as a historic winter storm, US President Donald Trump said on Saturday that the federal government is coordinating closely with state and local authorities. He added that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is on standby and ready to respond as conditions worsen.

Passengers travelling to or from the affected regions have been advised to monitor weather updates closely and stay in touch with airlines for the latest information.

## US Treasury Hints at Possible Removal of India Tariffs as Russian Oil Imports Plunge



US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent suggested on Friday at the World Economic Forum in Davos that the 25% tariffs imposed on India for purchasing Russian oil could eventually be lifted, following a sharp decline in India's Russian oil imports.

Speaking with Politico, Bessent described the tariffs as a "huge success," noting that Indian refinery purchases of Russian crude have "collapsed" since the levy was introduced. He indicated that while the tariffs remain in place, a diplomatic path exists for their removal if India shifts its energy sourcing. Bessent emphasized that these trade measures have tangible benefits for the US economy.

"We put a 25 percent tariff on India for buying Russian oil, and the Indian purchases by their refineries of Russian oil have collapsed. So that is a success. The tariffs are still on. I would imagine there is a path to take them off, so that's a check and a huge success," he told Politico.

The remarks come amid discussions in the US Congress on a proposed bill that could impose a 500% duty on countries importing Russian oil. India, however, has maintained that its energy policy is guided by the need to secure "affordable energy" for its population of 1.4 billion.

Reacting to the proposed legislation, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir

Jaiswal said New Delhi is closely monitoring developments.

"We are aware of the proposed bill. We are closely following the developments," Jaiswal said during a weekly press briefing.

Despite potential legislative threats from Washington, India continues to navigate its strategic autonomy while responding to global market realities.

Bessent also criticized European countries for purchasing refined Russian oil from India, arguing that by doing so, they are "financing the war against themselves." He described the trade as an "act of irony and stupidity," noting that Europeans were buying products refined in India from discounted Russian crude.

"Before the Ukraine invasion, approximately 2-3 percent of Indian oil went into its refineries from Russia. After sanctions, it got deeply discounted, and purchases surged to the high teens—7, 18, 19 percent. Huge profits for Indian refiners. But in the ultimate act of irony and stupidity, Europeans were buying the refined products made from Russian oil. They are financing Russia's war effort," Bessent said.

Meanwhile, the European Union and India are preparing to advance a comprehensive strategic agenda, including a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) described by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen as "the mother of all

deals." The agreement would cover a market of 2 billion people, representing roughly 25% of global GDP.

Bessent suggested that the EU has avoided imposing similar tariffs on India to protect the forthcoming trade deal, calling it "virtue signalling."

"I will also point out that our virtue-signalling European allies refused to do it because they wanted to sign this big trade deal with India," he said.

The EU and India are set to hold the 16th summit in New Delhi, where a new comprehensive strategic agenda is expected to be adopted. Von der Leyen is scheduled to visit next weekend to finalize the agreement, underscoring Europe's view of India as a crucial economic partner despite the Russian oil controversy.

Speaking at Davos, von der Leyen emphasized Europe's commitment to expanding trade and international cooperation.

"There is still work to do. But we are on the cusp of a historic trade agreement. Some call it the mother of all deals. One that would create a market of 2 billion people, accounting for almost a quarter of global GDP," she said.

Placing the agreement in a broader context, von der Leyen reiterated that Europe remains open to partnerships and trade opportunities worldwide.

## As Bangladesh Heads to the Polls, US Signals Openness to Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami



More than a year and a half after mass anti-government protests forced Sheikh Hasina to resign as Bangladesh's prime minister and flee the country, the nation is preparing for a landmark election on February 12. The political landscape has shifted dramatically since Hasina's ouster, with her Awami League barred from contesting the polls and the Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami poised for what analysts say could be its strongest electoral performance to date.

Against this backdrop, the United States has stepped up its engagement with Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh's largest Islamist party, signalling a pragmatic willingness to work with whichever political forces emerge victorious. According to a report by The Washington Post, US diplomats have conveyed openness to engaging with the Jamaat, a party that has been banned multiple times in Bangladesh's history, most recently under Hasina's rule.

The report cites audio recordings from a closed-door meeting held on December 1 between a Dhaka-based US diplomat and

female Bangladeshi journalists. In the discussion, the diplomat remarked that Bangladesh had "shifted Islamic" and predicted that Jamaat-e-Islami would "do better than it's ever done before" in the upcoming election. "We want them to be our friends," the diplomat reportedly said, even asking journalists whether they would consider featuring members of the party's student wing on their programmes.

The diplomat also sought to allay fears that Jamaat-e-Islami would impose a strict interpretation of Islamic law if it came to power, suggesting that the US would respond decisively with punitive economic measures should that occur. According to the reporting, the diplomat said the United States would impose "100 percent tariffs" if the party attempted to enforce rigid religious governance.

In a statement to The Washington Post, Monica Shie, spokesperson for the US Embassy in Dhaka, described the meeting as a "routine gathering" and an "off-the-record discussion" in which "numerous political parties were discussed." She

stressed that Washington does not favour any single political party and intends to work with whichever government is elected by the Bangladeshi people.

### A Controversial Political Force

Jamaat-e-Islami was founded in 1941 by Islamist thinker Syed Abul Ala Maududi and has long been one of South Asia's most controversial political movements. The party opposed Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan, arguing that separation would destabilise the regional balance in South Asia. During the 1971 Liberation War, senior Jamaat leaders aligned themselves with the Pakistani state and were accused of forming paramilitary groups that killed thousands of civilians fighting for independence, according to reports by Al Jazeera.

When Sheikh Hasina returned to power in 2009, her government launched war crimes trials against senior Jamaat leaders through the International Crimes Tribunal and banned the party from political activity. A sweeping crackdown followed, leaving Jamaat political

ly marginalised for more than a decade.

That ban was lifted after Hasina was toppled by student-led protests in 2024. Since then, Jamaat-e-Islami has re-emerged as a major political force under the leadership of chief Shafiqur Rahman,

Secretary-General Mia Golam Porwar, and deputy chief Syed Abdullah Mohammed Taher. The party has capitalised on political instability and public anger over corruption to expand its support base.

Historically, Jamaat has advocated governance based on sharia law and policies that would restrict women's participation in the workforce, arguing that shorter working hours would allow women to better fulfil their domestic responsibilities. In recent years, however, the party has sought to soften its image, emphasising anti-corruption and economic justice while avoiding overt religious rhetoric.

The Jamaat has also entered into an alliance with the National Citizen Party (NCP), a student-led political outfit formed by figures who spearheaded last year's uprising against Hasina. The

partnership has sparked internal dissent within the NCP, with some members opposing collaboration with the Islamist party.

Since Hasina's fall, Jamaat-e-Islami leaders have held several meetings with US officials. Party chief Mohammad Rahman also held a virtual meeting in January with US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer, signalling growing international engagement.

### Concerns in New Delhi

The US outreach to Jamaat-e-Islami is unlikely to ease anxieties in India. New Delhi designated Jamaat-e-Islami's Kashmir chapter an "unlawful group" in 2019 and renewed the designation in 2024. Indian officials remain wary of the party's ideological orientation and its potential impact on regional security.

Thomas Kean of the International Crisis Group told Al Jazeera that a Jamaat-led government would face greater difficulty resetting relations with India than a government led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). "India is looking for a reset after the election, but that will be more challenging with Jamaat in power than the BNP," Kean said, citing domestic political constraints in both countries.

The US engagement with Jamaat could also further strain India-US relations, already under pressure due to US tariffs on Indian products, disagreements over India's conflict with Pakistan, and New Delhi's continued purchases of Russian oil.

### The Road to February 12

The February 12 election is expected to be a contest between the BNP and an alliance led by Jamaat-e-Islami, its former coalition partner. Jamaat leaders have said they remain open to working with the BNP, raising the possibility of a power-sharing arrangement if the opposition prevails.

As Bangladesh approaches election day, the vote is shaping up not only as a test of its democratic transition but also as a moment with significant regional and geopolitical consequences.

## Indian-Origin Family Killed in Georgia Shooting; Husband Charged With Murder

A devastating tragedy struck an Indian-origin family living in the United States after a domestic dispute allegedly turned deadly in the early hours of Friday morning. An Indian woman and three of her relatives were shot dead at their home in Lawrenceville, a suburb of Atlanta in the US state of Georgia. Police have charged the woman's husband, Vijay Kumar, with multiple counts of murder in connection with the incident.

According to authorities, the shooting occurred around 2:30 am local time at a residence in the 1000 block of Brook Ivy Court. Officers from the Gwinnett County Police Department responded to a 911 call and arrived at the scene within minutes. Inside the home, they discovered four adults who had suffered fatal gunshot wounds.

Police later identified the victims as Meenu Dogra, 43, Kumar's wife; Gourav Kumar, 33; Nidhi Chander, 37; and Harish Chander, 38. All four were of Indian origin and were related to one another, though officials have not publicly detailed the pre-

cise family relationships beyond Dogra being Kumar's spouse.

Children were present inside the house at the time of the shooting, adding to the horror of the incident. According to police, three children ran into a closet and hid as the violence unfolded. One of the children, who is believed to be the son of Kumar and Dogra, managed to place an emergency call to 911, alerting authorities to the situation.

Police said the child's call played a critical role in their rapid response. Based on the information provided, officers were able to locate the residence quickly. The children were not physically harmed during the shooting. They have since been taken into the care of a family member, authorities confirmed.

Vijay Kumar, 51, was arrested and has been charged with multiple serious offenses. According to local media outlet Fox5 Atlanta, Kumar faces four counts of felony murder and four counts of aggravated assault. In addition, prosecutors have filed four counts of

malice murder, one count of cruelty to children in the first degree, and two counts of cruelty to children in the third degree.

Police have not publicly disclosed the motive behind the shooting but described it as stemming from a family dispute. The investigation remains ongoing, and authorities have said further details will be released as they become available.

The incident has sent shockwaves through both the local community in Georgia and the Indian diaspora in the United States. Neighbours described the area as a quiet residential neighbourhood and expressed disbelief that such violence could occur there.

India's Consulate General in Atlanta confirmed the deaths and the arrest of the suspect, expressing deep sorrow over the incident. In a statement posted online, the consulate said it is in touch with local authorities and is providing all possible assistance to the affected family.

"We are deeply grieved by a tragic shooting incident linked to an alleged



family dispute, in which an Indian national was among the victims," the consulate said in its statement. "The alleged shooter has been arrested, and all possible assistance is being extended to the bereaved family."

The consulate has not specified the nature of the assistance being provided but typically offers support related to legal processes, coordination with authorities, and, when required, repatriation of remains.

The shooting highlights ongoing concerns around domestic violence and gun-related crimes in the United States, particularly incidents involving families and children. Advocacy groups have repeatedly stressed the need for greater awareness, intervention, and support mechanisms to prevent domestic disputes from escalating into fatal violence.

As the legal process unfolds, Kumar remains in custody while awaiting further court proceedings. Authorities have urged anyone with additional information related to the case to come forward as the investigation continues.

# Markets End Week Deep in Red as Broader Indices Underperform



Indian equity markets witnessed sharp losses over the week, with broader indices falling 4-6 percent and logging their steepest weekly decline in four months. Weak earnings from India Inc, sustained foreign investor outflows, and the rupee touching a fresh all-time low weighed heavily on sentiment.

The BSE Sensex tumbled 769.67 points, or 2.43 percent, to settle at 31,537.70, while the Nifty50 dropped 241.25 points, or 2.51 percent, to close at 25,048.65. For the month so far, both benchmark indices are down nearly 4 percent.

Broader markets continued to underperform, with the BSE Midcap index slipping 5.7 percent and the Smallcap index plunging 9 percent during the month.

## Sectoral Rout Across the Board

All sectoral indices ended the week in negative territory. Nifty Realty was the worst performer, shedding over 11 percent. Nifty Consumer Durables declined 6.5 percent, while Nifty Media dropped 4 percent. Indices such as Oil & Gas, Energy, Infrastructure, Defence, and Healthcare fell around 3 percent each.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) remained net sellers, offloading equities worth ₹14,651.99 crore during the period. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs), however, cushioned the fall with net purchases of ₹20,746 crore.

## Global Headwinds and Earnings Pressure

According to Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Investments, Indian markets re-

mained cautious and volatile due to renewed global trade tensions and persistent FII outflows.

"Fresh U.S. tariff threats against European nations linked to the Greenland issue damped global risk appetite, leading investors toward safe-haven assets. Rising global bond yields and uncertainty around the U.S. Supreme Court's review of Trump-era tariffs further restrained risk-taking," Nair said.

He added that corporate earnings also reinforced the mixed sentiment, with weaker-than-expected results from major banking and IT companies offsetting selective value buying.

Although global cues briefly improved following constructive remarks from the U.S. President on the Greenland issue, the domestic rebound proved short-lived, highlighting ongoing external pressures.

## Outlook for the Coming Week

Market direction next week is likely to be guided by global macroeconomic cues and domestic fiscal expectations. Investors will closely monitor signals from the U.S. Federal Reserve regarding the pace of interest rate cuts, along with developments related to the Union Budget, particularly measures aimed at supporting capital flows and easing external trade pressures.

With the Q3 earnings season still underway, stock-specific action is expected to remain pronounced. Overall sentiment is likely to stay cautious, influenced by global developments, currency movements, and earnings outcomes, though selective opportunities may emerge in pockets supported by strong domestic demand.

## Smallcap Stocks See Sharp Declines

The BSE Smallcap index fell nearly 6 percent, with stocks such as Best Agrolife, Sudarshan Colorants India, Wardwizard Innovations and Mobility, Systematix Corporate Services, Ajmera Realty & Infra India, Sigachi Industries, Wanbury, OneSource Specialty Pharma, IIFL Finance, Jayaswal Neco Industries, Ramco Systems, Authum Investment & Infrastructure, Arisinfra Solutions, and Bigbloc Construction declining between 17 and 25 percent.

On the positive side, Dhampur Bio Organics, Lotus Chocolate Company, Bazaar Style Retail, Jindal Saw, Shanthi Gears, and Mercury EV-Tech posted gains.

## Where Is Nifty50 Headed?

Hitesh Tailor, Research Analyst, Choice Equity Broking

The 81,000-81,100 zone is emerging as a critical support area for the Sensex, where buying interest could emerge if weakness persists. On the upside, 82,000-82,100 is the immediate resistance band, likely to witness profit booking during any short-term rebound.

With the index closing decisively below key intermediate levels amid broad-based selling, the near-term bias remains cautious to bearish. Selective accumulation is advisable only if key support levels hold and clear buying interest returns.

## Amol Athawale, VP – Technical Research

As long as the market trades below the 100-day SMA (25,500 for Nifty and 83,000 for Sensex), the weak structure is likely to persist. Immediate support lies

at 24,900/81,100. A breach could accelerate selling toward 24,700-24,500 on Nifty and 80,500-80,000 on Sensex.

On the upside, a move above 25,200/82,000 could trigger a quick pullback toward 25,350-25,500 or 82,500-83,000.

For Bank Nifty, 58,000 remains a key level. Below this, the index could decline toward 57,500-57,100, while a breakout above 59,000 may lead to a rebound toward 59,350-59,500.

Nagaraj Shetti, Senior Technical Research Analyst, HDFC Securities

After a brief bounce in recent sessions, Nifty resumed sharp weakness on Friday, closing near the day's lows. A long bearish candle on the daily chart signals a lower-top reversal pattern near the 25,400 level. The weekly chart also reflects a strong bearish formation.

The overall trend remains negative, with the index likely to slide below the recent low of 24,900. The near-term downside target is seen around 24,600, while immediate resistance is placed at 25,200.

## Rupak De, Senior Technical Analyst, LKP Securities

The index remained under pressure throughout the session, trading below the 20 EMA on the hourly chart. Importantly, Nifty has closed below the 200-day moving average, indicating capitulation by bulls after repeated attempts to defend this crucial long-term level.

As long as Nifty remains below 25,500, short- to medium-term sentiment is expected to stay weak. On the downside, the index could extend its decline toward 24,700 in the near term.

## Union Budget Likely to Focus on Continuity, Capex, and Sunrise Industries: Insights from Jaspreet Singh Arora



### Budget Outlook: Reform-Oriented with Targeted Support

Jaspreet Singh Arora, Chief Investment Officer at Equentis Wealth Advisory Services, expects the upcoming Union Budget to be a "continuity budget," reinforcing ongoing initiatives rather than introducing radical changes. In an interview with Moneycontrol, he highlighted that the government is likely to focus on boosting capital expenditure, supporting sunrise sectors, and incentivizing manufacturing, particularly in AI and semiconductors.

"We expect an 11-13% boost in capital expenditure, alongside measures to position India as a manufacturing powerhouse. Major support is likely for sunrise industries including defence, electronics, AI, nuclear energy, and critical minerals through Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes," Arora said.

### RBI Policy Likely to Prioritize Liquidity Over Rate Cuts

Arora noted that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is expected to emphasize liquidity management and rate transmission in its February monetary policy rather than aggressive rate cuts. Recent RBI actions, including open market operations and variable-rate repo interventions, suggest a preference for ensuring adequate system liquidity while supporting credit flow.

"Despite cumulative policy rate cuts of around 125 basis points, 10-year Gsec yields have remained largely unchanged, highlighting weak transmission. The RBI is likely to continue using liquidity injections, OMOs, and fine-tuning the policy corridor, with only a modest terminal rate cut of 25 bps as a secondary measure," he added.

### Short-Term Challenges for Equity Markets

Global uncertainty remains the biggest near-term risk for equity markets. According to Arora, President Donald Trump's aggressive and unpredictable tariff policies represent a major challenge, creating trade disruptions that have triggered significant foreign fund outflows. In January 2026 alone, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded over ₹40,000 crore from Indian markets.

"The combination of tariff jitters and a weakening rupee, which recently hit record lows near ₹91.97/USD, increases importer hedging costs, clouds earnings visibility, and intensifies capital outflows. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) provide some stabilization, but their support is limited relative to the scale of foreign selling," he said.

### Global Macro Perspective

Looking ahead to the US Federal Reserve's upcoming meeting, Arora noted that strong economic growth and resilient employment are likely to keep immediate rate cuts off the table. Inflation remains slightly above the Fed's 2% target, with price pressures expected to persist into 2028. Analysts foresee at least two rate cuts later in the year once inflation trends moderate.

Overall, Arora emphasizes that investors should focus on sectors supported by domestic reforms, capital expenditure, and structural growth, while remaining cautious about short-term volatility stemming from global trade tensions and currency fluctuations.

# Indian Markets End Weak Despite Easing Global Trade Tensions

## Large-Cap Stocks Drag Indices Lower

The BSE Large-cap index declined 2.8 percent during the week, dragged down by heavyweights such as Adani Green Energy, Lodha Developers, Adani Enterprises, Wipro, Adani Energy Solutions, SRF, and Eternal. Weak earnings visibility and valuation concerns in select stocks continued to prompt profit booking at higher levels.

In terms of market capitalisation, Reliance Industries recorded the largest erosion in value during the week, followed by ICICI Bank, Etern, and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone. On the other hand, select defensive and IT stocks provided some relief, with Hindustan Unilever, Kotak Mahindra Bank, and Tech Mahindra witnessing an increase in market capitalisation.

## Midcaps and Smallcaps Face Steeper Correction

Midcap stocks witnessed sharper selling pressure, with the BSE Midcap index plunging 4.2 percent.

Stocks such as Kalyan Jewellers India, Godrej Properties, One 97 Com-

munications (Paytm), Ola Electric Mobility, KEI Industries, Oberoi Realty, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, UPL, Tata Communications, Yes Bank, and Crompton Greaves Consumer Electrical declined between 10 and 21 percent.

## Institutional Activity and Currency Pressure

Foreign Institutional Investors remained net sellers, offloading equities worth ₹14,651.99 crore during the week. However, Domestic Institutional Investors provided partial support by purchasing shares worth



₹20,746 crore, helping limit the downside in benchmark indices.

Adding to the pressure, the Indian rupee weakened further against the US dollar, hitting a fresh all-time low of 91.97 during Friday's session. The currency ended the week at

91.96 per dollar on January 23, compared with 90.86 a week earlier. During the period, the rupee traded in a wide range of 91.97 to 90.61, reflecting heightened volatility amid global uncertainty and capital outflows.

Overall, market sentiment remained cautious, with investors closely tracking global macroeconomic developments, currency movements, and corporate earnings for cues on the near-term direction of Indian equities.

## 'Happy Birthday, Momo': Assam Elephant Calf's Sweet Celebration Goes Viral



A heartwarming birthday celebration for a baby elephant in Assam has captured the attention of social media users, winning hearts with its simplicity and genuine affection. Elephant lover Bipin Kashyap recently celebrated the birthday of a young domestic elephant calf named Priyanshi, fondly called Momo, and the joyful moment has since gone viral online.

The video, shared by Kashyap on Instagram, shows him enthusiastically celebrating Priyanshi's special day. In the clip, he can be seen singing the birthday song while standing beside the calf, his happiness and affection clearly visible. The gentle interaction between the two highlights a deep bond, one built on care, familiarity, and mutual trust.

Priyanshi, also known as Momo, is a pet elephant, and the video offers a rare and touching glimpse into the affectionate relationship she shares with Kashyap. Rather than an elaborate event, the celebration is marked by warmth and sincerity, reflecting Kashyap's genuine love for the animal. Many viewers described the moment as refreshing, noting how it showcases compassion toward animals in its purest form.

One of the most endearing parts of the video is the specially prepared birthday "cake" for the elephant calf. The blue-coloured cake, designed exclusively for Priyanshi, is surrounded by an assortment of fruits, grains, and

vegetables. The birthday menu includes bananas, apples, grapes, and other nutritious treats carefully chosen to suit the calf's dietary needs. The thoughtful preparation adds to the charm of the celebration and demonstrates the care taken to ensure the elephant's well-being.

The video quickly drew warm reactions from viewers across social media platforms. Many users expressed delight at seeing the baby elephant enjoy her birthday, calling the moment adorable and uplifting. Comments poured in praising Kashyap for his empathy and love for animals.

"I love those people who genuinely care for animals. Happy birthday to Momo," one user wrote. Another described the clip as "the most beautiful scenery on Instagram." Others offered blessings and heartfelt wishes, with one commenter saying, "Love you, brother, for caring so deeply for these animals. God bless you all."

Several viewers also sent good wishes to both Priyanshi and her mother, hoping for their long and healthy lives. The overwhelming response reflects how simple acts of kindness toward animals can resonate widely and bring joy to people far beyond their immediate surroundings.

In a digital space often filled with distressing news, Priyanshi's birthday celebration stands out as a gentle reminder of compassion, connection, and the happiness found in caring for all living beings.

## A Son's Final Gift: Violin Serenade for Dying Mother Moves the World



In a deeply moving act of love, a man in China arranged a final musical farewell for his dying mother, a gesture that has touched hearts across the world. The emotional moment, widely described online as "the most tender farewell," took place in a hospital in China's southern Guangdong province and has since gone viral on social media.

Huang Haile said goodbye to his mother, Ye Jindi, at the Dongguan Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine on January 6. Aware that her time was limited, Huang invited professional violinist Tang Xing to perform at her bedside in the hospital's intensive care unit. The violinist played "Mother," a well-known composition by Japanese composer Joe Hisaishi, famously featured in the 1999 film *Kikujiro*. The soft, melancholic melody filled the ICU room, creating a quiet and intimate moment between mother and son.

Ye, 77, had been diagnosed with late-stage liver cirrhosis in 2023. Her condition worsened significantly last December shortly after she celebrated her birthday, when she developed heart inflammation. Doctors later informed the family that her illness had progressed too far for surgical intervention. As her health rapidly declined, Ye was admitted to the intensive care unit on December 29.

The decision to bring music into the ICU was deeply personal. Ye had worked as a primary school music teacher earlier in her life, and music held a special place in her heart. Huang explained that he believed hearing is often the last sense to fade before death. At first, he hoped that the music would comfort his mother and give her strength to continue fighting the illness.

"I thought music might give her confidence and courage," Huang shared.

Although Ye's condition did not improve, the music offered a moment of peace and dignity. About a week after the violin performance, Ye passed away. Honouring her final wishes, Huang transferred her from the ICU to a general ward, where she spent her last moments calmly and without distress.

Huang described his bond with his mother as extraordinarily close. After his father, a sailor, died when Huang was just 13, Ye raised him alone. She never remarried, choosing instead to devote her life entirely to her son. Following her liver disease diagnosis, Huang quit his job to care for her full-time.

The viral video has resonated widely, serving as a poignant reminder of love, gratitude, and the quiet ways people say goodbye.

## After a Decade Apart, Microchip Brings Lost Dog Home in Emotional Reunion



A Florida family has been reunited with their long-lost dog more than a decade after she mysteriously disappeared, thanks to a routine microchip scan at an animal shelter. The heartwarming reunion has captured widespread attention on social media and underscored the enduring importance of microchipping pets.

Miami-Dade Animal Services shared the story earlier this month after a senior dog was brought into the shelter. As part of standard intake procedures, shelter staff scanned the animal for a microchip—an often-overlooked step that can prove life-changing. The scan revealed an unexpected result: the dog was Buttercup, a 15-year-old pet who had been missing from her home for over 10 years.

The microchip contained identifying information that allowed shelter workers to trace Buttercup's original owners and contact them. For the family, the call brought an emotional end to a decade-long period of uncertainty and loss. Soon after, Buttercup was reunited with her owners,

closing a chapter that began with her unexplained disappearance more than ten years earlier.

In a social media post, Miami-Dade Animal Services described the reunion as a powerful reminder of why microchipping pets is so critical. "Last week, Buttercup was reu-

nited with her owner after being missing for more than 10 years," the post read. "A decade apart, and thanks to a simple scan, this sweet girl finally made her way home. Moments like this remind us why microchipping matters."

The shelter also empha-

reunion like Buttercup's."

The story quickly resonated with animal lovers online, sparking an outpouring of emotional reactions. Social media users flooded the shelter's Facebook page with messages of joy, curiosity, and affection. Many asked about Buttercup's condition and whether she recognised her family after so many years apart. Others wondered about her journey during the decade-long separation, with one user commenting, "Ten years? We need to know more of the story."

Several commenters shared their own experiences with adopting or losing pets, while others called the reunion heart-melting and inspiring. One user recalled adopting a dog from the same shelter 13 years ago and noted that she remains happy and healthy—proof, they said, of the lasting impact shelters and responsible pet care can have.

Buttercup's story, though extraordinary, serves as a simple reminder: a small chip can make all the difference, even years later.

## Mumbai Actor Wins Hearts After Letting Delivery Rider Walk Free Following Accident



A heartwarming act of compassion by Mumbai-based actor Siddharth Bhardwaj has struck a chord on social media after a video showing his response to a traffic accident went viral. Instead of demanding compensation for damage to his luxury car, Bhardwaj chose empathy, allowing a struggling delivery executive to walk away without paying a single rupee.

The incident occurred when a delivery rider, later identified as Vishal, accidentally crashed into Bhardwaj's parked BMW, leaving visible scratches on the vehicle. In the video shared by the actor, Bhardwaj calmly points out the damage and asks the rider how much he would be able to contribute toward repairs. Clearly shaken, Vishal offers between Rs 3,000 and Rs 4,000 before breaking down emotionally and revealing that his mother is battling advanced-stage cancer.

"So this delivery guy smashed into my parked car," Bhardwaj wrote in

the caption accompanying the video. "Upon asking him for compensation, he broke into tears and showed me his mom's hospital bills as she is on the last stage of cancer."

Moved by the rider's situation, Bhardwaj immediately dropped the idea of compensation. "I didn't have the heart to even ask him for a penny after that," he added. "I'll get my car fixed, and that is my contribution towards his cause and helplessness." The video ends with Bhardwaj embracing Vishal, a moment that has resonated deeply with viewers.

In a follow-up video, Bhardwaj shared an update on Vishal's situation, revealing that social media users had rallied to support the delivery executive. Clearly shaken, Vishal offers between Rs 25,000 and Rs 30,000 in donations from well-wishers.

Bhardwaj said Vishal offered to use the donated

money to repair the damaged car, but the actor firmly refused. "I told him that every single penny is for his mother," he said. "My car is not his responsibility."

The videos have garnered more than 2.5 million views, prompting an outpouring of praise from

users who applauded Bhardwaj's kindness. Many comments highlighted how difficult it can be to let go after damage to a hard-earned possession, while others called the compassion still exists.

"Don't worry, Sid. You will be compensated from

above for this good deed," one user wrote. Another commented, "This is how we can make a difference to any life we touch."

For many, the incident served as a powerful reminder that small acts of empathy can have an outsized impact—both online and off.

## Bengaluru Entrepreneur Plans to Leave City, Citing Traffic, Pollution, and Health Concerns



For many lifelong residents, Bengaluru is more than just a city—it is home, memory, and identity. But for a 41-year-old entrepreneur who was born and raised in the city, leaving has become a difficult yet necessary decision. In a candid post on Reddit, the business owner shared why he is plan-

ning to move out of Bengaluru, citing declining quality of life, worsening traffic congestion, and health concerns.

The entrepreneur wrote that the past year has been particularly challenging, as daily commutes have become increasingly exhausting due to relentless traffic

jams and rising dust pollution. Managing his business, he said, now comes at the cost of constant stress, leaving little time or energy for his family. After decades in the Garden City, he feels he has reached a breaking point.

"Bengaluru is the city where I was born and raised, but it's a city I will soon have to say goodbye to," he wrote. At 41, he said, the physical and mental toll of navigating the city every day has become too heavy. Long hours spent on the road, combined with poor air quality and unending construction dust, have begun to affect his health and overall well-being.

The entrepreneur expressed particular concern for honest taxpayers and salaried employees who have no choice but to endure long daily commutes. He pointed out that many people spend hours stuck in traffic, sacrificing personal time and peace of mind just to get to and from work. According to him, this is not a sustainable way to live.

In his post, he also noted that Bengaluru has now become the second most congested city in the world, after Mexico City—a statistic that underscores the scale of the problem. However, he was careful to clarify that his post was not meant as criticism of the city itself. Instead, he described it as

a warning directed at policymakers and authorities, urging them to acknowledge growing public frustration and take meaningful action.

"I'm not blaming Bengaluru," he wrote. "I'm warning the government. People are tired, and many are actively looking for solutions."

His post struck a chord on social media, drawing mixed reactions from fellow users. Some echoed his frustration, with one commenter saying, "As a fellow Bengalurian myself, I feel exactly the same." Others highlighted different concerns, such as pollution and waste management. "I made peace with the traffic," another user wrote. "It's the dust, debris, and garbage getting to me."

Several users also shared similar experiences, with one recalling a strong desire to leave the city. Together, the responses reflect a growing unease among residents grappling with the changing realities of life in India's tech capital.

## Bangladesh Cricket Board Appeals to ICC Dispute Resolution Committee Amid T20 World Cup Controversy



In a last-ditch effort to overturn the International Cricket Council's (ICC) decision to hold Bangladesh's men's T20 World Cup matches in India, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has approached the ICC's Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC). However, sources say the appeal is unlikely to be heard, as it falls outside the committee's remit.

Facing growing pressure, the BCB, led by Amiul Islam Bulbul, sought to explore all available options before taking further steps. "Yes, BCB has approached the DRC of ICC as it wants to exhaust all its options. If DRC rules against BCB, then the only body that can be approached is the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Switzerland," a BCB official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told PTI.

The controversy escalated after Bangladesh's interim government and sports ministry advisor, Asif Nazrul, who is known for his hardline stance against India, announced that the national team would not travel to India

due to "security concerns." This came in the wake of senior pacer Mustafizur Rahman being removed from Kolkata Knight Riders' IPL squad at the direction of the BCCI, prompting claims that the players' safety could be at risk.

However, according to the ICC's constitution and the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the DRC, the committee has no authority to hear appeals against decisions made by the ICC Board of Directors. Clause 1.3 of the ToR explicitly states: "The Committee shall not operate as an appeal body against decisions of the ICC or any decision-making body established under the ICC's Memorandum and Articles of Association or under any rules or regulations of the ICC."

An ICC board source told PTI that while Bangladesh can formally approach the DRC, the rules clearly prevent the committee from hearing cases challenging Board of Directors' decisions. "Bangladesh can approach the DRC, but if one looks at the rules, the case cannot

even be heard as the committee doesn't have the remit to hear an appeal against a decision made by the Board of Directors," the source said.

The ICC Board of Directors, following an independent security assessment which rated the threat level as "low to moderate," voted 14-2 in favor of keeping Bangladesh's matches in India. Despite this, Nazrul has maintained that the decision was ultimately a government directive rather than a cricket board decision.

The DRC, chaired by English barrister Michael Beloff, KC, operates under British law and primarily evaluates whether ICC rules and procedures were correctly followed. It does not function as a conventional appeals tribunal.

ICC sources have expressed frustration over the way the BCB handled the situation. "The ICC Board Members are extremely angry with Amiul Islam Bulbul as to why a press conference was held before informing the ICC of their decision. Asif Nazrul is persona-non-grata for the ICC, but Bulbul shouldn't have allowed the

standing" with the BCCI was not legally binding, but merely a "letter of intent."

The committee typically examines procedural compliance rather than substantive disputes, meaning the BCB's request to move the T20 World Cup fixtures is unlikely to succeed. The DRC comprises several independent experts, including Beloff, Mike Heron (KC), Justice Winston Anderson, Deon van Zyl (South Africa), Gary Roberts (Americas), Guo Cai (Asia), Annabelle Bennett (EAP), Jean Paulsson (Europe), Peter Nicholson (Ethics Officer), and committee administrators Vijay Malhotra (Chair of Audit Committee) and Sally Clark (Management Support).

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## Manoj Tiwary Criticizes Bangladesh's T20 World Cup Withdrawal, Cites Political Interference



Former Indian cricketer Manoj Tiwary has criticized Bangladesh's decision not to play their ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 matches in India, suggesting that political interference influenced the move rather than genuine security concerns.

Speaking to ANI, Tiwary questioned the reasoning behind Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) decision, pointing out that the country's former Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, resides safely in India. "It wasn't from the board's side. Today, if you watched the press conference, the Sports Minister gave a statement to the media, saying there is a security risk, but the board president was standing right next to him. Generally, in other countries, the cricket board is an autonomous body, and political and ministerial involvement is limited only to organizing events," he said.

Meanwhile, the ICC has kept Scotland on standby as a potential replacement team should Bangladesh fail to participate. ICC Chairman Jay Shah, who was recently in Namibia for the U19 World Cup, is currently in Dubai, with a formal announcement regarding Bangladesh's status expected by Saturday.

As the T20 World Cup draws closer, this unprecedented dispute highlights the complex interplay between politics and cricket administration. The BCB's move to approach the DRC reflects both its desperation and the limitations of governance mechanisms in international cricket.

Whether the decision will ultimately affect the Bangladesh team's participation remains uncertain, but the situation underscores the challenges of balancing security concerns, political influence, and the aspirations of players in high-profile international tournaments.

Tiwary lamented the impact of this decision on Bangladeshi players. "This is a loss for the players. All Bangladeshi players want to play for their country, and it's their dream to perform in the World Cup. But what can the players do now? It wasn't in their hands. The ICC's instruction was simply, 'Either you play, or you leave.' We know the board didn't make the decision—the Sports Ministry did. Politics has entered sports, and this time it's affected a major decision: Bangladesh is not coming to play in the World Cup."

As per the current schedule, Bangladesh are set to start their T20 World Cup campaign on February 7 against West Indies at Eden Gardens, Kolkata. They will then face Italy on February 9, also in Kolkata, before taking on England. Afterward, they are scheduled to travel to Mumbai to play Nepal at Wankhede Stadium.

## Ishan Kishan Shines on Return, Blasts 76 off 32 Balls Against New Zealand



### Bowler-Specific Challenges

- Finger Spinners:** Dew drastically reduces grip, making it difficult to impart revolutions.
- Wrist Spinners:** Considered more effective in dewy conditions due to variations in delivery and less reliance on tight finger grip.
- Fast Bowlers:** The primary issue is control. A slippery ball can lead to wide deliveries and difficulty executing yorkers, slower balls, and bouncers.

**A Structural Challenge**  
The growing impact of dew has reignited an old debate about T20 cricket: is the game too dependent on the toss? Experts like Bhogle warn that the format risks creating a "win-the-toss-win-the-match" pattern, while Gavaskar has suggested earlier start times to reduce dew's influence. Despite these discussions, solutions remain elusive.

**Why Batters Love Dew**  
For teams chasing, dew is a silent ally. The ball comes onto the bat cleaner, timing improves, and lateral movement diminishes, reducing risk for batters. While a wet outfield can occasionally slow the ball, the advantage overwhelmingly favors the side batting second, especially when the target is modest.

India wicket-keeper batter Ishan Kishan made a spectacular return to the national team ahead of the T20 World Cup, smashing a blistering 76 off just 32 balls in the second T20I against New Zealand on Friday. The innings was a timely response to doubts over his place and form, as selectors had backed him for a top-order role over Shubman Gill.

Kishan had a quiet outing in the series opener, and even after arriving at the crease in the second T20I, admitted that doubts had crept into his mind. "I asked myself one question, can I do it again or not? And I had a very clear answer: I felt I could bat through the innings and play good shots. I just needed to get runs somewhere to answer my questions. Even if I got out, I just wanted to play good cricket, that was it," he said after the match.

He shared the crease with India skipper Suryakumar Yadav, a familiar partner from their Mumbai Indians days in the Indian Premier League (IPL). Their understanding and quick running between the wickets added momentum to India's innings, with Kishan taking charge with aggressive strokeplay and calculated risks.

Kishan credited his resurgence to his strong performances in domestic cricket, which not only earned him a recall but also bolstered his

confidence ahead of the international assignment. "I was just looking to score runs. Sometimes it's important to do it for yourself, to answer your own questions about how you're batting and whether you're capable of playing for India. That's why it was important for me to play domestic cricket and get runs. The good part was that we won the trophy as well, and I carried that confidence here. So it was a pretty good day for me," he added.

The innings underlined Kishan's ability to handle pressure and adapt to different match situations, reaffirming the faith of selectors who chose him over the established top-order option, Shubman Gill. His stroke-making, coupled with quick running and tactical awareness, provided India with the platform to build a competitive total against the Kiwis.

Despite the brilliant performance, Kishan acknowledged that his job is far from over. India still have three more T20Is against New Zealand, giving him the opportunity to consolidate his position and continue building momentum ahead of the T20 World Cup. His return could prove crucial as India look to fine-tune their batting line-up and solidify their top-order options in the lead-up to the marquee tournament.

## The Invisible 12th Man: How Dew Could Shape the T20 World Cup 2026



### Timing Matters

February in India typically brings moderate to heavy dew, particularly in North, East, and Central India, as cold nights collide with warmer daytime temperatures. March sees lighter dew conditions as nights warm, though coastal and river-adjacent grounds remain vulnerable. The implication is stark: night matches, especially in the tournament's early stages, are likely to be contested under sharply contrasting conditions across innings.

### Why Dew Tips the Balance

Dew forms when surface temperatures fall be-

low the dew point, causing moisture to settle on the grass, outfield, and ball. In cricketing terms, this moisture fundamentally alters the contest. Teams batting second often find scoring easier, while bowlers struggle to maintain control as the ball becomes slick and difficult to handle.

Former India off-spinner R. Ashwin summed it up succinctly: "The difference in quality between the teams isn't coming through—dew is narrowing that gap if you happen to lose the toss." Statistical analysis of recent T20 games confirms this trend, showing a significant increase in scoring rates for second innings and higher win

percentages for chasing teams under heavy dew conditions. Skill remains crucial, but environmental factors increasingly dictate how it manifests.

**A Bowler's Worst Enemy**

For bowlers and fielders, dew can turn competition into survival. Sunil Gavaskar famously likened a wet white ball to "a bar of soap," an image that resonates across dressing rooms. Grip disappears, yorkers turn into full tosses, slower balls lose their deception, and spinners struggle to extract revolutions as the ball skids across the surface. Even swing specialists find it difficult to maintain a dry side. Routine fielding becomes challenging, with misfields and dropped catches becoming more likely.

Harsha Bhogle has noted, "The next big death bowler will be the best dew bowler," reflecting how T20 cricket skills now extend beyond beating batters to mastering conditions themselves.

**Why Batters Love Dew**

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## Sharwanand Unveils Teaser of Stylish Crime Comedy 'Baa Baaa Black Sheep'



Tollywood is set to witness an intriguing blend of crime, comedy, and style with the upcoming film *Baa Baaa Black Sheep*, whose teaser was unveiled by actor Sharwanand on the auspicious occasion of *Vasanth Panchami* on Friday. Produced by Venu Donepudi under the Chitralayam Studios banner and directed by Guni Manchikanti, the film promises a quirky cinematic experience packed with wit, chaos, and high-energy storytelling.

Sharwanand, currently basking in the blockbuster success of *Nari Nari Naduma Murari*, launched the teaser and expressed his delight with its slick presentation and rich visuals. Wishing the team success, the actor praised the unique concept and stylish execution showcased in the teaser, which has already generated positive buzz among film enthusiasts.

*Baa Baaa Black Sheep*

is described as a stylish crime comedy that revolves around guns, gold, and a city-wide humorous hunt involving six individuals. The teaser offers glimpses of a flamboyant gangster, a group of misfit friends, eccentric criminals, and a chaotic chase triggered by the discovery of Mahatma Gandhi's "missing watch." As greed and crime take center stage, the narrative unfolds through hilarious misunderstandings, unexpected twists, and sharp character dynamics.

Producer Venu Donepudi stated that the film smartly blends a crime-driven plot with witty dialogues and situational comedy. "The story thrives on secrets, irony, and humorous mishaps, making comedy an organic part of the crime narrative," he said, adding that strong writing and clever character interactions are the film's biggest strengths.

The film boasts an eclectic ensemble cast featuring Tinnu Anand, Upendra Limaye, George Marian, Akshay Lagusani, Vishnu Oi, Karthikeya, and Vismaya Sri. Adding to its uniqueness, *Baa Baaa Black Sheep* is the first film to be shot entirely in Meghalaya. The breathtaking landscapes of the northeastern state play a vital role in the storytelling, giving the film a fresh visual appeal. The makers collaborated closely with the Meghalaya government to ensure smooth production, with Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma acknowledging the project as a milestone in promoting the state's creative economy and tourism.

Currently in post-production, *Baa Baaa Black Sheep* is eyeing a summer release. With stylish visuals, a quirky crime plot, and a talented technical team backing it, the film is shaping up to be an exciting addition to Telugu cinema's evolving entertainment landscape.

## Attitude Star Chandra Hass' 'Barabar Premista' Set for February 6 Release Amid College Students' Frenzy



Attitude Star Chandra Hass is gearing up to entertain young audiences with his upcoming Telugu entertainer *Barabar Premista*, which is scheduled for a theatrical release on February 6. Directed by Sampath Rudra, the film is produced by Geda Chandu, Gayatri Chinni, and AVR under the banners CC Creations and AVR Movie Wonders, with Kakarla Satyanarayana presenting the project. Miss India finalist Meghna Mukherjee plays the female lead, while Ishtamga fame Arjun Mahi appears in the role of the antagonist.

The makers announced the release date in a vibrant and energetic manner by hosting a special event at Brilliant Group of Colleges in Hyderabad on Wednesday. The campus was filled with ex-

citement as hundreds of students gathered to catch a glimpse of the film's lead pair. Adding to the frenzy, Chandra Hass and Meghna Mukherjee surprised the students with energetic dance performances, creating a festive atmosphere before officially revealing the release date. The announcement of the February 6 release was met with loud cheers, reflecting the strong youth buzz surrounding the film.

Addressing the students, hero Chandra Hass said he was thrilled to begin the film's promotions at a college. "Seeing all of you gives me immense energy. We are confident of scoring a big win with *Barabar Premista* on February 6. Please watch the film in theatres and enjoy it," he said. Hero-

With its lively campus promotions, relatable village-based love story, and youthful energy, *Barabar Premista* is poised to strike a chord with audiences when it hits theatres on February 6.

## Varun Sandesh-Starrer 'Hello It's Me' Title and First Look Poster Launched in Hyderabad



The title and first look poster of the upcoming Telugu film *Hello It's Me*, starring Varun Sandesh in the lead role, were officially unveiled at a launch event held in Hyderabad on Thursday. The film marks the directorial debut of actress Shagna Sri Venu, who earlier earned recognition as a heroine with Government Junior College. Notably, Shagna also plays the female lead in the film, making it a significant milestone in her career.

Produced by VSK Sanjeev, Vangapalli Sandeep, and Vangapalli Sankeerth under the banners S2S Cinemas and Shass Productions, *Hello It's Me* is currently in the final stages of shooting. Actor Darshan Madamanchi plays another key role in the film, which is positioned as a clean, family-oriented romantic entertainer with a strong youth connect.

Several prominent personalities from the film industry attended the launch event and shared their thoughts. Veteran actor Rajasekhar spoke fondly about Shagna, recalling his earlier association with her in a short film. He expressed happiness about being part of the project and praised the journey of young talent in the industry. Actor Dr. Bhadram lauded Varun Sandesh's performances and expressed confidence that his role in *Hello It's Me* would once again impress audiences. He also appreciated the producers for entering cinema purely out of

passion.

Actor Jaswanth described the film as content-driven and said it carries an important message for today's youth. Actress Nandini Rodda, making her acting debut, expressed her excitement about sharing screen space with Varun Sandesh and thanked the team for the opportunity. Cinematographer Brahmateja Maripudi highlighted Shagna's dedication, stating that she handled the project like a "one-woman army," even shooting in challenging weather conditions.

Music director Vamsikanth Rekhana said the film reflects

how today's youth should and should not behave, adding that all six songs have come out exceptionally well. Producers Sanjeev and Sandeep spoke about backing Shagna's vision despite initial skepticism, emphasizing her determination and passion as a filmmaker.

Director Rajesh Jaganatham noted that it is rare for a young actress to simultaneously act and direct a film, calling Shagna's effort commendable. Addressing the gathering, Shagna Sri Venu said *Hello It's Me* is based on a strong, relatable story that every boy and girl can connect with. She also stressed that direction has no gender boundaries, crediting her team and Varun Sandesh for their immense support.

Varun Sandesh, speaking at the event, said after doing consecutive thrillers, he was happy to return to a clean family love story. He expressed confidence in Shagna's storytelling and said the film's music would resonate strongly with audiences.

With a strong cast, youthful theme, and passionate team, *Hello It's Me* is gearing up to strike a chord with audiences upon release.

## Vennela Kishore Steals the Show in a Rib-Tickling Avatar from Upcoming Entertainer 'Purushaha'



attention and further raising curiosity around the film.

*Purushaha* takes a refreshing and realistic approach to the husband-wife dynamic by blending relatable marital situations with situational comedy. With a trendy narrative style that resonates with today's generation, the film promises a unique comic take on post-marriage life. Even while the shoot is underway, the team has been smartly building buzz through quirky and engaging promotional material.

Each poster released so far has added a new layer of intrigue. The teaser earlier hinted at the struggles men face after marriage while also underlining the indispensable role of wives in a man's life. The latest poster featuring Vennela Kishore takes the excitement a notch higher.

Sporting a perplexed expression, Kishore is accompanied by the witty line, "Kitikee Daggara Em Jarigindi?" (What

happened at the window?), suggesting a comic situation filled with misunderstanding and chaos. The visual strongly indicates that the film will explore fresh, never-before-seen comedic moments.

Presented by Battula Saraswathi and produced by Battula Koteswara Rao under the Kalyan Productions banner, *Purushaha* is directed by Veeru Vulavala. The film marks the introduction of Pavan Kalyan Battula as the lead hero. Despite revealing only posters and first looks so far, the makers have managed to generate impressive buzz by introducing characters in a way that reflects their unique traits and behavior, keeping audiences guessing about the story.

Adding to the excitement, the teaser—launched by acclaimed filmmaker Buchi Babu Sana—has received a tremendous response. Packed with comedy in every frame and highlighted by the punchline

"You are the pride of mankind," the teaser has significantly boosted expectations around the film's entertainment quotient.

On the technical front, *Purushaha* boasts a strong crew with cinematography handled by Satish Muthyalu, music composed by Shravan Bharadwaj, editing by Koti, and art direction by Ravibabu Dondapati. Post-production work is currently progressing at a brisk pace, and the makers are expected to announce the release date soon.

Featuring an ensemble cast that includes Pavan Kalyan Battula, Saptagiri, Kasireddy Rajkumar, Vaishnavi Kokkura, Vishika, Hasini Sudheer, Sri Sandhya, Gabi Rock, Anaira Gupta, Rajeev Kanakala, Pammal Sai, VTV Ganesh, and Vennela Kishore, *Purushaha* is shaping up to be a laughter-packed entertainer that promises wholesome fun for audiences of all ages.

## 'Sri Chidambaram Garu' to Release Worldwide on February 6

The upcoming Telugu film *Sri Chidambaram Garu* is all set for a grand worldwide theatrical release on February 6, the makers announced at a press meet held in Hyderabad on Friday. Presented by Smt. Chinta Varalakshmi, the film is produced by Chinta Vineesh Reddy and Chinta Gopala Krishna Reddy under the Sri Chakras Entertainment banner, with Chinta Rajasekhar Reddy serving as co-producer. The film is written and directed by Vinay Ratnam, while noted producer Vamsi Nandipati is releasing it theatrically.

Starring Vamsi Tummala and Sandhya Vashishta in the lead roles, *Sri Chidambaram Garu* has already attracted attention with its recently released teaser, which received an overwhelming response for its emotional depth and refreshing presentation. Adding to the buzz, the song "Velledaari," beautifully rendered by Oscar-

winning music director M.M. Keeravani, struck a strong chord with audiences. Composed by Chandrasekhar, the song has been widely appreciated for its soulful tune and meaningful lyrics, with Keeravani's vocals giving it a timeless emotional appeal.

The release date announcement came alongside the success celebrations of the song. Speaking at the event, chief guest R.P. Patnaik praised the young team for making a mature and inspiring film. He described *Sri Chidambaram Garu* as a story that today's society needs, especially at a time when many youngsters struggle to cope with small problems. "This film sends out a powerful message that one's weakness can become one's strength," he said, while also appreciating Vamsi Tummala's expressive performance and wishing the entire team

success.

Music directors Chandru and Ravi expressed their happiness at collaborating with M.M. Keeravani and thanked Vamsi Nandipati for introducing the project to them. Producer Gopala Krishna Reddy stated that the film was made without compromising on production values and described it as a content-driven cinema comparable to big

budget films. He added that supporting new talent was his main intention behind producing the film.

Actress Sandhya Vashishta, who plays the character Leela, said the film has a feel-good narrative with a Malayalam cinema vibe. Hero Vamsi Tummala highlighted the emotional strength of the film and called it a rewarding cinematic journey, crediting the music

for elevating the overall experience. Director Vinay Ratnam concluded by saying the film is close to his heart and assured that every song and scene would resonate emotionally with audiences.

With strong content, soulful music, and a meaningful message, *Sri Chidambaram Garu* is gearing up to offer an emotional and inspiring theatrical experience this February.

