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Telangana Municipal Elections 2026 Schedule Announced



Hyderabad, 27 January 2026 (TPN Bureau)

The Telangana State Election Commission on Tuesday announced the schedule for the 2026 Municipal Elections, setting in motion the electoral process for urban local bodies across the state.

According to the notification issued by State Election Commissioner Rani Kumudini, the process of filing nominations will begin on January 28 and continue till January 30. The scrutiny of nomi-

nations will be conducted on January 31, while candidates will be allowed to withdraw their nominations up to February 3.

Polling for all municipalities and municipal corporations will take place in a single phase on February 11, 2026, from 7.00 am to 5.00 pm. In the event of any re-poll requirement, February 12 has been kept as a reserve day. The counting of votes will be held on February 13, and results are expected to be declared the same day.

With the announcement of the election schedule, the Model Code of Conduct has come into force across the state with immediate effect. The code will remain in place until the completion of the election process, re-

stricting announcements, transfers, and policy decisions by the government that could influence voters.

The municipal elections are expected to witness keen political competition, as they play a crucial role in shaping urban governance, infrastructure development, sanitation, water supply, and other civic services. Political parties have already begun preparatory activities, including candidate selection and grassroots mobilisation, ahead of the nomination process.

The State Election Commission has directed district administrations and election officials to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made for the smooth conduct of polls. Adequate securi-

ty measures, polling staff deployment, and voter facilitation steps are being planned to guarantee a free, fair, and peaceful election.

Officials stated that special attention will be given to voter awareness, accessibility at polling stations, and adherence to election guidelines. After the completion of ward-level elections, the process for electing chairpersons, mayors, and deputy mayors in municipalities and corporations will follow as per the rules.

The 2026 municipal elections are being seen as a key political exercise in Telangana, as the results are expected to reflect public sentiment on governance and development issues in urban areas across the state.



Revanth Reddy Begins Executive Education at Harvard

Hyderabad, January 27 (TPN Bureau):

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has begun an executive education programme at Harvard University in the United States, marking a rare academic engagement by a sitting chief minister from India. The programme, hosted by Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, focuses on modern leadership challenges and governance in a rapidly changing global environment.

According to official sources, the Chief Minister joined an international group of political leaders, policymakers and professionals for the intensive course, which examines leadership in situations of conflict, uncertainty and institutional stress. The sessions include interactive lectures, case studies and group discussions aimed at strengthening decision-making skills and strategic thinking.

Revanth Reddy's participation in the programme is being viewed by the state government as an effort to gain global exposure and understand international best practices in public administration. Officials said the insights gained from the course would be useful in strengthening governance, policy design and

institutional reforms in Telangana.

The Chief Minister's schedule at Harvard is said to be rigorous, with early morning classes and full-day academic engagement. The programme brings together participants from several countries, providing an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences on leadership, democracy and public policy. At the end of the course, participants are awarded a certificate of completion.

Revanth Reddy's overseas academic visit follows his recent participation in international engagements, reflecting his focus on positioning Telangana as a globally connected and forward-looking state. Government sources clarified that the Chief Minister continues to monitor state administration remotely and remains in constant touch with senior officials during his absence.

Back in Telangana, the development has drawn mixed political reactions. Supporters of the Chief Minister have welcomed the move, stating that exposure to global academic institutions enhances leadership capacity and brings fresh perspectives to governance. They argue that such learning experiences can help leaders better handle complex administrative and social challenges.

However, opposition leaders have questioned the timing of the programme, suggesting that governance responsibilities should take precedence over short-term academic courses. They also raised concerns over optics at a time when the state faces multiple administrative and political challenges. In response, ruling party leaders maintained that the programme is brief, structured and directly relevant to leadership and governance.

Senior Congress leaders defended Revanth Reddy's decision, stating that continuous learning is essential for effective leadership. They emphasised that gaining global insights does not undermine governance but instead strengthens it.

The Chief Minister is expected to return to Hyderabad after completing the programme and resume his duties in person. Officials expressed confidence that the knowledge and perspectives gained at Harvard would positively influence policy decisions and long-term planning in the state. As Telangana continues to navigate economic growth, welfare delivery and administrative reforms, the government believes such global exposure will contribute to more informed and resilient leadership.

KTR Meets Governor, Demands CBI Probe Into Singareni Coal Scam



TPN Bureau | January 27:

Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao on Tuesday lodged a formal complaint with the Telangana Governor, Jishnu Dev Varma, urging a central investigation into what he described as irregularities in the Singareni coal block allocation and operations under the current Revanth Reddy-led government.

KTR, accompanied by a delegation of BRS MPs, MLAs and party leaders, met the Governor at Raj Bhavan and presented a detailed representation alleging that the state gov-

ernment has failed to act on supposed evidence of misuse of authority and financial misconduct in the handling of Singareni Collieries contracts and related tenders.

Addressing reporters after the meeting, KTR claimed that the issue reflects deep systemic problems and that state institutions have been reluctant or unable to address the concerns fairly. He said the BRS has repeatedly sought accountability through state channels, but without results, forcing the party to request intervention by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

KTR criticised the state government for ignoring

repeated warnings and said this inaction undermines public trust in governance. He alleged that powerful interests have been allowed to evade scrutiny, and that only a central probe can ensure impartiality and justice. According to him, the allegations go beyond routine administrative lapses and point to larger questions of transparency and rule of law. The BRS leader stressed that his party is not targeting any individual for political reasons, but is compelled by mounting public concern over the alleged mishandling of public resources. He argued that Singareni coal, a key economic asset for Tel-

angana, must be managed transparently in the interest of workers and the state's long-term prosperity. Reactions from the ruling camp are expected in the coming days, with Congress leaders likely to defend the state government's position and challenge the BRS's assertions. The Revanth Reddy administration has previously dismissed similar allegations from the opposition as politically motivated rhetoric aimed at tarnishing its image ahead of key municipal and general elections.

Political analysts say KTR's move to involve the Governor signals a tactical escalation in the ongoing tussle between the BRS and the ruling Congress, especially as both parties gear up for electoral battles. The complaint also dovetails with the broader narrative pushed by the BRS that alleges misuse of investigative agencies and political victimisation of opposition figures. For now, the ball is in the Governor's court, with observers watching closely to see whether Jishnu Dev Varma will recommend a CBI investigation or refer the matter back to state authorities. Whatever the outcome, the development is set to add another layer of intensity to Telangana's already charged political environment in 2026.

Bhatti Clarifies Ministers' Meet During CM's Absence



TPN Bureau | January 27:

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Tuesday responded to political speculation surrounding a meeting held by senior ministers during Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's absence from the state, asserting that the gathering was routine and purely administrative in nature.

Addressing the media in Hyderabad, Bhatti dismissed claims that the meeting had any political or strategic significance. He said coordination meetings among Cabinet colleagues are a normal part of governance and should not be misconstrued as

power shifts or internal realignments. According to him, the discussions focused on ongoing administrative matters and review of development-related issues. The meeting, held at the Deputy Chief Minister's residence, drew attention as it took place while the Chief Minister was on an official foreign visit. This led to speculation from opposition parties and sections of the media, with suggestions that the gathering could indicate internal differences within the ruling Congress government. Bhatti, however, firmly rejected such interpretations.

He stated that the Cabinet functions collectively and that governance does not come to a halt when

the Chief Minister is travelling. "Ministers are expected to review work, share updates and ensure continuity in administration. There is nothing unusual or secretive about it," Bhatti said, adding that all key decisions are ultimately taken in consultation with the Chief Minister.

Bhatti also underlined that the Congress government remains united and focused on delivering its promises to the people of Telangana. He accused the opposition of attempting to create unnecessary confusion and politicise routine administrative interactions for their own benefit. "Such rumours are being spread deliberately to divert attention from governance and de-

velopment," he remarked.

Senior leaders from the ruling party echoed Bhatti's stand, maintaining that coordination among ministers is essential, particularly when the Chief Minister is away on official duties. They reiterated that no policy or political decisions were taken during the meeting and that the discussions would be shared with the Chief Minister upon his return.

Opposition leaders, meanwhile, continued to question the timing of the meeting, arguing that transparency was required to dispel doubts. However, government representatives insisted that the administration is functioning smoothly and in accordance with established norms.

Political analysts noted that in a charged political atmosphere, even routine meetings tend to attract heightened scrutiny. They observed that the Deputy Chief Minister's clarification appeared aimed at putting an end to speculation and reinforcing the message of unity within the government.

As the Chief Minister is expected to resume duties shortly, the state leadership hopes the controversy will subside, allowing the government to refocus attention on governance, welfare schemes and upcoming administrative priorities.

Minister Seethakka Extends Warm Wishes to Devotees Ahead of Medaram Sammakka Saralamma

Medaram, Telangana | January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Minister Seethakka on Tuesday extended her heartfelt greetings to the millions of devotees arriving for the Medaram Sammakka Saralamma Maha Jata, one of the largest tribal festivals in the world. She expressed her hope that the four-day celebration, deeply rooted in tribal traditions and culture, would fill the hearts of all devotees with devotion, peace, and happiness.

In her statement, Minister Seethakka prayed for the well-being, prosperity, and good health of all attendees through the blessings of Sammakka and Saralamma.

She assured that the state government had completed all arrangements to ensure the safety and convenience of devotees. Measures include transportation, drinking water, medical facilities, sanitation, and essential infrastructure to facilitate a smooth and peaceful darshan experience.

She emphasized that the festival is not only a spiritual event but also a symbol of Telangana's tribal heritage, urging all visitors to maintain decorum and respect the cultural significance of the jata. "We want everyone to have a safe and fulfilling experience while visiting the sacred shrines," she said.

Chief Minister A. Revan



vanth Reddy also conveyed his greetings to the people of Telangana,

highlighting the jata as a grand celebration of the state's tribal culture, often referred to as Telangana's Kumbh Mela. He urged citizens to celebrate the four-day festival as a tribute to nature and the forest deities, ensuring harmony with the environment and local traditions.

The government has undertaken unprecedented efforts to improve the Medaram temple premises, allocating Rs. 250 crore for the expansion of temple grounds and the construction of large shrines for Sammakka, Saralamma, Govindaraju, and Pagidida Raju. The temple precincts have been modernized in accordance with tribal customs, with



decorative gateways on all four sides to accommodate the massive influx of devotees.

Infrastructure improvements include well-maintained roads, permanent facilities, and essential services to ensure that over a million devotees can participate without inconvenience. The government has also

coordinated with police and other departments to maintain security and order throughout the festival.

Minister Seethakka highlighted that the public government's commitment to tribal welfare continues to honor the legacy and inspiration of Sammakka and Saralamma, and urged all visitors to cooperate fully to ensure that the festivities proceed smoothly and safely.

The jata, a symbol of faith, democracy, and tribal pride, is expected to witness record participation, with government departments working round the clock to provide uninterrupted services to all devotees.

Deputy CM Bhatti Highlights Welfare Measures for Singareni Workers

Sangareddy, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Wednesday outlined a series of welfare initiatives being implemented by the Praja Government for Singareni coal workers, emphasizing that the state is prioritizing their well-being and addressing long-standing concerns.

Speaking on the measures, Bhatti highlighted that issues related to the change of names of Singareni employees will be resolved promptly. He assured that workers facing health issues will have all medical invalidation concerns addressed through the designated medical boards.

He further announced that, following Coal India norms, workers will now receive facilities equivalent to officers, including tax-related benefits, and the government will constitute a committee to ensure proper implementation. In addition, to fulfill the dream of home ownership, financial and administrative support will be provided through recommendations by the IFORE Committee.

Bhatti also highlighted



that accident insurance coverage of 1.25 crore has been introduced for all Singareni employees, a scheme recognized nationwide as a model for worker welfare. For the 30,000 contract workers, a separate 40 lakh accident insurance scheme has been implemented.

In the area of compassionate appointments, the maximum age limit for dependents has been increased from 35 to 40 years, enabling more families to benefit from employment opportuni-

ties. Since the Praja Government took office, 2,539 positions have been filled, including 798 external posts and 1,741 appointments on compassionate grounds. Bhatti also stressed that Singareni hospitals will be upgraded into super-specialty facilities, including the establishment of cath labs to improve healthcare access for employees and their families. Highlighting the financial success of the coal company, Bhatti noted that in FY 2024-25, Sin-

gareni recorded its highest-ever profits of 6,394 crore, with 802 crore (34%) distributed to workers as profit share. Additionally, outsourced service personnel received 5,500 each as their profit share. The Deputy Chief Minister said these measures underscore the government's commitment to the welfare, security, and prosperity of Singareni employees and their families, ensuring that they receive benefits and facilities on par with higher-level officers. He

emphasized that the Praja Government will continue to focus on initiatives that improve the quality of life for coal workers, fulfill their aspirations, and provide robust support across health, housing, and financial security. Bhatti concluded by asserting that the welfare of Singareni workers remains a top priority and that the government will continue to monitor and expand schemes to safeguard their interests and well-being.

Deputy CM Bhatti Highlights 100 Crore Welfare for Persons with Disabilities



Madhira, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Wednesday underscored the Praja Government's commitment to the welfare of persons with disabilities (PWDs), stating that in just two years, the government has achieved in this sector what previous administrations could not accomplish in a decade. Addressing a gathering in Madhira Assembly constituency after distributing tricycles to PWDs, Bhatti highlighted that the government has spent 100 crore over the past two years to support persons with disabilities.

He said the People's Government is providing iPads, computers, and tablets to students with disabilities to ensure uninterrupted access to education. "This is a People's Government—an Indiramma People's Government—that thinks about the people. We will ensure that persons with disabilities do not face difficulties and that all necessary welfare

schemes are provided," he said.

Bhatti emphasized that supporting PWDs is a collective responsibility of society. He urged everyone to ensure that those born with disabilities progress alongside others and are given opportunities to excel in education, employment, and other fields. He also stressed the need for greater support and encouragement to ensure PWDs do not feel burdened by their disability.

"Our vision is to empower and uplift persons with disabilities so that they can lead independent and fulfilling lives. The Indiramma People's Government is committed to this mission and will continue to provide assistance in every possible way," Bhatti said.

He added that social attitudes and policies must work hand in hand to create an environment where persons with disabilities are not only cared for but are also encouraged to participate actively in society. The

Deputy Chief Minister reiterated that the government's welfare schemes are designed to enable PWDs to achieve success comparable to their peers.

The event in Madhira also highlighted the government's proactive approach to addressing accessibility, educational support, and mobility needs of PWDs, reinforcing the administration's focus on inclusive development.

Bhatti concluded by affirming that the welfare of persons with disabilities will remain a top priority, and the government will continue to take measures to provide financial, educational, and social support, ensuring that no one is left behind due to disability.

This initiative reflects the state government's broader vision of creating an inclusive society where all citizens, irrespective of their abilities, can thrive and contribute meaningfully.

Revenue System Undergoes Major Overhaul to Deliver Better Services to Citizens

Hyderabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Telangana Revenue, Housing, and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy on Tuesday announced comprehensive reforms in the state's revenue system aimed at providing faster, transparent, and citizen-friendly services. The Minister said the government is introducing corporate-level integrated Sub-Registrar offices to modernize and streamline revenue administration across the state.

Speaking to the media, Minister Srinivas Reddy said that over the past decades, self-serving decisions by previous governments had weakened the revenue system, impacting efficiency and public service delivery. Over the last two years, under the guidance of Chief Minister Revanthe Reddy, the Praja Government has undertaken extensive measures to reform the system and bring revenue services closer to citizens.

The Minister said that on Tuesday, a review meeting was held at the Secretariat with officials to finalize

plans for integrated offices. Under the new system, 39 Sub-Registrar offices along the Outer Ring Road will be consolidated into 11 clusters, constructed in partnership with private construction companies at no additional financial burden on the government. These companies will also maintain the buildings for five years post-construction.

The integrated offices will be developed on 3-5 acre plots, and facilities will include mini-marriage halls for registration of marriages, separate waiting areas for expectant mothers and senior citizens, feeding rooms for women, crèches for children, and modern lift facilities for the elderly and differently-abled. Preparations are underway to lay the foundation stone for the Patancheru integrated office on Wednesday, with similar plans for district headquarters in the second phase.

Minister Srinivas Reddy said that ongoing construction at Talim is progressing rapidly, with a target to make the new integrated offices operational by

June 2. Recently, a foundation stone was laid for the Medchal integrated office, constructed by Rajapushpa Construction near the Patancheru-Shankarpalli main road.

He added that modernization of stamp and registration services, including slot booking and Aadhaar-based signature verification, has already saved considerable time for citizens. The reforms, he emphasized, are not just about

new buildings but about transforming the way citizens interact with government services.

On journalist welfare, Minister Srinivas Reddy stated that the government prioritizes protection, accreditation, and professional dignity of media personnel, in line with Chief Minister Revanthe Reddy's vision. He noted that suggestions from journalist associations were incorporated into the updated G.O.

and that journalist welfare remains a primary focus of the administration. Several journalist associations expressed gratitude to the Minister for the government's transparent and fair approach.

The Minister concluded by stressing that these reforms will modernize revenue administration, enhance public convenience, and create a citizen-first approach in Telangana's governance.



Sridhar Babu Rejects 'Secret Meeting' Claims, Calls Reports Misleading

Hyderabad, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Telangana State IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu on Tuesday dismissed reports claiming that a recent gathering of senior Ministers was a "secret meeting," describing such narratives as misleading and politically motivated. The Minister emphasized that in a functioning democracy, discussions among those holding constitutional responsibilities are routine, necessary, and transparent.

In a detailed statement, Sridhar Babu clarified that the meeting in question took place at the residence of Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and focused solely on administrative and governance matters. He stressed that the Cabinet operates as

a collective unit, and coordination among senior Ministers is part of their duty to ensure smooth administration across the state.

Addressing circulating reports, he said, "Portraying such discussions as secretive is entirely unwarranted and misleading. Coordination among Ministers is a normal aspect of governance and should not be given an unnecessary political color." He expressed concern over the spread of false narratives on social media and certain media platforms, cautioning that such reporting can erode public confidence and create unnecessary controversies.

Sridhar Babu also clarified the circumstances surrounding the meeting. After the state's 'At Home' programme at Lok Bhavan,



the Ministers traveled together in a single vehicle, in full public

view, demonstrating that there was nothing covert about their in-

teraction. The discussions reportedly included preparations for the

upcoming municipal elections, which he described as a legitimate

part of political activity in a democratic system.

The Minister reiterated that the government welcomes constructive criticism but warned that speculative reporting and personal attacks against Ministers undermine democratic discourse. He appealed to the media to act responsibly, focus on accurate reporting, and contribute positively to the development of the state rather than promoting unfounded controversies. Sridhar Babu's clarification comes amid heightened attention on Cabinet interactions, with some media and opposition parties portraying routine coordination meetings as clandestine events. By setting the record straight, he aimed to reinforce transparency, maintain public trust,

and highlight that governance discussions among Ministers are open, accountable, and intended for the benefit of the public.

He concluded by urging citizens and journalists alike to distinguish between normal administrative deliberations and political conspiracies, emphasizing that the government remains committed to effective governance, development, and welfare initiatives across Telangana. The statement reflects the administration's insistence on clarity, accountability, and public confidence in its operations.

The Minister's remarks underline the importance of responsible media reporting and the role of Ministers in maintaining seamless governance while addressing public concerns.

MLC Dr. Balmur Venkat Hits Back at BRS Leaders Over Singareni Controversy

Hyderabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Telangana MLC Dr. Balmur Venkat launched a sharp rebuttal against BRS leaders over recent allegations concerning Singareni coal tenders, calling their claims misleading and politically motivated. Speaking at a press meet, he described the situation as a deliberate attempt to divert public attention from important governance issues.

Dr. Venkat criticized the Kalvakuntla family for spreading false narratives, terming their political maneuvers as "drama". He emphasized that the current public government has preserved and strengthened Singareni under Congress leadership, following established autonomous procedures. Highlighting facts about tender processes, he clarified that requirements such as site visits were not new.



"Site visit rules were introduced by Coal India in 2018, and Singareni implemented them in 2021," he said, noting that the BRS-led governments were in power during both periods. He pointed out that even central government-owned entities and major PSUs, including Railways and Hindustan Copper Ltd., follow similar procedures. "Nothing new has been imposed by the present government," he added.

Dr. Venkat accused the BRS leaders of hypocrisy, noting that over the past decade, they mismanaged Telangana funds and were involved in several scams. From Kaleshwaram irrigation projects to electricity procurement scandals, he alleged that the Kalvakuntla family had repeatedly caused financial loss to the state treasury while engaging in irregularities. He condemned the

false media campaigns launched against the government, saying that attempts to malign the public administration without evidence are unacceptable. Dr. Venkat added that the Deputy Chief Minister has already addressed the issue responsibly, stating that investigations will proceed where there is documented evidence.

The MLC also directly challenged opposition leaders: "If your

daughter's allegations are true, have the courage to hold a press meet and present facts. Silence only signals admission." He insisted that attacks on the government only erode public trust and warned that citizens are increasingly aware of the truth behind such propaganda.

Concluding his remarks, Dr. Venkat called on all political leaders to engage in responsible discourse, focus on development, and refrain from spreading baseless claims that distract from governance and welfare initiatives in Telangana.

This response underscores the ongoing political friction in the state, with the Congress-led government defending its record on Singareni and accusing the BRS leadership of attempting to manipulate public opinion for electoral gain.



Jagga Reddy Slams BJP Over Republic Day Protocol, Defends Gandhi Family's Democratic Legacy

Hyderabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Senior Congress leader Jagga Reddy on Tuesday strongly criticized the BJP-led Union government, alleging a departure from long-established democratic traditions during the Republic Day celebrations. He said the manner in which senior opposition leaders, particularly Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, were seated reflected a lack of respect for constitutional values and political decorum.

Addressing the media, Jagga Reddy recalled that after Independence, leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, and Sonia Gandhi consistently followed democratic traditions that upheld the dignity of the opposition. "When the Prime Minister hoisted the national flag, opposition leaders were seated in the front rows. That was not charity—it was constitutional respect and the people's mandate," he said.

He alleged that during the January 26 cel-

ebrations, Rahul Gandhi was seated in the third row, which he described as a deliberate attempt to humiliate the Leader of the Opposition. "The people of this country must observe BJP's behavior closely. The Modi government has abandoned political traditions that once defined India's democracy," he said.

Jagga Reddy remarked that such actions would not personally affect Rahul Gandhi. "Rahul Gandhi comes from a family where the Prime Minister's post was born. He does not measure dignity by seating arrangements," he said, adding that the Gandhi family had provided decades of governance focused on justice and welfare for the poor.

Using strong metaphors, Jagga Reddy said, "A lion does not need a throne. Whoever a lion sits becomes the throne. Rahul Gandhi's words, thoughts, and conduct reflect that strength. But today, one is called Prime Minister only when seated on a throne."

He also praised Priyanka Gandhi, stating that she had firmly questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Parliament, demonstrating the importance of a strong opposition. Jagga Reddy reminded that leaders like Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi respected opposition stalwarts such as Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani, seating them in the front rows and valuing their presence in Parliament.

"The BJP was given power to provide good governance, not to harass the Gandhi family or erase democratic traditions," he said. He accused the ruling party of indulging in politics of division and manipulation, rather than constructive governance.

Concluding his remarks, Jagga Reddy warned that Prime Ministers may come and go, but history cannot be erased. He urged the current generation to reflect on the values being set today, stressing that democracy survives only when tradition, respect, and dissent are protected.

Kavitha Slams Former MP Santosh Rao



Hyderabad, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Telangana politics witnessed fresh ripples on Monday after Telangana Jagruthi president and senior BRS leader K. Kavitha made pointed remarks against former Rajya Sabha MP Joginapally Santosh Rao, triggering widespread discussion within political circles.

Speaking to the media in Hyderabad, Kavitha alleged that Santosh Rao played a key role in sidelining several leaders who were part of the Telangana statehood movement. She said the sacrifices and contributions of movement activists were systematically ignored, causing deep re-

sentment among grassroots workers. Kavitha asserted that internal conspiracies and power-centric politics had weakened the spirit of the movement within the party. Kavitha stated that leaders who fought relentlessly for Telangana deserved respect and recognition, but instead faced marginalisation. She claimed that certain individuals prioritised personal influence over collective ideology, leading to discontent among senior activists and cadres. Without mincing words, she accused Santosh Rao of being instrumental in creating divisions and eroding trust within the organisation. Her comments come at



a time when the Bharat Rashtra Samithi is already navigating internal challenges following its electoral setback and the changing political landscape in the state. Kavitha's remarks are seen as part of a broader expression of dissatisfaction over the party's internal functioning and leadership decisions taken in recent years.

Observers note that Kavitha has been increasingly vocal about internal issues, often calling for introspection and course correction. On Monday, she reiterated that ignoring ground-level voices would only weaken the party further. She emphasised the need to re-

connect with movement-era leaders and workers who, she said, were the backbone of Telangana's political journey.

Kavitha also appealed to party leadership to reflect on past decisions and ensure that internal democracy and transparency are restored. She maintained that the strength of the party lay in unity and mutual respect, warning that continued internal rifts could have long-term consequences.

The remarks have sparked reactions across political and social media platforms, with supporters and critics alike weighing in. While some party workers welcomed Kavitha's candid ap-

proach, others viewed the public criticism as an indication of deepening fault lines within the BRS.

So far, there has been no official response from Santosh Rao or senior party leadership regarding Kavitha's statements. However, political analysts believe that the episode highlights growing unease within the party ranks and reflects the larger churn underway in Telangana politics.

As the state moves toward future electoral battles, such internal developments are expected to play a significant role in shaping political strategies and alignments in the months ahead.

Cantonment Board Merger Protest in Support of Local Development

Hyderabad, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau
 Cantonment MLA Sree Ganesh staged a relay hunger strike in Hyderabad on Wednesday, demanding the immediate merger of the Cantonment Board with the state's Municipal Corporation to facilitate local development. The protest highlighted long-standing issues faced by residents living under the central government-administered board. Metta Sai Kumar, Chairman of Fisheries, extended his support to the demonstration. Ganesh pointed out

that because the Cantonment Board operates under central government control, the state government is unable to implement development projects in the area. Even when funds from the MLA's development budget are allocated, NOCs from the Cantonment Board are required, delaying or preventing execution of critical projects. Residents also face higher property registration charges compared to other state-controlled municipal areas. While the state charges 7.5%, Cantonment



Board residents must pay 11%, effectively paying 3.5% extra. Ganesh criticized the central government for

delaying democratic processes in the region. The Cantonment Board elections, originally scheduled for 2020, have

been postponed for six years. Instead, the BJP-led government at the Centre has been nominating individuals, one

per year, undermining democratic representation and accountability. The MLA argued that while the central government has repeatedly promised to merge the Cantonment Board with the state municipal corporation, the process has not moved forward, and the nominated system continues, stalling progress. He further claimed that 1,200 crore in service charges due from the central government for Cantonment area development have not been released, leaving essential infrastructure

and welfare projects incomplete. Ganesh accused the BJP-led administration of deliberately blocking funds and delaying the merger to avoid granting the area full state governance benefits. The protest aims to pressure the central government to merge the Cantonment Board with the municipal corporation, ensuring transparent administration, democratic representation, and uninterrupted delivery of development works for residents. Local leaders and res-

idents joined the MLA in demanding that both the funds and administrative control be handed over to the state government so that urban development, planning, and public services can proceed without bureaucratic hurdles. Ganesh emphasized that the merger is critical for equitable development in Hyderabad and called on the central government to act immediately to safeguard residents' interests, resolve service charge issues, and restore democratic governance in the Cantonment area.

Former Corporation Chairman Injured in Alleged Police Rough Handling at Jubilee Hills

Hyderabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau
 Tensions escalated near Jubilee Hills Police Station when police allegedly used excessive force against former State Corporation Chairman Kethireddy Vasudev Reddy during a routine media interaction. The incident reportedly occurred while Vasudev Reddy was addressing the press in connection with a court-issued notice. Eyewitnesses and media personnel present at the scene claimed that police personnel intervened aggressively, causing Vasudev Reddy to fall and sustain injuries. The manner in which the police handled the situation has drawn sharp criticism from BRS leaders, who described the actions as unacceptable and disrespectful. Political observers



have highlighted that the incident raises questions about police conduct and the treatment of public figures during media interactions. BRS representatives called for an immediate inquiry into the matter and demanded accountability for any undue use of force. The police have yet to issue an official statement regarding the incident. Meanwhile, the matter has sparked public debate on law enforcement

practices, with calls for ensuring that media interactions and lawful notices are handled professionally without compromising the safety of individuals involved. The incident at Jubilee Hills underscores growing concerns over police overreach in urban areas, and observers say it may have wider political implications given Vasudev Reddy's position and prominence in local governance.

Dharmapuri Arvind Comments on Meeting Raghunandan Rao

Hyderabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau
 BJP MP Dharmapuri Arvind on Tuesday addressed media speculation surrounding his recent meeting with party colleague Raghunandan Rao, dismissing rumours and clarifying the purpose of the interaction. Arvind said that contrary to some circulating claims, the meeting was strictly political and organisational in nature, focused on party strategy and unity ahead of the upcoming municipal elections. Speaking to reporters near Indira Park, he emphasised that his engagement with Raghunandan Rao was not driven by any personal agendas or hidden motives. Arvind said attempts to interpret the meeting as anything other than normal political dialogue were misleading and unnecessary, and that BJP leaders regularly meet to coordinate on organisational priorities, candidate selection and campaign planning. The MP also pushed back against social media chatter and commentary that suggested internal divisions within the party. He noted that differences of opinion are a natural part of democratic politics, but stressed that speculation aimed at portraying disarray within the BJP was unfounded. According to him, leaders like Raghunandan Rao and him-



self remain focused on strengthening the party's grassroots presence and preparing for the electoral battles ahead. Arvind reiterated his commitment to working in harmony with all party units and leaders to ensure a cohesive approach to the civic polls, where the BJP aims to expand its footprint across urban local bodies. He underscored the importance of strategic discussions among MPs and office-bearers to address local issues, refine campaign messaging and build support in key constituencies. On questions about how the meeting was interpreted by political opponents, Arvind urged critics to refrain from "over-sensationalising" routine organisational discussions. He maintained that BJP members are experienced poli-

ticians who engage regularly to fine-tune positions and policies, and that such meetings should not be misconstrued as signs of discord or controversy. Arvind's comments reflect ongoing political manoeuvring in Telangana as parties prepare intensively for the municipal elections. By publicly clarifying the nature of his interaction with Raghunandan Rao, he sought to underline a message of coordination and focus within the BJP as it gears up to compete across urban bodies and local governance structures. The MP concluded by urging media and political commentators alike to prioritise substantive issues over speculation, emphasising that citizens expect results-oriented leadership as electoral contests approach.

Hyderabad's HYDRA Team Lauded for Heroic Efforts in Protecting Lives and City Assets

Hyderabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau
 The Hyderabad Metropolitan Authority's HYDRA team has been praised for its exemplary role in safeguarding city assets and protecting lives during emergencies, demonstrating commitment to both public safety and urban development. Officials highlighted that HYDRA's responsibilities extend beyond disaster response to preserving government properties worth thousands of crores, protecting the city's environmental and aesthetic assets, and ensuring the

restoration of vital water bodies and lakes that are crucial for Hyderabad's ecological balance. A recent incident at Meer Alam Cheruvu underscored the bravery and dedication of the team. During the lake restoration project, several engineers and laborers became trapped in an unexpected situation. HYDRA personnel promptly intervened, rescuing all individuals and ensuring their safety, an act that earned them widespread appreciation from the government and local communities. The government

emphasized that HYDRA's efforts are not limited to emergency situations but also play a critical role in urban planning, environmental protection, and disaster preparedness. By combining technical expertise with swift action, the team helps ensure continuous public service and safety even under challenging circumstances. The authorities expressed special appreciation to the HYDRA staff involved in the Meer Alam Cheruvu rescue, acknowledging their courage, professionalism, and commitment to public welfare.

Their work is seen as a model example of dedication in public service, inspiring both government employees and citizens alike. With Hyderabad growing rapidly, such interventions highlight the importance of having specialized teams ready to respond to emergencies, protect critical infrastructure, and safeguard both human lives and environmental resources. The government reiterated its support for HYDRA initiatives and affirmed that further resources and training will be provided to strengthen

their capabilities. This recognition comes as part of the broader effort by the state administration to ensure public safety, environmental sustainability, and disaster resilience in Hyderabad, reinforcing confidence in the city's emergency management systems. The incident at Meer Alam Cheruvu has once again showcased HYDRA's commitment, efficiency, and bravery, reflecting the government's emphasis on combining urban development with citizen safety and environmental responsibility.

BJP Stages Dharna at Indira Park Over Public Issues

Hyderabad, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau
 The Telangana unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday staged a dharna at Indira Park in Hyderabad, raising concerns over what it described as the State government's failure to address several public issues. The protest witnessed the participation of senior BJP leaders, party legislators and cadres, who accused the ruling Congress government of neglecting public welfare and delaying key commitments. Addressing the gathering at Dharna Chowk, BJP leaders said the protest was aimed at highlighting the difficulties faced by citizens due to administrative inaction. They alleged that despite repeated representations, the government had not taken concrete steps to resolve pending issues affecting various sections of society. The party leaders claimed that people were being pushed into hardship while the government remained indifferent. The protesters criti-

cised the government's priorities and questioned its claims of transparent and people-centric governance. They alleged that announcements made during election campaigns had not translated into action on the ground. BJP leaders said the dharna was a warning that the party would intensify its agitation if the government continued to ignore public concerns. Several speakers alleged that the Congress government was more focused on political management than governance, resulting in delays in decision-making. They said the administration must act responsibly and ensure timely implementation of welfare measures and policy decisions. According to them, protests like the one at Indira Park would continue across the State until corrective measures were taken. Party leaders also appealed to the public to hold the government accountable and support democratic protests. They maintained that



peaceful agitations were necessary to draw attention to unresolved issues and compel the government to respond. The BJP reiterated its commitment to stand with the people and raise their voices both on the streets and in legislative forums. Security ar-

rangements were in place at Indira Park to ensure the protest remained peaceful. The dharna concluded without any untoward incidents, with BJP leaders announcing that similar protests would be organised in the coming days if their demands were

not addressed. The protest comes at a politically significant time, with municipal elections approaching in the State, and is seen as part of the BJP's broader effort to mobilise public opinion against the ruling party.

Former Minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy Condemns SIT Summons of Ex-MP Santosh Kumar

Hyderabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau
 Former minister Singireddy Niranjan Reddy has strongly condemned the summons issued by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) to former MP Santosh Kumar in connection with the ongoing phone-tapping case. In a statement, he accused the SIT of acting like a "private army of the Congress party" and targeting BRS leaders under the guise of investigation. Niranjan Reddy criti-

cized the police for allegedly using the investigation process to harass political opponents rather than focusing on facts. He stated that the SIT should immediately reveal the evidence collected so far in the case, asserting that without proper proof, the investigation is being misused to malign reputations. He also expressed concern over certain media outlets, claiming that unverified news reports are being used to tar-

nish the image of BRS leaders, which he described as an attack on press freedom and individual dignity. "Journalists should not allow themselves to become tools for political agendas," he said, urging media organizations to verify facts before publishing stories. Addressing the case specifically, Niranjan Reddy said that summoning Santosh Kumar appears to be a tactic to intimidate and humiliate him, and that the former MP

is being portrayed as guilty even before any evidence is presented. He emphasized that such actions undermine public trust in both law enforcement and investigative agencies. The former minister stressed that investigations must be transparent, evidence-based, and impartial, and that law enforcement officials should maintain their dignity and independence, rather than acting as instruments of political parties.

He concluded by calling on the SIT and media organizations to adhere strictly to facts, uphold fairness in reporting, and avoid actions that could be interpreted as politically motivated harassment. This statement highlights growing political tensions surrounding the phone-tapping investigation, with accusations of bias and misuse of authority emerging from both opposition leaders and affected parties.

Jaggareddy Opposes Relocation of Sangareddy Registrar Office

Sangareddy, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau
Senior Congress leader and Sangareddy MLA T. Jagga Reddy has strongly opposed plans to relocate the Sangareddy District Registrar Office and the Sangareddy Registration Office to another location, warning officials against taking any unilateral action. Speaking to the media on Tuesday, he said shifting the office would create significant inconvenience for residents and urged authorities to reconsider the proposal.

The controversy arose after reports emerged that officials were planning to move the offices under the name of an "Integrated Registration Office" to Kardhanur in the Patancheru Sub-constituency. Jagga Reddy described the move as ill-conceived and emphasized that the registrar office, being a district-level facility, should remain in Sangareddy, the district headquarters. He stressed that relocating it would burden residents who visit the office for routine registration work, legal documentation, and property-related matters.

Jagga Reddy suggested that if the government intends to improve registration services in Patancheru, it should focus



on upgrading or relocating the Patancheru Sub-Registrar Office within the same constituency, rather than moving a major district office. He warned that any attempt to transfer the Sangareddy registrar office without proper consultations would meet with strong opposition from both the public and local political leaders.

The MLA also clarified that no relocation decision should be implemented until he personally discusses the matter with District In-charge Minister Damodar Raja Narasimha and Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy. He described his statement as both a caution and a recommendation, emphasizing that officials must respect administrative hierarchy and the concerns of the district residents before taking action.

Local residents, property owners, and legal professionals have expressed concern that relocating the office would complicate registration procedures and increase travel time, especially for people from surrounding mandals who regularly visit Sangareddy for official work. Jagga Reddy's intervention

has heightened attention on the issue, signaling that political leadership is taking public convenience seriously. While the Registration Department has not issued any formal clarification regarding the relocation proposal, political observers suggest that Jagga Reddy's firm stance is likely to delay or halt any immediate action. The issue highlights the importance of consulting elected representatives and local stakeholders before making administrative changes that impact public services.

At present, the proposed relocation appears to be on hold as authorities await further discussions with the MLA and ministers. Jagga Reddy reiterated that the registrar office must continue to operate from Sangareddy, ensuring that the district's administrative and public service functions remain accessible and efficient. The episode underscores how administrative decisions in Telangana are increasingly subject to scrutiny by political leaders, with public convenience being a decisive factor in shaping government action.

Deputy CM Bhatti Urges Support for Congress in Municipal Elections

Madhira, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka on Wednesday addressed a press meeting in Madhira, urging people to support Congress candidates in the upcoming municipal elections and highlighting the government's achievements over the past two years.

Bhatti emphasized that ministers, MLAs, municipal chairpersons, party leaders, and workers must function as a unified team, explaining the various development and welfare programs implemented by the Praja Government to the public. He said that the government has undertaken numerous initiatives to improve the living standards of the urban poor and middle-class families, with targeted plans for housing, employment, and social welfare.

Highlighting the state's economic vision, Bhatti referred to the Telangana 2047 Vision Document, aiming to transform Telangana into a three-trillion-dollar economy capable of competing globally. He said that supporting Congress candidates in municipal elections is essential to achieving this ambitious goal.

Focusing on women's empowerment, Bhatti noted that through MeMPA (Mission for Empowerment of Municipal Women), the government has provided 6,000 crore in interest-free loans to women in municipalities to strengthen their fi-



ancial independence. He added that Telangana's urban areas are witnessing significant employment growth, guided by the government's CURE, PURE, and REAR policies, designed to integrate urban and rural economic clusters for balanced development. In rural areas near municipalities, the government is promoting agriculture-linked industries under the REAR (Rural Agro Regional Economy) program, providing employment and additional income for local farmers while increasing the value of agricultural produce systematically.

Bhatti also highlighted the distribution of new ration cards for families previously waiting for months, covering 1.03 crore households out of 1.15 crore families. For low-income and vulnerable groups, the government provides up to 200 units of free electricity, funded by the state. Women across Telangana now enjoy free travel on RTC buses, enhancing mobility

and participation in social and economic activities.

Education and skill development remain a key focus. Bhatti said the government has set up Advanced Technology Centers in all constituency headquarters and is building Young India Residential Schools to provide world-class education to underprivileged children from backward communities. Bhatti concluded by reiterating that municipal elections are critical for sustaining Telangana's development trajectory. He urged citizens to vote massively for Congress candidates, ensuring that the welfare, empowerment, and growth programs of the Praja Government continue to benefit every section of society.

This appeal reflects the government's push to connect electoral support with ongoing urban and rural development initiatives, highlighting achievements in financial inclusion, women's empowerment, education, employment, and social welfare.

Grand Celebration of Sri Venkateswara Swamy Kalyanam in Karimnagar

Karimnagar, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Karimnagar district witnessed a grand celebration of Sri Venkateswara Swamy Kalyanam on the historic Old Market Road as part of the annual Brahmotsavam festivities of the temple. The event drew thousands of devotees from across the district, making it a vibrant display of faith and tradition.

As part of the celebrations, Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar presented traditional silk garments to the deity, a customary offering from the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). The presentation of these sacred silk clothes is considered a mark of devotion and is an important highlight of the Kalyanam ceremony.

The programme saw the participation of several dignitaries from TTD, including Deputy

Executive Officer Lok Nath, Sud Chairman Komatireddy Narendra Reddy, RDO Mahesh, and the temple Executive Officer, along with other prominent leaders and officials. Their presence underscored the significance of the annual festival and its cultural and spiritual importance in the region.

Thousands of devotees gathered to witness the ceremonial rituals, chanting hymns and offering prayers during the Kalyanam. The event maintained its traditional grandeur, with elaborate decorations, musical performances, and religious rituals conducted according to age-old customs.

Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar emphasized the importance of preserving religious traditions and cultural heritage while noting the



devotion and enthusiasm of the local community in sustaining such festivities. The event served not only as a spiritual gathering but also as a celebration of Karimnagar's cultural identity.

The annual Brahmotsavam, culminating

with the Kalyanam, is a major religious and social event in Karimnagar, attracting devotees, leaders, and pilgrims from neighboring areas. The celebrations highlighted community participation, devotion, and the collective spirit in keeping traditional

practices alive. Overall, the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Kalyanam in Karimnagar was marked by faith, festivity, and cultural vibrancy, reinforcing the city's reputation as a center of devotion and traditional heritage in Telangana.

Ponnamp Prabhakar Reviews Development Work at Vemulawada

Rajanna Sircilla, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Rajanna Sircilla district witnessed a significant visit by Minister Ponnamp Prabhakar and Government Whip Adi Srinivas to the Sri Rajarajeshwara Swamy Temple in Vemulawada, where they performed special pujas and reviewed ongoing development works at the temple premises.

Speaking at a media interaction, Minister Prabhakar expressed his blessings for all devotees and highlighted the government's focus on development and welfare ahead of the upcoming municipal elections scheduled in February. He urged voters to elect Congress candidates in all municipalities and municipal corporations, emphasizing that the Praja Government under Chief

Minister Revanth Reddy has ensured comprehensive development, including essential infrastructure and welfare schemes, in urban and rural areas alike.

The Minister contrasted the current administration's performance with previous governments, noting that over the last ten years, not a single double-bedroom house was allotted, whereas under his tenure, 3,500 Indiramma houses have been sanctioned for the constituency. Similarly, ration cards are being issued to all eligible citizens without political bias, and distribution of Sanna rice is being carried out, a scheme unique to Telangana.

Highlighting electricity reforms, he said that families who previously had to pay 1,000 per month for electricity are now provided 200 units



of free supply monthly. Women traveling across the state, including to Vemulawada and Sammakka Saralamma Jataka, can avail of free RTC bus travel, a scheme valued at 9,000 crore, funded entirely by the government.

Minister Prabhakar also spoke about farmer welfare, including Rythu Bharosa, loan waivers, and 500 bonus payments for minor crops, and emphasized that the government is filling vacant jobs quick-

ly through a job calendar, improving employment opportunities across the state.

Regarding temple development, he clarified that Vemulawada temple improvements are ongoing and under government supervision, including foundation stone laying for key projects and modernization of the bus station and other facilities. He rejected claims that Amruth schemes were election-centric, stating that development initiatives

are long-term and continuous, not tied to electoral politics.

On political matters, Prabhakar criticized opposition attempts to politicize development, citing instances where voters elected Congress candidates despite opposition campaigns. He reiterated that all urban development, healthcare, and educational programs are being implemented transparently, and assured that district reorganization will not affect ongoing

Pippiri Village Transforms into Model Village Under Deputy CM Bhatti's Guidance

Adilabad, January 27, 2026 | TPN Bureau

Pippiri village in Bazarhatnur mandal, Both Assembly constituency, is witnessing rapid development after being adopted by Telangana Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka. The initiative follows the historic People's March Padayatra conducted by Bhatti Vikramarka during his tenure as Congress Legislature Party leader, where he promised to transform Pippiri into a model village once in power.

Under his direction, all development works in the village have accelerated. Cement roads and drainage systems have been approved and constructed across all colonies, giving the village a modern look. What was once an ordinary rural settlement is now steadily becoming a role model village, with visible improvements in in-

frastructure, sanitation, housing, and the implementation of government welfare schemes.

The newly appointed village council, led by the sarpanch, has worked closely with the administration to ensure that development efforts are carried out efficiently. Projects under the Indiramma housing scheme, sanitation drives, and transparent delivery of government welfare programs are creating a positive impact and setting benchmarks for other villages in the district.

Education and health have also been a major focus. Schools are being modernized, Anganwadi centers strengthened, and health sub-centers equipped with basic facilities. The village has successfully implemented the Safe Drinking Water Scheme, ensuring clean water reaches every household.

Being an agricul-

ture-dependent village, Pippiri has received enhanced infrastructure for farmers, including plans for lift irrigation, which will provide water throughout the year and create employment opportunities for farm laborers. Effective implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has further boosted livelihoods, increased water storage, and reduced seasonal migration, enabling villagers to live with dignity in their own homes.

Deputy CM Bhatti's adoption of Pippiri has strengthened the village's trust in government initiatives. Transparent distribution of welfare benefits, irrespective of political affiliation, has enhanced confidence in local governance, the Deputy CM's guidance, and the leadership of the sarpanch.



India Has Options. A Deal With Europe Would Prove It

When Ursula von der Leyen took the stage at Davos, she made an unmistakable point: Europe's future autonomy runs through New Delhi. By placing India at the heart of her declaration of European independence, the president of the European Commission signalled both urgency and intent. Her imminent visit to India, she said, was meant to "energise" the relationship—and, ideally, to close the remaining gaps in a free-trade agreement that has been under negotiation for decades between two of the world's largest economies.

Von der Leyen has described the prospective pact as "the mother of all deals". Prime Minister Narendra Modi should take her at her word and deliver it when she arrives this week. Not simply because Europe wants it, or because India would benefit from it, but because of the message it would send to Washington—and to US President Donald Trump in particular.

Europe's sudden push is easy to understand. The continent is under pressure from nearly every direction. Russian aggression continues to test its security architecture. China's economic coercion weighs heavily on its industries. Internally, Europe grapples with slow growth, political fragmentation, and structural weaknesses. Looming over all of this is a deepening anxiety about the United States: what began as concern about American disengagement has hardened into alarm at open intimidation from Washington.

India, by contrast, appears as a rare constant in an unsettled world. Its economy is growing steadily. Its politics, while noisy, are broadly predictable. It poses no existential threat to Europe. New Delhi may not align perfectly with European capitals on climate policy or on Ukraine, but it does not seek to coerce, expropriate, or humiliate its partners. In today's climate, that counts for a great deal.



When von der Leyen arrives in New Delhi as the chief guest for Republic Day celebrations, Prime Minister Modi will extend the customary warmth and ceremony. But symbolism alone will not suffice. This is the moment to cut through the thicket of red tape and unresolved disputes that have long stalled the free-trade agreement.

Officially, negotiations were meant to conclude by the end of 2025. In practice, India has spent much of the past year glancing nervously toward the White House. New Delhi has been reluctant to finalise concessions with the European Union that could later be treated as a baseline for fresh demands

from an "America First" administration. From a purely tactical standpoint, it also made sense to stabilise relations with the more volatile partner first.

That strategy now looks increasingly untenable. Prospects of a reliable trade understanding between India and the United States have faded. President Trump appears less interested in mutual accommodation than in public submission. He seems to want India to abase itself—to credit him personally for deal-making brilliance, and even to express gratitude for his role in maintaining peace in South Asia. That is something Modi simply cannot do. His

nationalist political base would not allow it, and nor should it.

Even if India were willing to swallow its pride, there is little reason to believe that concessions alone would change Trump's posture. It is hard to imagine any set of offers persuading him to withdraw the punitive 50 per cent tariffs imposed on Indian goods, abandon his long-held belief that India is unfairly "getting something for nothing", and suddenly embrace partnership and integration. The bilateral relationship is stuck in a rut that goodwill alone cannot fix.

Something more disruptive is required to reset the dynamic.

Indian concerns about how Washington might react to a comprehensive India-EU trade deal are understandable. To protectionists, every agreement signed without them is, by definition, an agreement signed against them. And everything known about Trump suggests he would view such a pact as a deliberate provocation: a Europe he has recently mocked and pressured joining forces with an India he is trying to corner.

His response would likely be, to put it mildly, intemperate.

Modi should welcome that reaction rather than fear it. He should sign the deal not in spite of American pressure,

but because of it.

Trump, above all, respects strength—or at least the appearance of strength. Europe and Brazil are pushed around; China and Russia are not. India has discovered, uncomfortably, that when faced with an unfriendly United States it has less leverage than it assumed. If New Delhi is looking for a way to demonstrate that it will not be bullied, there could hardly be a clearer signal than concluding one of the largest bilateral trade agreements in history.

Domestic politics also argue in favour of boldness. Modi's voters may have little interest in the technicalities of phytosanitary standards,

or regulatory harmonisation. But they understand defiance. They recognise moments when their prime minister takes a stand. Finalising a major agreement with Europe precisely when it is in Trump's crosshairs would be read not as weakness, but as confidence—evidence that India can navigate a crowded and often hostile world on its own terms.

The agreement on offer will not be perfect. No trade deal ever is. Some agricultural products may be excluded. Indian carmakers may not receive the protection they seek. European activists will almost certainly raise concerns about labour rights and environmental safeguards. These imperfections are inevitable.

But delay carries its own risks. The longer negotiations drag on, the greater the chance that this narrow window of opportunity will close. The broader and more ambitious the agreement becomes, the likelier it is to fall victim to political paralysis—especially in the European Parliament, which has already consigned the EU-Latin America trade agreement to a kind of legal limbo. In trade diplomacy, perfectionism often amounts to paralysis.

A timely deal with Europe would force Washington to acknowledge a reality it has been reluctant to accept: India has options, and it is prepared to act on them. As a by-product, the agreement could help reorient parts of the Indian economy—particularly in energy and manufacturing—away from pathways blocked by American trade barriers erected against China.

For more than a decade, a succession of press releases has promised that the India-EU free-trade agreement would be historic. If that claim is to mean anything, the moment to act is now.

History, after all, is rarely made by waiting for ideal conditions.

Fashioning Victimhood in an Age of Real Precarity

Every so often, a piece of writing appears that is so exquisitely disconnected from reality that it feels less like commentary and more like performance art. Divia Thani's recent *Vogue* essay about wearing saris in London and discovering—apparently to her own surprise—that this has become a political act belongs firmly in that category. Published under the sweeping headline "Wearing My Sari in London Is No Longer Just a Matter of Personal Style – It's Political, Too," the piece argues that an editor's luxury fashion choices now constitute resistance in an era of rising anti-immigrant sentiment. It reads not as journalism or reflection, but as an unintentional parody of elite media solipsism. The only problem is that the author seems entirely sincere.

Thani's central claim is that her choice to wear saris in London is an act of courage, a declaration of identity in a hostile environment. The essay insists that personal style—specifically, highly curated, high-end personal style—has taken on political weight. Yet the gulf between this claim and lived reality is so vast that it becomes almost comical.

The disconnect is clearest in the anecdotes meant to illustrate her transformation. Thani recalls how, decades ago, she arrived at an American university armed with "two suitcases with DKNY sweaters, blue jeans and a Michael Kors backpack with gold buckles," hoping to blend in. Today, she writes, she fills multiple suitcases with saris so she can express her authentic self while

living in London. This evolution is framed as both liberation and resistance. The reader is invited to see her wardrobe shift not simply as personal preference or confidence earned with age and status, but as a meaningful intervention in Britain's culture wars.

From there, the essay veers into territory that only the fashion pages could treat as subversive. Wearing an ivory handwoven Chanderi sari with a Zara crop top to Wimbledon, or a navy-and-silver sari under a blazer paired with a Chanel bag at lunch, is presented as an act of quiet defiance. A sequined Manish Malhotra sari worn with Cartier jewellery becomes, somehow, part of the struggle against xenophobia. It is hard to read this without thinking of an Onion headline accidentally published as earnest commentary.

Thani writes with breathless sincerity about how wearing a sari makes her "stand a bit straighter, a bit taller, to walk with a little swagger." That is a perfectly reasonable emotional response to feeling confident and well dressed. But she then stretches that feeling into a political claim, suggesting that this confidence itself is a contribution to resisting anti-immigrant hostility. The effect is surreal. A luxury fashion editor describes her jewellery and couture, then pivots to anti-immigration marches, as if the two occupy the same moral register.

This would merely be silly if it weren't for the gravity of the issues she gestures toward. Anti-immigrant politics in Britain are not an abstract aes-



thetic debate. They have material consequences for people who are surveilled, detained, deported, and denied basic rights. Against that backdrop, treating a designer sari as a brave stand against oppression feels not just naive, but insulting.

There is also something strikingly tone-deaf about the author's self-positioning. Thani comes from Mumbai, a city where wealth and poverty exist

in jarring proximity, where inequality is not theoretical but unavoidable. To arrive in London and cast herself as a figure of embattled visibility requires an extraordinary suspension of context. She is neither British aristocracy clinging to a fading past nor a precarious migrant navigating a hostile system. She is a globally mobile, well-connected editor whose image is carefully constructed, photographed,

and monetised. Her vulnerability is aesthetic, not structural.

That performance of vulnerability—delivered from within a cocoon of comfort—is where the essay collapses into farce. The reader is asked to treat visibility chosen from a position of security as equivalent to visibility imposed on those without protection. But these are not the same things. Choosing to stand out when one has

wealth, citizenship, and institutional backing is categorically different from being forced into visibility when one has none of those buffers.

The farce is completed by a telling institutional detail. In 2023, the British Society of Magazine Editors awarded Thani a DEI honour, a category originally intended to recognise those facing genuine structural barriers within the industry. Thani plainly does not. She is not marginalised, underrepresented, or excluded from opportunity in any meaningful sense. That she can be repackaged as a "diversity" figure speaks less to her circumstances than to how emptied of substance that language has become.

When institutions begin awarding inclusion honours to individuals whose lives are defined by access and comfort, DEI stops naming injustice and becomes a form of corporate self-congratulation. It turns structural critique into branding and replaces material analysis with optics. Thani's essay is not an outlier in this ecosystem; it is its logical outcome.

What makes the piece more than merely ridiculous is its timing. Britain is currently home to people living with real fear and real deprivation. Migrants trapped in the so-called hostile environment. Asylum seekers housed in unsafe, degrading accommodation. Workers denied legal status and basic protections. Families living under the constant threat of deportation. Refugees demonised daily in tabloids and political speeches.

These people do not get to turn identity into an aesthetic choice. They do not receive applause for "walking with swagger." Their lives are shaped by policy, prejudice, and poverty in ways that no amount of couture can approximate.

Against that reality, the *Vogue* essay feels like a slap in the face. It recentres attention on someone whose greatest challenge is how best to accessorise heritage while attending elite social events, then asks readers to treat that choice as an act of bravery. It collapses politics into personal branding and turns suffering into a backdrop for self-expression.

A Facebook commenter captured this deflation perfectly: "An Indian woman wearing a blingy sari to an event in London is not a political statement and it doesn't exactly make her a suffragette. Better journalism, *Vogue*." The bluntness resonates because it punctures the fantasy at the heart of the essay.

There is nothing wrong with loving saris, celebrating Indian fashion, or feeling pride in cultural identity. Those are pleasures, not sins. The problem arises when those pleasures are recast as political resistance while the scale of actual suffering is ignored or minimised. If *Vogue* wants to engage seriously with immigration, racism, and belonging, it should start by distinguishing between privilege and persecution—and by resisting the temptation to flatter writers who confuse a designer wardrobe with courage.

Government Defends G-RAM-G Jobs Scheme Amid Opposition Protests



Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju on Tuesday reaffirmed that the government has no plans to roll back the recently passed G-RAM-G rural jobs guarantee scheme, despite mounting opposition protests. "Once the law is before the country, we have to follow it... we cannot reverse gear and go back to the past. It cannot happen," Rijju asserted.

The G-RAM-G scheme, which replaced the 20-year-old MNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), was cleared by Parliament during last month's winter session. The legislation has sparked intense criticism, particularly over its name—which references Lord Ram instead of Mahatma Gandhi—and its structural provisions, which some opposition parties argue could undermine job guarantees for the rural poor.

The government, however, defended G-RAM-G as a modernized and more efficient alternative to MNREGA, citing its increased minimum work-

days from 100 to 125 and reforms designed to reduce corruption and improve accountability.

Opposition Pushback

Protests against the scheme have intensified ahead of the upcoming budget session of Parliament, with several opposition-led states passing resolutions against G-RAM-G. Telangana (Congress), Punjab (AAP), and Tamil Nadu (DMK) have already approved anti-G-RAM-G measures, and Karnataka (Congress) is expected to follow suit.

The issue recently created a high-profile confrontation in Karnataka, where Governor Thawarchand Gehlot refused to read a speech prepared by the state government for the opening joint session of the legislature. Gehlot cited 11 sections critical of G-RAM-G, which the state refused to remove, leading to the Governor walking out amid protests from Congress lawmakers. The BJP demanded action against those lawmakers, alleging they

physically obstructed the Governor's exit.

Key Features of G-RAM-G

- Guaranteed Workdays:** The scheme guarantees a minimum of 125 workdays per year, up from MNREGA's 100. However, this applies only to areas officially notified as rural by the central government, a criterion retained from MNREGA.
- Funding Structure:** Under G-RAM-G, states will fund 40% of total expenses (90% previously covered by the Centre under MNREGA), with hill and northeastern states contributing only 10%. Union Territories will continue to receive 100% central funding. The government argues this encourages state ownership of the programme, though critics contend it could strain state finances and limit work availability.

- Central Oversight:** The Centre will set standards, materials, and approved types of work, ensuring compliance and enabling suspension of funds in cases of irregularities. This contrasts with MNREGA, where panchayats had broader discretion over local work.
- Work Categories:** G-RAM-G divides work into four sectors—water security, core rural infrastructure, livelihood assets, and climate resilience. Critics argue this limits the flexibility previously available to panchayats, potentially reducing projects tailored to local needs.

The government maintains that financial burdens are calibrated according to state capacities and emphasizes that G-RAM-G represents a step forward in modernizing India's rural employment framework, balancing central oversight with local execution.

Vijay's Jana Nayagan Faces Legal Hurdles Amid Election Timing and MCC Concerns

The release of actor Vijay's much-anticipated farewell film, *Jana Nayagan*, has run into a significant legal roadblock, with the case now being closely examined through the lens of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC). Observers are drawing parallels with the 2019 controversy surrounding the delayed release of the Narendra Modi biopic, which was held back ahead of the general elections due to concerns over its potential influence on voters.

On Monday, the Madras High Court set aside an earlier directive issued by a single judge, which had instructed the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) to grant the film a UA 16+ certificate. The division bench, comprising Chief Justice Manindra Mohan and Justice Arul Murugan, ruled that the single judge should have allowed the CBFC adequate time to file a counter-affidavit before passing interim orders. Consequently, the matter has been remitted to the single judge for a fresh hearing, potentially prolonging the certification process and delaying the film's release.

Adding another layer to the issue, the bench considered a complaint submitted by a member of the CBFC's Examining Committee. The complaint flagged concerns over the depiction of an army-related emblem in the film and the absence of a defence expert on the reviewing panel. These points are likely to play a critical role in the renewed legal proceedings, further



complicating the path to certification.

Missed Release Dates and Election Timing

Jana Nayagan was initially scheduled to release on January 9, strategically timed to coincide with the Pongal holiday, a lucrative window for Tamil cinema. With today's ruling failing to deliver a definitive resolution, producers had hoped for a new release around January 30 or even Valentine's Day in February. However, with the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections set for April, political observers fear that any further delays could push the release dangerously close to the period when the Model Code of Conduct is enforced.

Critics argue that if the certification process extends into the election season, there is a risk that authorities could stall the release on grounds related to the MCC, echoing the 2019 situation in which the Modi biopic was barred from screening before polling due

to concerns about electoral influence.

Political Implications for Vijay

The stakes for Vijay are particularly high given his growing political footprint. The superstar has launched the Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) party, which is gearing up for its electoral debut. *Jana Nayagan* is widely perceived not only as Vijay's cinematic farewell but also as a symbolic political statement ahead of the polls.

Vijay has been vocal about his political positions, referring to the ruling DMK as his "political enemy" and the BJP as his "ideological enemy," while ruling out any alliance with the saffron party or its ally, AIADMK. Against this backdrop, DMK and Congress leaders have alleged that the Centre is using the CBFC to pressure Vijay into aligning with the NDA.

Responding to such speculation, Vijay stated on Sunday,

"Do you think I'd buckle under pressure? Nothing would work with me." TVK leaders have also sought to differentiate *Jana Nayagan* from the 2019 Modi biopic, arguing that the film is a work of fiction rather than a political biopic. TVK spokesperson Felix Gerald told NDTV, "The film on Narendra Modi highlighted his achievements. *Jana Nayagan* is fiction. This can't be stopped in the same way."

Legal and Symbolic Stakes

At the core of the controversy are questions of freedom of expression, the authority of the CBFC, and the potential use of the MCC to influence release timing. Key elements of the legal dispute include the CBFC panel composition, objections raised by committee members, and the portrayal of sensitive national symbols.

As the case returns to the single judge for a fresh hearing, the clock ticks toward election season, placing *Jana Nayagan* at the intersection of cinema, law, politics, and public discourse. The film's fate will be closely watched not only by fans of Vijay but also by political commentators and civil liberties advocates, as it highlights the complex interplay between entertainment and electoral regulations in India.

In short, *Jana Nayagan* now stands as a litmus test for the independence of artistic expression in a politically charged environment, with the Model Code of Conduct looming as a potential final barrier to its release.

India-EU Free Trade Deal: Key Consumer and Industrial Benefits



bring significant benefits for both consumers and industries in India, while also boosting exports to Europe. Officials have highlighted sector-specific outcomes that could reshape markets and pricing over the coming years.

Autos: Protecting Small Cars

India's auto market is dominated by small cars priced between Rs 10 lakh and Rs 25 lakh, and the EU has limited interest in this segment. An official clarified that under the agreement, cars likely to sell below Rs 25 lakh in India will not be exported from Europe, although EU manufacturers may produce such models locally. This provision aims to protect India's domestic small-car market while allowing foreign investment and technology transfer.

Cheaper European Wine and Spirits

One of the most visible impacts for consumers will be in wine and spirits. Currently, India levies a 150% import duty on European wines, but the FTA proposes to reduce it to 20% over 5-10

years, gradually lowering prices of imported wines, cognacs, and premium gins and vodkas. To safeguard domestic producers, no duty concessions will apply for wines costing below 2.5 euros. Indian wines will also benefit from reduced duties in EU markets, enhancing their export potential.

Healthcare and Medicines

The deal is expected to make critical medicines and medical equipment imported from Europe more affordable in India. State-of-the-art European technologies for treating cancer and other serious illnesses will become accessible at lower costs. Additionally, India-made medicines will gain easier access to 27 European markets, boosting Indian pharmaceutical exports.

Electronics and High-Tech Machinery

The agreement removes tariffs on aircraft spare parts, mobile phones, and other high-tech electronic items imported from Europe. This reduction will lower manufacturing costs for gadgets in India, potentially making consumer

electronics like mobile phones cheaper.

Steel, Chemicals, and Raw Materials

Another major benefit is the proposed zero tariffs on iron, steel, and chemical products, which could reduce raw material costs for construction and industrial projects. This would directly benefit industries as well as homebuyers and infrastructure developers.

Boost for Indian Exports

The FTA opens up Europe's massive market for Indian garments, leather, jewellery, and other products, enhancing India's export competitiveness. Combined with duty reductions on key imports, the agreement is expected to create a more balanced, mutually beneficial trade ecosystem.

Overall, the India-EU FTA promises to lower costs for consumers, reduce industrial input expenses, and expand export opportunities. Its phased implementation over the next 5-10 years ensures that domestic industries are safeguarded while India leverages greater access to European markets.

Ayodhya Bureaucrat Resigns Amid Controversy Between Shankaracharya and Yogi Adityanath



In a dramatic escalation of the ongoing dispute involving Shankaracharya Swami Avimuktेश्वaranand Saraswati and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, an Ayodhya bureaucrat has resigned, citing support for the chief minister, the Prime Minister, and the Constitution.

The controversy began earlier this month during the Magh Mela in Prayagraj. The Shankaracharya and his followers claimed they were prevented from taking a holy dip at the Sangam, while officials stated that the chariot procession was stopped to prevent a potential stampede in the crowded area. Authorities asked the religious leader to proceed on foot like other devotees.

Feeling insulted, the Shankaracharya launched a protest, leading to a sharp exchange of words with Yogi Adityanath. The chief minister, without naming the seer, referred to a "Kalanemi"—a demon from the Ramayana who disguised himself as a saint to deceive Lord Hanuman—warning people to be

cautious.

In response, the Shankaracharya criticised the CM's focus on religion, saying:

"A politician who is the chief minister doesn't talk about education, health, law and order, or the state's prosperity. He talks about Kalanemi and religion and irreligion. The issue of religion should be left to religious leaders."

The seer also addressed the controversy surrounding the University Grants Commission's (UGC) new guidelines on setting up committees, helplines, and monitoring mechanisms for complaints, particularly from SC, ST, and OBC students. Critics, including general category students and some politicians, argue the framework could discriminate against non-reserved categories.

Speaking to IANS, the Shankaracharya said: "No caste is inherently unjust; it is individuals who act unjustly. By pitching one caste against another, you are taking a misguided step. This could harm Hinduism. This law should be repealed immediately."

Bureaucrat Resignation

On Tuesday, Prashant Kumar Singh, the GST Commissioner of Ayodhya, resigned, citing his inability to tolerate what he called an insult to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Prime Minister Modi, and the government.

Singh said: "I have resigned in support of the government, the chief minister, the Prime Minister, Home Minister, the Constitution, and democracy. I am pained by Avimuktेश्वaranand's unrestrained comments, which seem aimed at dividing society."

The bureaucrat added that personal remarks were made against the chief minister and noted his gratitude toward the government:

"This government is my annadata (food provider). I am indebted to it. It is not my duty to keep drawing a salary like a robot. Yogi Adityanath is a democratically elected chief minister, and I cannot tolerate this insult."

Singh further stated that he was disheartened by the political controversy surrounding the UGC issue and plans to pursue social work once his resignation is accepted.

Canada and India to Expand Energy Trade, Relaunch Ministerial Dialogue

Canada and India have agreed to strengthen trade in oil and gas as the two countries seek to reboot their relationship following a period of diplomatic chill. According to a joint statement obtained by Bloomberg News, Ottawa will commit to shipping more crude oil, liquefied natural gas (LNG), and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to India, while New Delhi will increase exports of refined petroleum products to Canada.

The announcement follows a meeting between Canadian Energy Minister Tim Hodgson and India's Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri at India Energy Week in Goa, where both leaders relaunched the ministerial energy dialogue. This mechanism, which had been the primary channel for energy cooperation between the two countries, had fallen dormant amid tensions sparked by the killing of a Canadian Sikh activist.

The renewed push marks a significant effort by Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney to diversify Canada's export markets amid rising trade tensions with the United States. It also reflects Ottawa's pragmatic, economy-first approach to diplomacy with key Asian partners. Carney is expected to visit India in the coming weeks to further the reset, following preliminary talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in November aimed at exploring a comprehensive economic partnership agreement.

Beyond crude, LNG, and refined petroleum, the two ministers committed to facilitating greater reciprocal in-



vestment in each other's energy sectors. Areas of potential collaboration include hydrogen, biofuels, battery storage, critical minerals, electricity systems, and the use of artificial intelligence in energy management. The relaunch of the dialogue underscores both countries' recognition of the strategic and untapped potential in enhancing their energy relationship.

Bilateral trade between Canada and India reached C\$13.3 billion (\$9.7 billion) in 2024, but Ottawa sees substantial room for growth, particularly in energy. India currently accounts for just 1 percent of Canada's critical minerals exports, highlighting the scale of untapped opportunity. Canada began exporting LNG to Asia in June 2025, and its LPG terminals provide relatively short shipping routes to India. Additionally, the expansion of the Trans Mountain pipeline has created a more direct path for crude shipments to India, although most Canadian barrels still transit through the US Gulf Coast.

The move follows Carney's recent visit to Beijing, where he and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed to reduce

tariff barriers. That agreement prompted US President Donald Trump to threaten 100% tariffs on Canadian goods if Ottawa finalized a trade deal with China. Carney has emphasized that Canada is not seeking a free trade agreement with China, instead focusing on pragmatic partnerships in Asia, including India.

Analysts note that the relaunch of the energy dialogue signals a strategic recalibration in Canada-India relations. By expanding energy trade and facilitating joint investments, both countries aim to strengthen economic ties, diversify supply chains, and build resilience against global trade uncertainties. For Canada, India represents a key growth market, while India gains access to stable, diversified energy supplies to meet its rising domestic demand.

With Carney's upcoming visit and the relaunch of structured ministerial talks, the Canada-India energy partnership is poised to become a central pillar of bilateral relations, reflecting both economic pragmatism and broader geopolitical strategy in the Indo-Pacific region.

Carney Says Trump's Tariff Threats Are Pre-Negotiation Positioning Ahead of USMCA Review

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said Monday that some of US President Donald Trump's recent tariff threats against Canada should be seen as strategic positioning ahead of negotiations to review the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) later this year. Carney described the upcoming process not as a full renegotiation but as a robust review, designed to evaluate and update the agreement that has governed North American trade since 2020.

"The president is a strong negotiator, and some of these comments and positioning should be viewed in the broader context of that," Carney said, suggesting that Trump's aggressive rhetoric is part of early negotiating tactics rather than an imminent trade war.

Trump stirred controversy last weekend by threatening to impose 100 percent tariffs on all Canadian imports if Canada proceeded with a trade deal with China. Carney and other Canadian officials, however, have consistently maintained that Ottawa is not pursuing a comprehensive free trade agreement with Beijing, and that recent engagements with China focused on resolving specific tariff disputes rather than crafting a broad FTA.

Canadian Trade Minister Dominic LeBlanc also weighed in, clarifying that Canada's discussions with China are limited in scope and cover only a few sectors. He emphasized that the up-



coming talks with the United States will centre on the USMCA review, not a wide-ranging renegotiation—contrasting sharply with the major overhaul that took place under Trump's previous term.

Under USMCA rules, Canada, the United States, and Mexico review the pact periodically to ensure its terms remain effective. Carney said that while upcoming discussions could be lively, they are a standard part of treaty obligations and do not indicate plans to dismantle the existing agreement.

Carney's comments come amid heightened friction between Ottawa and Washington, part of a broader clash over trade and foreign policy. Trump's tariff threats surfaced against the backdrop of Canada's shifting trade dynamics, including a recent strategic partnership with China that involved reducing tariffs on certain imports, such as electric vehicles, in exchange for lower duties on Canadian exports like agricultural products. Carney has defended these

moves as pro Canadian and consistent with USMCA commitments, underscoring that there is no plan for a full China free trade deal.

The dispute has also taken on symbolic overtones, with Trump's public criticism of Carney and even personal jabs on social media. Despite the rhetoric, Carney has stuck to a diplomatic line, urging a focus on diversified economic partnerships and cooperation with middle powers, comments that gained wide attention at events such as the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Canada's position reflects a balancing act between maintaining a strong trade relationship with its largest partner—the United States—and pursuing economic diversification through strategic engagements with other global economies. As the year's USMCA review unfolds, both sides will be watching closely to gauge how much of the recent tariff talk is tactical posturing and how much might influence substantive trade policy.

India and EU Seal Landmark Free Trade Agreement Amid Strategic Convergence



In a historic moment combining diplomacy, strategy, and commerce, India and the European Union (EU) have finalized a long-awaited Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The agreement was signed at the India-EU Summit in New Delhi, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Council President Antonio Costa, who had recently attended India's Republic Day celebrations as chief guests. The event underscores the deal's significance as one of the most consequential trade agreements of this decade.

The FTA caps over two decades of negotiations between two of the world's largest democratic markets. India and the EU have been strategic partners since 2004, building a relationship anchored in shared democratic values, multilateralism, and a commitment to a rules-

based international order. Their historical ties extend even further, to 1962, when India established diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community, the EU's precursor.

The timing of the agreement carries added weight. Global trade and markets remain volatile amid resurgent tariff wars, ongoing supply chain disruptions, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Against this backdrop, the India-EU FTA sends a strong signal in favor of open, predictable, and diversified trade at a moment when economic nationalism is gaining momentum worldwide.

Economic and Strategic Dimensions

Economically, India and the EU are already closely linked. The EU is India's largest trading partner in goods, with bilateral trade reaching approximately USD 136 billion in 2024-25, alongside a steadily grow-

ing services trade. European companies have invested heavily in India's manufacturing, digital, and clean energy sectors, while Indian firms, particularly in IT services and pharmaceuticals, have deepened their presence in Europe.

Despite this integration, trade between the two has long been considered "below potential". Formal negotiations for a comprehensive FTA, investment protection pact, and geographical indications agreement resumed in 2021, with an ambitious goal to conclude by the end of 2025. Through continuous ministerial engagement, the two sides bridged remaining gaps, resulting in a deal described by diplomats as balanced and forward-looking. The agreement lowers tariffs, eases regulatory barriers, opens services markets, and strengthens supply chain resilience. India gains access to a 450-million-

strong consumer market, while Europe deepens its footprint in one of the world's fastest-growing major economies.

Beyond Trade: Strategic Cooperation

The FTA also reflects a broader strategic alignment. India and the EU have expanded cooperation in defence, maritime security, climate action, clean energy, digital technologies, and connectivity. Initiatives such as the India-EU Trade and Technology Council and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) highlight the interlinkage of trade, technology, and security. Joint naval exercises and defence industrial collaboration further demonstrate growing strategic trust.

The EU's presence at India's Republic Day reinforces the symbolic importance of the partnership. Officials note that it signals Europe's view of India not just as a market

but as a central pillar in its Indo-Pacific and global strategy.

Challenges and Outlook

Negotiations were complex, with sensitive issues like market access, environmental and labour standards, data flows, and public procurement requiring careful resolution. Yet geopolitical and economic pressures—particularly the need to diversify supply chains and uphold a rules-based trading system—created urgency.

The FTA marks the opening of a new chapter in India-EU relations, weaving together economics, strategy, and shared values. In an era of uncertainty, the New Delhi handshake sends a clear message: two major democracies are choosing cooperation over confrontation and integration over isolation, setting a precedent for 21st-century global trade.

India and EU Conclude Free Trade Agreement, Sending Strong Political Signal Against Protectionism

India and the European Union (EU) have concluded negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) aimed at boosting bilateral trade and strengthening economic ties between two of the world's largest economies. The deal, expected to be officially announced today, has been described by both sides as balanced, forward-looking, and strategically significant.

According to European Council President Antonio Costa, the pact carries an important political message against rising tariffs and protectionism, particularly in the context of global uncertainties driven by the trade policies of US President Donald Trump. "In our multipolar world, it is essential that the EU and India become closer partners," Costa said. "Together, we can provide stability, predictability, and reliability in international relations while protecting the international rules-based order."

Costa, who attended India's Republic Day celebrations as chief guest alongside European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, emphasized that the India-EU deal would serve as a geo-

political stabilizer. He noted that it demonstrates how nations can maintain open trade frameworks even when other countries are resorting to increased tariffs. "This agreement sends an important political message to the world: India and the EU prioritize trade agreements over tariffs," he added.

Trade Significance

The EU is India's largest trading partner, and the proposed FTA is expected to expand both trade and investment, particularly in sectors affected by Trump-era tariffs. India's bilateral trade in goods with the EU reached USD 136.53 billion in 2024-25, comprising exports of USD 75.85 billion and imports of USD 60.68 billion. Trade in services with the EU in 2024 totaled USD 83.10 billion.

Currently, the EU imposes an average tariff of about 3.8 percent on Indian goods, though labour-intensive sectors face higher duties of roughly 10 percent. India's weighted average duty on EU goods is around 9.3 percent, with particularly high tariffs on automobiles and auto parts (35.5



percent), plastics (10.4 percent), and chemicals and pharmaceuticals (9.9 percent).

When the FTA is signed, it is likely to enable duty-free trade on a range of labour-intensive sectors, including textiles, chemicals, gems and jewellery, electrical machinery, leather, and footwear. Analysts expect this to enhance India's competitiveness in key export segments, improve market access, and support foreign investment flows.

Context of Global Trade Tensions

The global economy is

currently navigating turbulence amid Trump's aggressive tariff policies, which have unsettled markets and disrupted global supply chains. Against this backdrop, the India-EU FTA is widely seen as a strong signal in favor of open, predictable, and diversified trade. By reducing barriers and fostering closer economic integration, the agreement positions both India and the EU as proponents of rules-based international trade.

Dubbed by EU leaders as the "mother of all trade deals," the pact not

only strengthens economic links but also carries broader geopolitical significance. It highlights the shared commitment of India and the EU to promote stability, economic cooperation, and a predictable global trading environment at a time when protectionist measures are gaining traction elsewhere.

Overall, the FTA represents a milestone in India-EU relations, expected to drive growth in trade, investment, and technology transfers while signaling a united front against rising protectionism globally.

Late Buying Lifts Sensex, Nifty; Metal Stocks Outperform



Indian equity benchmark indices closed higher on January 27, recovering part of the losses from the previous session amid a highly volatile trading day. Gains were led by metal, financial, IT, and oil & gas stocks, while market sentiment also received a modest boost from optimism surrounding an India-European Union trade agreement.

The session began on a cautious note, with indices trading in a narrow range for most of the day. However, strong buying interest in the final hour helped the benchmarks close near the day's highs. At the close, the Sensex advanced 319.78 points, or 0.39 percent, to 81,857.48, while the Nifty rose 126.75 points, or 0.51 percent, to settle at 25,175.40.

Broader markets moved largely in line with the benchmarks, with both the Nifty Midcap and Smallcap indices gaining around 0.5 percent each. Sectorally, the market breadth was positive, with all indices except auto, FMCG, media, and consumer durables ending in the green. The metal index outperformed, surging nearly 3 percent, supported by strength in global metal prices.

Among Nifty stocks, Adani En-

terprises, Axis Bank, JSW Steel, Adani Ports, and Grasim Industries emerged as the top gainers. On the flip side, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Asian Paints, Bajaj Finserv, and Eternal were among the biggest laggards.

Stock-specific action remained intense, driven largely by quarterly earnings and corporate developments. Kotak Mahindra Bank shares fell 2 percent after its Q3 results missed street estimates. In contrast, Axis Bank surged 5 percent following a strong Q3 performance. UltraTech Cement climbed 2 percent on better-than-expected earnings, while Godrej Consumer Products declined 5 percent after reporting a drop in quarterly profits.

In the metals space, Hindustan Zinc hit a 52-week high, tracking strength in silver prices, which hovered near all-time highs. Despite reporting a sharp 150 percent jump in Q3 profit, JSW Energy shares slipped 7 percent, suggesting profit booking after the recent rally.

Elsewhere, RailTel Corporation of India rose nearly 2 percent after securing an order worth ₹27.04 crore. Marine Elec-

tronics gained 7 percent after announcing multiple order wins totalling ₹284 crore. Hindustan Copper advanced 5 percent after emerging as the preferred bidder for a mining lease in Madhya Pradesh. Meanwhile, Urban Company shares fell over 2 percent on weak Q3 results.

Despite the broader recovery, market breadth remained mixed, with more than 640 stocks touching their 52-week lows. These included names such as Syngene International, SignatureGlobal, Brainbees Solutions, Reliance Power, Poly Medicure, Mahanagar Gas, PCBL Chemical, Devyani International, Zee Entertainment, Dixon Greentech, and Godrej Properties, among others—highlighting continued pressure in select pockets of the market.

Outlook for January 28

On the monthly expiry day, the Nifty witnessed a choppy session marked by sharp intraday swings of nearly 300 points. For most of the ses-

sion, the 25,190–25,200 zone, which had acted as support earlier, emerged as a strong resistance. However, a late short-covering rally enabled the index to close higher.

Technically, the Nifty formed a sizeable bullish candle on the daily chart with long lower wicks, indicating buying interest at lower levels. Importantly, the index managed to close above the 200-day exponential moving average (EMA), though analysts caution that a follow-through move is needed to confirm a trend reversal.

Going ahead, immediate support for the Nifty is seen in the 24,950–24,900 zone, which aligns with an upward-sloping trendline connecting the August swing lows of 24,338 and 24,405. A decisive break below this level could drag the index towards 24,700, followed by 24,500 in the near term.

On the upside, resistance is expected in the 25,250–25,300 zone, while 25,500 remains a crucial hurdle. Until the Nifty convincingly breaks above this level, market participants may continue to adopt a sell-on-rallies strategy, with volatility likely to remain elevated.

India and EU Sign Security and Defence Partnership, Strengthening Strategic Ties



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday signed a security and defence partnership with European Commission Vice President Kaja Kallas, emphasizing his expectation of “greater cooperation” between India and EU countries. The agreement allows India to participate in select European defence initiatives, according to a draft document seen by Reuters, and comes amid Europe’s efforts to reduce dependence on the US and China while expanding diplomatic and economic engagement with other regions.

“The EU and India will consult on their respective defence initiatives, including through exchanges on defence industry-related matters,” the draft partnership said. It added that both sides would explore opportunities for India’s participation in EU defence initiatives where interests align and legal frameworks permit.

A statement from India’s Ministry of Defence highlighted that the partnership would act as a force multiplier, enabling integration of supply chains to build trusted defence ecosystems and future-ready capabilities. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh noted that India’s defence industry could play a meaningful role in the EU’s ‘Re-Arm initiative’, particularly as Europe seeks to diversify suppliers and reduce strategic dependencies.

The draft envisages an annual EU-India dialogue on security and defence, with deeper collaboration on maritime security, cyber threats, and counterterrorism. “The growing complexity of global security threats, rising geopolitical tensions, and rapid

technological change underscore the need for closer EU-India dialogue and cooperation in security and defence,” the document stated.

Kallas also emphasized the importance of joint efforts in the Indian Ocean Region, noting that both sides could benefit from sharing best practices through joint exercises. The statement carries significance against the backdrop of India’s broader engagement in the Indo-Pacific to counter China’s assertiveness.

Defence Industry and Supply Chains The partnership also focuses on closer coordination in the defence industry, particularly regarding supply chains, to build more resilient ecosystems. Singh tweeted that the discussions included “opportunities for integrating supply chains for building trusted defence ecosystems and future-ready capabilities,” and reiterated his anticipation of “greater cooperation between India and the EU countries.”

The signing of the security and defence partnership coincided with the historic India-EU free trade agreement (FTA), hailed as the “mother of all deals.” With the agreement, India becomes the third Asian country, after Japan and South Korea, to secure such a pact with the EU, further cementing its strategic and economic engagement with Europe.

This dual push—on trade and defence—reflects a growing alignment between India and Europe amid global geopolitical shifts, emphasizing shared security interests, technological cooperation, and strengthened industrial collaboration.

Indian Auto Stocks Slip After India-EU Free Trade Agreement; Analysts Weigh Impact



Shares of Indian automakers declined on January 27 following the finalization of the long-awaited India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA), sparking concerns about the future competitiveness of domestic players. Analysts said the near-term market reaction reflects uncertainty over pricing, demand, and margins, rather than any immediate impact on earnings.

Under the new FTA, India will gradually cut tariffs on imported cars from 110 percent to as low as 10 percent over a period of five to ten years. Duties on car parts will also be fully abolished within the same timeframe, according to a statement from the European Commission. Currently, import duties on completely built-up (CBU) passenger vehicles stand at 110 percent for cars over \$40,000 and 70 percent for cars under \$40,000.

Indian automakers have long opposed such cuts, warning that they could discourage investment in local manufacturing by making imported vehicles more competitive.

What This Means for Investors

The FTA is expected to provide EU carmakers greater access to India’s passenger vehicle market, the third-largest globally after the US and China, said brokerage PL Capital. Luxury vehicles account for only about 1 percent of the Indian market, so the tariff cuts are unlikely to significantly affect mass-market players such as Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles (TMPV), and Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M). However, premium and luxury models may face some pressure, particularly from European imports.

Tariffs on battery electric vehicles (BEVs) will be phased down from 100

percent over five years, providing some relief to Indian EV makers. “The India-EU FTA, which has been under negotiation for a long time, introduces both opportunities and challenges for the domestic auto industry,” PL Capital noted.

Harshal Dasani, Business Head at IN-Vasset PMS, said the immediate market concern is not long-term competitiveness but short-term uncertainty: “Markets are reacting ahead of operational clarity, which explains the visible churn in auto counters despite the absence of any immediate earnings impact.”

He added that investors should monitor factors such as premium-segment exposure, pricing discipline, localisation depth, and export optionality. Companies with a strong SUV mix, diversified geographic revenue, and robust balance sheets are better positioned to absorb competitive pressures.

Market Reaction

The Nifty Auto index was down more than 1.4 percent by 2:42 pm. M&M was the top loser, falling over 4.5 percent to ₹3,382.50 per share. Maruti Suzuki and Tube Investments of India declined around 2 percent each. Shares of TMPV, Ashok Leyland, and Exide Industries were down over 1 percent, while Hero MotoCorp, Bosch, TVS Motor, and Bharat Forge saw marginal losses.

BMW Group India CEO Hardeep Singh Brar described the FTA as a “historic milestone” for India’s auto and industrial ecosystem, highlighting its potential to expand trade and enable deeper technological exchange. He added, “India today is not just a large market, but a future-ready economy backed by reforms and policies focused on building a globally competitive ecosystem.”

India-EU Free Trade Agreement Could Boost Exports and Stocks in Pharma, Textiles, and Chemicals

The much-anticipated India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is expected to be announced later today, with analysts hopeful that the so-called “mother of all deals” could inject optimism into the domestic equity markets. The news has already led to a smart rally in select stocks, including KPR Mill, Welspun Living, and Nitin Spinners, which are likely to benefit from the agreement.

Currently, India exports around 17 percent of its total goods to the EU, and brokerage Emkay Global estimates that the FTA could boost India’s exports to Europe by roughly \$50 billion, primarily through medium-tech manufacturing. According to Emkay, the deal would enhance import efficiency, attract higher foreign direct investment (FDI), enable technology transfers, and provide greater regulatory certainty, particularly for IT services, where the EU already accounts for about a third of India’s demand.

Key Sectors to Watch

The sectors expected to benefit most from the deal include pharmaceuticals, textiles, and chemicals, aligning with India’s broader structural shift in exports. However, Emkay cautioned that while the FTA could be positive for markets, progress on a US-India trade deal, stability in the rupee, and reduced global uncertainty remain critical for sustained market confidence.

Textiles

India accounts for roughly 38 percent of EU textile imports but makes up only about 5 percent of the EU’s total textile supply, behind competitors like China (28%), Bangladesh (22%),



Turkey (11%), and Vietnam (6%). Currently, Indian exports face tariffs of 10–12 percent, while Bangladesh and Vietnam enjoy zero tariffs via existing FTAs.

“Reducing tariffs to zero would significantly enhance India’s price competitiveness, putting it on par with Vietnam and Bangladesh,” Emkay noted. India is well-positioned to gain market share in knitwear, outerwear, and trousers. Stocks expected to benefit include Arvind, Vardhman Textiles, and KPR Mills, especially if import duties on inputs like vegetable textile fibers, paper yarn, and woven fabrics are lowered.

Pharmaceuticals

India’s formulations exports to the EU stand at \$2.95 billion, or about 12 percent of India’s to-

tal pharma formulations exports. However, India represents only 2.2 percent of the EU’s total pharma imports, highlighting significant growth potential.

Emkay expects the FTA to facilitate regulatory cooperation, including accelerated marketing approvals, reduced filing costs, and smoother approvals for generics. This could help Indian companies scale up EU operations, win more tenders, and reduce dependence on the US. Bio-similar companies like Biocon and Dr. Reddy’s and generics manufacturers such as Lupin, Aurobindo, Torrent Pharma, Ipca Laboratories, and Sun Pharma stand to gain.

Chemicals

India is a net importer of chemicals globally but has been a net exporter to the EU, export-

ing \$8.9 billion compared with imports of \$7.7 billion in CY24. Currently, India imposes 0–10 percent duties on chemicals, while the EU maintains lower tariffs (3–5 percent).

The FTA is expected to increase export volumes, create subcontracting opportunities, and improve EBITDA margins by 100–400 basis points for domestic manufacturers. Emkay has identified more than 10 companies with over 15 percent of revenues coming from EU exports that could benefit from volume growth and operational leverage.

Overall, analysts believe the India-EU FTA could be a game-changer for export-oriented sectors, offering both revenue growth and improved margins while reinforcing India’s position in global trade.

Tradition Meets New Beginnings: Maharashtra Woman Takes Canadian Citizenship Oath in Nauvari Saree



A woman from Maharashtra made her Canadian citizenship ceremony memorable by proudly embracing her cultural roots. Divya Lotlikar chose to wear a traditional Nauvari saree, paired with a classic nath (nose ring) and a bindi, as she took the oath of Canadian citizenship—turning the formal occasion into a deeply personal and symbolic moment.

Divya shared photos and videos from the ceremony on Instagram, where she was seen receiving her citizenship certificate while dressed in the traditional Maharashtrian attire. In her post, she described the moment as one of the most significant milestones of her life. Wearing the Nauvari saree, she explained, was not merely a fashion choice but a reflection of her journey, identity, and values.

According to Divya, the Nauvari saree symbolises strength, dignity, tolerance, and continuity—qualities she feels closely align with her own experiences as an immigrant. She wrote that the ceremony marked the culmination of years of hard work, adaptability, and determination as she built a new life in Canada while staying connected to her roots. For her, honouring her heritage during such an important event felt both empowering and meaningful.

The Canadian citizenship oath ceremony is a formal process in which applicants officially pledge loyalty to

Canada and commit to upholding its laws and democratic values. While the ceremony follows a structured protocol, Divya's choice of attire stood out as a reminder that personal identity and cultural pride can coexist seamlessly with national belonging.

Her post quickly gained attention on social media, drawing praise and admiration from users across platforms. Many applauded her confidence and the way she represented Maharashtrian culture on an international stage. One user commented, "Oh my God. Congratulations—this is so beautiful." Another wrote, "Congratulations, you are so natural and confident. Proud of you, Marathi."

Others described the moment as a perfect blend of heritage and achievement. "Tradition and achievement in one frame," one comment read. Some even found inspiration in her choice, with a user sharing, "You just gave me a great idea to wear Marathi ethnic wear for my USA citizenship ceremony."

Divya's story resonated with many immigrants who balance embracing a new national identity while preserving cultural traditions. Her decision to wear a Nauvari saree at such a pivotal moment served as a powerful reminder that celebrating one's roots can be a source of pride, strength, and continuity—even while stepping into a new chapter of life.

When Will Ramadan Begin in India in 2026? Key Dates Explained



Ramadan, the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, is observed by millions of Muslims in India and across the world through fasting, prayer, reflection, and acts of charity. As the sacred month approaches, many are seeking clarity on when Ramadan will begin in India in 2026 and when Eid-ul-Fitr is likely to be celebrated.

Ramadan 2026: Expected Start Date in India

Ramadan follows the Is-

lamic lunar calendar, which is based on the cycles of the moon. As a result, the start of Ramadan shifts earlier each year in the Gregorian calendar and may vary by one day across countries depending on the local sighting of the crescent moon.

In India, Ramadan in 2026 is expected to begin on Thursday, February 19. However, this date remains provisional and will be officially confirmed only after the new moon is sighted and announced by religious

authorities. Until then, Muslims prepare spiritually and practically for the month of fasting and devotion.

Throughout Ramadan, Muslims observe a fast from dawn (Suhoor) until sunset (Iftar), abstaining from food, drink, and other physical needs during daylight hours. Fasting is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and is intended to cultivate self-discipline, empathy for the less fortunate, and closeness to God.

Beyond fasting, Rama-

dan is marked by increased prayer, recitation of the Quran, and acts of generosity. Many Muslims offer additional nightly prayers known as Taraweeh and increase charitable giving through Zakat (obligatory charity) and Sadaqah (voluntary charity).

Duration and Spiritual Significance

Ramadan lasts either 29 or 30 days, depending on when the next crescent moon is sighted. The final ten days are

considered especially sacred, with believers seeking Laylat-ul-Qadr (The Night of Power), believed to be the night when the Quran was first revealed and regarded as the most spiritually significant night of the year.

Eid-ul-Fitr 2026: Expected Date

Eid-ul-Fitr marks the conclusion of Ramadan and is one of the most important festivals in Islam. In India, Eid-ul-Fitr in 2026 is expected to fall on March 20 or March 21, subject to the sighting of the moon.

The day begins with a special congregational Eid prayer held in mosques and open grounds, followed by festive meals, family gatherings, exchanging greetings, and giving Eidi. Muslims are also required to give Zakat-ul-Fitr, a form of charity that must be paid before the Eid prayer so that those in need can also partake in the celebrations.

Key dates (subject to moon sighting):

- Ramadan begins: February 19, 2026
- Eid-ul-Fitr: March 20 or 21, 2026

Viral 'Age 26' Checklist Sparks Debate Over Life Milestones in 2026

A viral social media checklist titled "At the age of 26 you must have" has sparked a wave of debate across platforms such as X and TikTok, exposing a sharp divide between traditional ideas of success and the economic realities facing young adults in 2026. The post, which lays out a series of supposed milestones—from owning a smartphone and a passport to having \$10,000 in savings and even a baby—has triggered reactions ranging from humor and disbelief to anxiety and outright anger.

While some items on the list felt attainable to many users, others quickly became flashpoints. Basic requirements like owning a smartphone or having a passport were seen as realistic, if not essential, in a globalised world. Financial expectations, however, struck a nerve. Many users pointed out that saving \$10,000 by the age of 26 is unrealistic for a generation grappling with high inflation, stagnant wages, rising rent, and student loan debt. According to

recent data, the median savings for people under 35 sits at roughly \$5,400—far below the checklist's benchmark.

The most controversial requirement on the list was undoubtedly "having a baby." Critics widely condemned the expectation as outdated and out of touch with contemporary life choices. In the United States, the average age of first-time mothers has risen to about 27.5 years, as many delay parenthood in favour of career stability, financial security, or personal freedom. High childcare costs and unaffordable housing were frequently cited as reasons for postponing family life.

The contrast is notable when compared with India, where the average age of first-time mothers remains significantly lower, around 21 to 22 years. Even so, many Indian users joined the criticism, arguing that economic pressure and shifting social norms are rapidly reshaping timelines there as well.



The debate intensified when the original checklist evolved into an even more demanding version titled "At the age of 30 you must have." New additions such as a "big house" and a "caring partner" prompted concerns about mental health and the psychological toll of rigid life benchmarks. Users warned that such lists fuel comparison cul-

ture and unnecessary self-judgment.

In response, many people began redefining what truly matters in 2026. Rather than ticking off traditional milestones, they emphasised resilience, physical and mental well-being, and adaptability as the real essentials. Others turned to humour to cope. One user questioned why hav-

ing a baby was considered mandatory regardless of marital status, while another joked that simply surviving to 26 felt like an achievement.

Across the conversation, a common theme emerged: many admitted they were fortunate to meet only two or three items on the list—and were learning to be okay with that.

ChatGPT Exposes New York Man's Secret Family on First Date



A bizarre and darkly amusing dating story from New York City has gone viral on social media after a woman allegedly discovered that her date had a secret family—with unexpected help from ChatGPT. The story was shared on X by dating coach Blaine Anderson, who said she recently spoke with the woman involved, a 27-year-old single professional.

According to Anderson, the woman had gone out to dinner with a finance executive in his late forties. From the start, the date felt unusual. Throughout the meal, the man repeatedly pulled out his phone to consult ChatGPT, using the AI to generate conversation starters, look up information about their cocktails, and even read responses aloud to her. What might have initially seemed quirky or tech-savvy soon became distracting.

As the evening progressed, the woman decided to address the situation playfully rather than awkwardly. Toward the end of the date, she jokingly pointed out his apparent obsession with ChatGPT. Instead of brushing it off, the man leaned into it. He reportedly told her that ChatGPT was his "best friend" and encouraged her to ask it anything she wanted about him. To prove his point, he handed her his phone.

What followed was a twist no one saw coming.

The woman typed a simple prompt into ChatGPT: "Tell me something you wouldn't share with anyone else that

you really like about me." The AI's response, however, revealed far more than intended. ChatGPT replied: "I love how you're a caring husband to your wife and father to your children."

The implication was clear—and shocking. The man, who had presented himself as single, appeared to have a wife and children. The revelation instantly ended the date and soon found its way online, where it exploded into a viral discussion about technology, trust, and dating etiquette.

Social media users reacted with a mix of humor and disbelief. One commenter wrote that the real horror was not the secret family, but the man's willingness to trust an AI with personal information on a first date, calling it a failure of basic discretion. Another user quipped that he had mistaken ChatGPT for a wingman when it was really a "court stenographer with perfect recall," joking that he had essentially handed over evidence against himself.

Others warned against overreliance on technology in personal interactions. "This is why you don't bring your digital best friend on a first date," one comment read. "The AI just exposed a whole family like a background check."

Whether cautionary tale or modern dating farce, the story has struck a chord—highlighting how artificial intelligence, when trusted too blindly, can reveal truths people may be trying desperately to keep hidden.

Maggi in the Mountains and the Internet Loses Its Mind



A content creator's claim that he earned ₹21,000 in a single day by selling Maggi noodles in the mountains has gone viral on social media, sparking a mix of amazement, humour, and practical debate online. The video, shared by Badal Thakur, has racked up

more than four million views, highlighting both the enduring popularity of Maggi as a comfort food in hill stations and the internet's fascination with unconventional income stories.

In the video, titled "Selling Maggi in Mountains for a Day," Thakur docu-

ments an experiment in which he sets up a temporary Maggi stall at an undisclosed mountain location. Armed with a table and an LPG cylinder, he offers two menu options: a plate of regular Maggi priced at ₹70 and a plate of cheese Maggi priced at ₹100. According to his esti-

mate, he sold between 300 and 350 plates over the course of the day, resulting in a total revenue of approximately ₹21,000.

The claim quickly caught the internet's attention. Many users were stunned by the numbers and rushed to calculate potential monthly earnings, with some suggesting that at this rate, a vendor could make over ₹6 lakh a month. The idea prompted tongue-in-cheek reactions, including comments like, "Should I quit my job?" and jokes about abandoning corporate careers for mountain-side food stalls.

However, as the discussion grew, several users were quick to point out that the figure cited represents gross income, not actual profit. Expenses such as Maggi packets, LPG refills, transportation of supplies to remote locations, disposable plates and cutlery, and labour costs significantly reduce the final take-home amount.

One user broke down

the math, estimating that 300 Maggi packets at ₹20 each would cost another ₹6,000, with an LPG cylinder adding ₹500. Transportation costs could run up to ₹5,000, and hiring a helper might cost another ₹1,000 per day. After expenses, the user calculated a daily profit of roughly ₹8,000—still impressive, but far from the headline figure.

Others also highlighted the physical and logistical challenges of such work, especially in harsh mountain conditions. "It's still better than some degrees," one commenter wrote, "but the struggles are real—working daily in minus-10 degrees is hectic."

While the viral video has romanticised the idea of quick earnings in scenic locations, the online debate underscores a more nuanced reality: high daily revenue does not automatically translate into easy money, and the grind behind such ventures often remains unseen.

ICC Revises Media Accreditation for Bangladesh Journalists Following Team Withdrawal from T20 World Cup

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is revising its media accreditation process for Bangladeshi journalists who wish to cover the upcoming T20 World Cup in India after the Bangladesh cricket team decided to withdraw from the tournament, citing security concerns. Sources within the ICC told PTI that the accreditation process is being reworked due to changes in the number of requests and the tournament schedule.

Around 80-90 Bangladeshi journalists had applied for media accreditation. However, ICC rules restrict the number of accreditations per country to a quota, generally not exceeding 40 journalists, even if the national team is participating. Decisions on applications are made based on the recommendations of the home cricket board, with the ICC taking a final call on approvals.

Some Bangladeshi journalists have claimed that their accreditation requests were rejected, prompting concern within the media community in Dhaka. BCB media official Amjad Hossain confirmed that the matter has been raised with the ICC. He told reporters, "The decision came only yesterday, and we have sought to know the details. An explanation has been requested. It is an internal and confidential matter, but we wanted to understand why this was done."



Senior journalists in Bangladesh expressed surprise at the move. One reporter, who has covered eight to nine ICC World Cups, stated, "This is the first time my application has been rejected. We are awaiting clarity from BCB before reapplying."

The ICC has clarified that the Bangladesh cricket team did not face any security threat in India, and the withdrawal was a decision made independently by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB). The withdrawal necessitated adjustments to the media accreditation process, as the number of journalists expected to cover the team would no longer apply.

To maintain the tournament schedule, the ICC replaced Bangladesh with

Scotland, ensuring the T20 World Cup remains on track to begin on February 7. The replacement also impacts media planning, with accreditation lists being updated to reflect the new team lineup.

ICC sources emphasized that the revision is primarily administrative. "There is a reworking of the process since there is a change in the number of requests and the schedules. The accreditation lists are being worked out

accordingly," an official said.

The development highlights the ripple effects of a team's withdrawal on both tournament logistics and media operations. Bangladeshi journalists are now awaiting further guidance from the BCB on how to proceed with reapplications for accreditation, while the ICC ensures that the revised lists reflect the current structure of the tournament.

Pakistan Weighs T20 World Cup Boycott Amid Bangladesh Solidarity, but Stakes Are Monumental



The cricketing world is closely watching as the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) considers a potential full boycott of the T20 World Cup 2026, following the International Cricket Council's (ICC) decision to replace Bangladesh with Scotland after the Tigers declined to travel to India over security concerns. PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday to discuss the matter, though a final decision is expected only

later this week.

While political sentiment in Pakistan has fueled talk of solidarity with Bangladesh, experts warn that a boycott could be catastrophic for the PCB. Naqvi has emphasized that the ultimate decision regarding Pakistan's participation rests with the government. The national selectors recently announced a 15-man squad for the tournament, but official clearance from the government remains pending.

Despite public posturing, several factors make a withdrawal nearly impossible:

1. Breach of Participation Agreement

Every ICC Full Member signs a Tournament Participation Agreement (TPA) well in advance of major events. Pulling out at the last minute would constitute a direct breach of this legally binding contract. The ICC has already indicated that such a breach could result in the

withholding of Pakistan's annual revenue share of USD 34.5 million (approx. Rs. 316 crore). For a board already operating in a fragile financial environment, losing this revenue—roughly 6% of the ICC's total pool—could destabilize its operations.

2. ICC Sanctions

The ICC maintains strict rules against political interference in cricket. A boycott perceived as government-mandated could be interpreted as an attempt to "weaponize" sport. Possible sanctions include:

- Suspension from global cricket, similar to past actions against Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka.

- Exclusion from Asia Cup events, given that the Asian Cricket Council often aligns with ICC positions.

- Revocation of hosting rights, including Pakistan's scheduled 2028 Women's T20 World Cup.

3. Threat to the PSL: NoC Retaliation

The Pakistan Super League (PSL) relies heavily on overseas players, who require No Objection Certificates (NoCs) from their home boards to par-

ticipate. A boycott could prompt ICC directives preventing foreign players from traveling to Pakistan, severely impacting the PSL's financial viability and international credibility.

4. Bilateral Fallout and Isolation

Cricket revenues depend on bilateral tours and global scheduling. Disrupting a marquee event like the T20 World Cup risks alienating key cricket boards, which could cancel or avoid tours to Pakistan, further jeopardizing PCB income streams.

While the idea of standing with Bangladesh has political appeal, a full boycott of the World Cup carries monumental risks. Legal breaches, sanctions, financial losses, and bilateral fallout would likely far outweigh any symbolic statement of solidarity.

The Bottom Line: Expressing support for Bangladesh may resonate politically, but a complete withdrawal from the ICC event would amount to self-inflicted damage for Pakistan cricket, threatening both its financial stability and standing in the international cricketing community.

Abhishek Sharma Smashes Records in T20I, Earns Praise as "Perfect T20 Batter"



India's young opener Abhishek Sharma produced a sensational performance in the third T20I against New Zealand on Sunday, rewriting the record books in the process. Chasing a modest target of 154, Abhishek blazed his way to an unbeaten 68 off just 28 balls, guiding India to victory in a mere 10 overs. His innings included a half-century scored in only 14 balls, making him the fastest Indian to reach 50 in a T20I against New Zealand.

This innings not only sealed the match but also highlighted Abhishek's emergence as one of the most feared T20 batters globally. His ability to score quickly, coupled with a fearless approach at the crease, has made India's batting lineup even more formidable in the shortest format.

Former India cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar lauded Abhishek's talent, calling him a "perfect batter" for T20 cricket. Speaking in an Instagram video, Manjrekar highlighted Abhishek's remarkable technique, describing it as tailor-made for the high-octane demands of the T20 format.

"What a sensational player and what a sensational T20 talent," Manjrekar said. "When you look at Abhishek Sharma's technique and compare it with the traditional Test cricket style, you realize he's made

for T20s. Apply this style in Tests, and you might struggle, but in T20s, it's perfect."

The former cricketer also praised Abhishek's unselfishness and team-oriented mindset. "One of the things that stands out is how unselfish he is," Manjrekar noted. "Even when he's in the 90s, he doesn't slow down. His hundreds in T20 internationals come at strike rates exceeding 200. He's always looking to maximize every single ball."

Manjrekar emphasized that Abhishek's fearlessness is a key trait that sets him apart. "He's not afraid of getting out. First ball, he'll take risks, try to hit sixes. That's what makes him so dangerous. He doesn't play safe just to extend his innings; he plays to maximize returns on every ball," he added.

Abhishek's recent performances underscore why he is increasingly being seen as a cornerstone of India's T20 plans. With his explosive batting, sharp cricketing instincts, and fearless approach, he has quickly become one of the most exciting young talents in world cricket.

As India gears up for upcoming T20 series, all eyes will remain on Abhishek Sharma, whose ability to turn games around in mere overs makes him a player capable of shaping India's T20 fortunes for years to come.

Italy Registers Historic T20I Win Over Ireland in Dubai



Italy created history on Monday by defeating Ireland by four wickets in the third T20I at The Sevens Stadium in Dubai, marking their first-ever victory against a Test-playing nation. Despite the milestone win, Italy lost the three-match series 1-2. Italy, ranked 28th in the T20I rankings, chased down a modest target of 155 with a thrilling finish, while Ireland sit at 11th place.

The game reached a dramatic climax in the final over, with Grant Stewart delivering a match-winning performance. Stewart smashed a hat-trick of sixes off the first three balls of the last over, finishing unbeaten on 33 off 19 balls, including five boundaries, to guide Italy to victory with three balls to spare.

Italy's chase got off to a shaky start, losing their first wicket in the opening over. Skipper Wayne Madsen top-scored for the side with a fighting 30-ball 39, while Gian-Piero Meade contributed 22 off 19 balls before being dismissed with 44 runs needed from the final four overs. Stewart, joining Marcus Campianno at the crease, steadied the innings, adding crucial runs with Campianno to leave Italy needing 16 from the final over – a target Stewart masterfully achieved.

Earlier, Ireland opted to bat first after losing the toss. Opener Ross Adair was removed by Italy's Ali Hasan in the third over, slowing Ireland's momentum. Captain Paul Stirling counter-attacked, scoring 45 off 38 balls, but wickets at regular

intervals, including dismissals of Harry Tector (13), Lorcan Tucker and Stirling himself, prevented Ireland from posting a massive total.

Middle-order contributions from Ben Calitz (12-ball 22), Gareth Delany (18 off 14), and Mark Adair (25 off 21) helped Ireland reach a competitive 154 all out in 19.4 overs. Italy's Crishan Kalugamage was the standout bowler, taking 3 wickets for 28 runs in 4 overs, supported by Stewart and JJ Smuts, who chipped in with two wickets each.

This historic win comes at a crucial time as Italy prepares for their first ICC T20 World Cup, beginning February 7. Placed in Group C, Italy will face Bangladesh, Nepal, England, and West Indies across venues in India and Sri Lanka. Their tournament campaign starts against Bangladesh at Eden Gardens, Kolkata on February 9, followed by a match against Nepal on February 12 in Mumbai.

The Azzurri's victory over Ireland provides a major confidence boost ahead of the World Cup, proving they can compete against higher-ranked sides and signaling that Italy could be a dark horse in the upcoming tournament.

Brief Scores:

Ireland – 154/10 in 19.4 overs (Paul Stirling 45; Mark Adair 25; Crishan Kalugamage 3/28)

Italy – 157/7 in 19.3 overs (Wayne Madsen 39; Grant Stewart 33*; Matthew Humphreys 2/23)

KL Rahul Opens Up on Retirement, Injuries, and Life Beyond Cricket

India batter KL Rahul has revealed that the thought of retirement has crossed his mind, but he insists it is still "some time away" and that he won't prolong the decision when the time comes. In a candid conversation with former England skipper Kevin Pietersen on his YouTube channel, Rahul said he sees retirement as a natural transition rather than a daunting choice.

"I've thought about it. I don't think it's going to be that difficult," the 33-year-old from Bengaluru said. "If you're honest with yourself, when it's time, it's time. And there's no point dragging it. Obviously, I'm some time away."

Rahul, a mainstay in India's Test and ODI squads, has amassed 4,053 runs in 67 Tests at an average of 35.8, 3,360 runs in 94 ODIs at 50.9, and 2,265 runs in 72 T20Is at an average of 37.75 with a strike rate of 139. Despite his impres-

sive record, Rahul stressed that he does not see himself as indispensable, a mindset he feels will make his retirement decision easier.

"Just quit. Just enjoy the stuff that you've got, your family, and just do that. That's the hardest battle," he said. "I try and tell myself I'm not that important. Cricket in our country will carry on. Cricket in the world will carry on. There are more important things in life. Ever since I had my first baby, the way you look at life is completely different."

The batter also reflected on the challenges of dealing with injuries, which have forced him to confront his longevity at the highest level. "There have been times when I've been injured—so many times—and that's the hardest battle you have to face," Rahul said. "It's not the physical pain or what the physio or surgeon puts



you through. It's the mental battle when your mind just gives up. When it happens repeatedly, your mind says you've done enough. Cricket has given you enough money, you can survive for the next however many years."

Rahul's openness highlights the psychological

and emotional toll of professional cricket, especially for players juggling national duties, domestic commitments, and family life. His reflection demonstrates a rare balance between ambition and acceptance, emphasizing that life beyond cricket is equally important.

The stylish batter is set to return to domestic action, playing for Karnataka in a must-win Ranji Trophy clash against Punjab in Mohali on Thursday, underlining that despite his contemplations about retirement, he remains focused on contributing on the field.

Rajendra Prasad Unveils 'Blood Roses' Trailer



The trailer of the upcoming crime thriller Blood Roses was officially released by Nata Kiriti and Padma Shri awardee Rajendra Prasad, creating a strong buzz among cinema circles. Slated for a grand theatrical release on February 6, the film promises an intense blend of crime, action, and suspense.

Blood Roses is being produced under the banner of TBR Cine Creations, presented by K. Naganna and K. Lakshamma, with Harish Kamarthi as producer and Ellappa as co-producer. The film is written and directed by MGR, who has designed the narrative with a gripping screenplay aimed at keeping audiences engaged throughout. The lead roles are played by Dharma Keerthi Raju and Apsara Rani, whose performances are expected to be major highlights.

After watching the trailer, senior actors Su-

man and Ajay Ghosh congratulated the film unit, stating that the visuals and narrative looked intriguing. They wished the team great success for the film's upcoming release, further boosting confidence around the project.

Speaking at the trailer launch, Rajendra Prasad praised the film's intense treatment and crime-thriller elements. He described the trailer as compelling and expressed hope that Blood Roses would emerge as a successful venture upon its release. He added that the film could bring strong recognition to director MGR, producer Harish K, and the entire team of artists and technicians involved.

Apart from the lead pair, Blood Roses boasts an extensive supporting cast including Suman, Gharshana Srinivas, Tarzan, Sreelu, Kranthi Kili, Rajendra, Junior Relangi, Jagadeeshwari, Mani Kumar, Dhruva,

Anil, Narendra, Pragya, Navitha, and popular television and comedy artists such as Jabardasth GMR, Jabardasth Ramu, Jabardasth Babu, and ETV Jeevan. Child artists Baby Anushka, Baby Sriya, and Baby Gouthami also appear in key roles.

The technical team adds further strength to the project. Cinematography is handled by Ogi Reddy Shivakumar, while music is composed by Peddapalli Rohith, complementing the film's dark and intense mood. Editing is by Ravi Teja CH, with Mani Kumar serving as executive producer. Most of the film was shot in and around Hyderabad, lending authenticity to its urban crime setting.

With its trailer receiving positive feedback and strong promotional momentum, Blood Roses is set for a grand theatrical release on February 6 through MG Movies, presented by Achibabu.

Jayanth C Paranjee Launches Romantic Track 'Malli Malli' from Barabar Premistha



The upcoming Telugu film Barabar Premistha, featuring Attitude Star Chandra Hass in the lead role, continues to build strong buzz with the release of its latest romantic song 'Malli Malli'. The melodious track was officially launched by renowned director Jayanth C Paranjee, adding further prominence to the film ahead of its theatrical release on February 6.

Directed by Sampath Rudra and produced by Geda Chandu, Gayatri Chinny, and AVR under the banners of CC Creations and AVR Movie Wonders, the film is presented by Kakarla Satyanarayana. Barabar Premistha pairs Chandra Hass with Miss India finalist Meghna Mukherjee as the female lead, while Arjun Mahi, known for Ishtanga, plays the antagonist. The posters, teaser, and previously released songs have already resonated well with the youth, creating promis-

ing expectations around the project.

The newly released song Malli Malli is a soft romantic duet that beautifully captures the chemistry between Chandra Hass and Meghna Mukherjee. Composed by RR Dhruvan, the song stands out for its soothing melody and emotional depth. Dhruvan has also penned the lyrics, which blend seamlessly with the composition, while Mohammed Irfan's soulful vocals elevate the track's romantic appeal. The song has been receiving positive responses for its freshness and melodic charm.

Speaking at the song launch, director Jayanth C Paranjee praised the composition and extended his best wishes to the team. "Malli Malli is a lovely song. The film is releasing on February 6, and I hope audiences watch and encourage the movie," he said.

On the technical front,

Barabar Premistha boasts YR Sekhar as the director of photography, with Bonthala Nageswar Reddy handling the editing. The story is penned by MA Tirupathi, while the screenplay is jointly crafted by Sampath Rudra and Tirupathi. Dialogues are written by Ramesh Rai, adding strength to the film's narrative.

Apart from the lead cast, the film features a strong supporting ensemble including Muralidhar Goud, Laxman Meesala, Madhumandan, Abhay Naveen, Rajasekhar Aningi, Dr. Bhatini, Keerthilatha Goud, and Sunitha Manohar in key roles.

With its youthful theme, romantic music, and growing promotional buzz, Barabar Premistha is gearing up for a grand release on February 6, aiming to strike a chord with young audiences and romance lovers alike.

Dubbing Begins for Ustaad Bhagat Singh

The much-awaited Telugu mass entertainer Ustaad Bhagat Singh has officially entered a key stage of its journey, with dubbing work commencing on an auspicious note. The development has heightened excitement among fans, as the film marks the powerful combination of Power Star Pawan Kalyan and director Harish Shankar, a duo known for delivering high-voltage commercial cinema.

Director Harish Shankar, fondly referred to as the "Cult Captain" for his distinctive storytelling style and punch-packed writing, is said to be personally overseeing the post-production process. Known for his sharp wit and mass-loaded dialogues, Harish Shankar is reportedly ensuring that the dubbing sessions capture the raw intensity and energy required to elevate the film's impact. Industry sources suggest that Ustaad Bhagat Singh will feature several hard-hitting and whistle-worthy dialogues, designed to resonate strongly with Pawan Kalyan's massive fan base.

Adding to the buzz, Power Star Pawan Kalyan is expected to join the dubbing sessions very soon. His participation is eagerly awaited, as his powerful voice modulation and screen presence have always been key highlights of his films. Fans are already anticipating iconic dialogues that could become instant catchphrases upon release.

With post-production pro-

gressing at a brisk pace, the makers have assured that major updates related to the film will be unveiled shortly. These updates are expected to include promotional content, music releases, and possibly an official release timeline. The team has urged fans to stay tuned, promising a series of electrifying announcements in the coming days.

Ustaad Bhagat Singh features an impressive cast that includes Pawan Kalyan in the lead role, alongside Sreeleela, Rashmika Mandanna, and others in pivotal roles. The film is written and directed by Harish Shankar S, with producers Naveen Yeneni and Ravi Shankar Yalamanchili backing the project.

On the technical front, the film boasts a strong crew with music composed by Devi Sri Prasad, whose collaboration with Pawan Kalyan has delivered several chartbusters in the past. The screenplay is handled by K. Dasharath and Ramesh Reddy, with additional writing by Praveen Varma and Chandramohan. Editing is by Karthika Srinivas, while Anand Sai serves as the production designer. Action sequences are choreographed by Ram Laxman, Nabakanth, and Prudhvi.

With its mass appeal, powerful dialogues, and a star-studded team, Ustaad Bhagat Singh is shaping up to be one of the most anticipated releases in Telugu cinema.



Mohan Babu Receives Governor's Award of Excellence in West Bengal



In a landmark moment for Telugu cinema, legendary actor Shri Mohan Babu was conferred with the prestigious Governor's Award of Excellence by the Government of West Bengal on the occasion of Republic Day. The grand ceremony was held at Lok Bhavan, Kolkata, marking a rare

and significant recognition of a Telugu film icon by the eastern state.

The award was presented by the Hon'ble Governor of West Bengal in the presence of distinguished guests, followed by the traditional At Home reception. Adding emotional and symbolic weight to the occa-

sion, Mohan Babu's son, actor and producer Vishnu Manchu, who also serves as the President of the Movie Artists Association (MAA), attended the ceremony alongside MAA Treasurer Siva Balaji. Their presence underscored the collective pride of the Telugu film frater-

nity in this historic achievement.

This honor is particularly noteworthy as it marks the first time West Bengal has bestowed such a prestigious award on a Telugu actor, reflecting the growing national recognition of Telugu cinema's artistic excellence and cultural impact. The award highlights how regional cinema continues to transcend linguistic and geographical boundaries, earning admiration across India.

The recognition comes at a fitting time, coinciding with Mohan Babu's 50 remarkable years in Indian cinema. Over the decades, he has carved a unique legacy through powerful performances across multiple languages and genres. Known for his versatility and intense screen presence, Mohan Babu has portrayed a wide spectrum of characters, leaving an indelible mark on audi-

ences and critics alike.

Beyond cinema, Mohan Babu's contributions extend to education and philanthropy, most notably through his initiatives aimed at empowering underprivileged communities. His efforts off-screen have earned him equal respect, reinforcing his image as not just a celebrated actor but also a committed social contributor.

For the global Telugu diaspora, the moment stands as a source of immense pride. The honor symbolically bridges Bengal's rich cultural heritage with Tollywood's vibrant cinematic legacy, embodying the true spirit of Republic Day—unity in diversity.

As India reflects on its democratic and cultural journey, Mohan Babu's recognition reaffirms that excellence in cinema has the power to unite the nation beyond language and region.

Crime Thriller Zamana Set for January 30 Release

The upcoming Telugu crime thriller Zamana, starring Surya Srinivas and Sanjeev Kumar in the lead roles, is all set to hit theatres on January 30. Directed by debutant Bhaskar Jakkula and produced by Tejaswi Adapa, the film has generated positive buzz following its recently held grand pre-release event, which saw the presence of the film's cast, crew, and special guest Aakash Puri.

The pre-release celebration was marked by enthusiastic participation from the team, who expressed strong confidence in the film's content. Actor Aakash Puri, who attended the event as the chief guest, praised the trailer and extended his best wishes to the makers. Speaking on the occasion, he said that Zamana appears to be made with a strong and interesting concept, and urged audiences to watch the film in theatres upon its release. He added that movies backed by good crime and thriller elements often connect well with viewers and hoped the film would

bring recognition to the entire team.

Director Bhaskar Jakkula described Zamana as a different and engaging crime thriller made with a fresh narrative approach. He stated that the film is packed with entertainment and unexpected twists that would keep audiences hooked from beginning to end. Thanking producer Tejaswi Adapa for trusting him with the project, Bhaskar also appealed for continued support from the audience and media.

Music director Keshav Kiran highlighted the film's gripping screenplay and said the narrative flow was one of the project's biggest strengths. He expressed confidence that Zamana would appeal to viewers across age groups and thanked the media and guests for supporting the film during its promotional journey.

Lead actors Surya Srinivas and Sanjeev Kumar spoke emotionally about the project, stating that Zamana was made with great belief and hard work. They shared that the film, scheduled



for release on January 30, reflects their passion and commitment, and expressed hope that audiences would appreciate their efforts.

Set against the backdrop of Hyderabad's Old City, Zamana is said to mirror the thoughts and realities of today's youth.

The film blends crime, suspense, and entertainment while staying rooted in a realistic setting that enhances its intensity. Actress Swathi Kashyap and Zara, among others, play important roles in the film.

On the technical front, cinematography is by

Jagan A, editing by M.R. Varma, and music by Keshav Kiran. With a strong storyline, engaging performances, and a contemporary theme, Zamana is gearing up to offer audiences a thrilling cinematic experience when it arrives in theatres on January 30.