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Revanth Reddy Seeks Harvard Partnership for Telangana's Education Vision

Cambridge (USA), January 28, 2026—TPN Bureau

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, currently on an official visit to the United States, held high-level discussions with senior leadership of Harvard University's Kennedy School on strengthening academic collaboration and advancing large-scale education reforms aligned with the state's long-term development goals.

The Chief Minister presented the state government's ambitious #TelanganaRising vision, outlining Telangana's focus on human capital development,

innovation-driven governance, and future-ready education systems. He emphasized the need for global academic collaboration to redesign education frameworks that can deliver quality learning outcomes at scale, particularly in emerging economies like India.

According to sources, CM Revanth Reddy sought formal collaboration with the Harvard Kennedy School in areas such as public policy education, leadership training, digital learning platforms, and evidence-based governance. Prof. Tinsley and Prof. Weinstein responded positively to the proposal and expressed interest in exploring structured engagement with the Telangana government through Harvard-X and other Kennedy School initiatives.

The discussions also covered modern approaches to skill development, especially in the context of rapid technological change, artificial intelligence, and digital governance. CM Reddy highlighted Telangana's priority to equip youth with future-oriented skills while simultaneously strengthening public education systems to



ensure equity and access. Another key focus of the interaction was the role of human resource development in accelerating economic growth. The Chief Minister underscored that sustained economic transformation depends not only on infrastructure and investments but also on continuous upskilling of the workforce and effective public administration. He noted that global institutions like Harvard can play a critical role in shaping policy leaders and administrators capable of managing complex development challenges. Officials accompanying the Chief Minister said

the meeting marked an important step toward building global academic bridges that can support Telangana's governance reforms and education modernization agenda. Further discussions and follow-up engagements are expected to translate the dialogue into concrete collaborative programs. CM Revanth Reddy's interaction with Harvard leadership reflects the Telangana government's broader strategy of leveraging global best practices and international partnerships to position the state as a knowledge-driven economy and a hub for innovation-led growth.



Wings India Exhibition Soars at Begumpet Airport

Hyderabad (Jan 28, 2026) | TPN Bureau

The prestigious Wings India aviation exhibition took off in grand style at Begumpet Airport on Tuesday, transforming the historic airfield into a vibrant hub of aviation innovation, technology, and global collaboration. The biennial event, regarded as one of Asia's largest civil aviation shows, has drawn wide attention from industry leaders, policymakers, aviation professionals, and enthusiasts.

The exhibition showcases a wide range of aircraft, aviation technology, and support systems, highlighting India's growing stature in the global aviation and aerospace sector. From commercial and business aircraft to helicopters, drones, and maintenance technologies, the static displays at Begumpet have become a major attraction for visitors.

Wings India provides a comprehensive platform for stakeholders across the aviation ecosystem, including airlines, aircraft manufacturers, airport operators, maintenance service providers, and start-ups. The event focuses on critical areas such as aircraft manufacturing, airport infrastructure development, aviation safety, sustainability,



digital transformation, and skill development. Industry experts noted that the exhibition reflects India's rapid progress in civil aviation over the past decade. With rising passenger traffic, expanding regional connectivity, and increasing emphasis on indigenous manufacturing, India is emerging as one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets. Wings India serves as a meeting ground to discuss challenges and opportunities shaping the future of air travel. Apart from aircraft displays, the event features high-level conferences, panel discussions, and business-to-business meetings. These sessions are aimed at fostering policy dialogue, encouraging investments, and strengthening international partnerships. Senior officials, aviation regulators, and global experts are expected to deliberate on strategies to make aviation safer, greener, and more inclusive.

The choice of Begumpet Airport as the venue adds historic significance to the exhibition. Once the primary airport of Hyderabad, Begumpet has witnessed several landmark aviation events and now hosts Wings India as a symbol of the city's enduring connection with aviation. The exhibition also reinforces Hyderabad's reputation as a key hub for aerospace, defence manufacturing, and aviation services. Visitors, including students and young professionals, are finding the exhibition inspiring, as it offers a close look at cutting-edge aviation technology and career opportunities in the sector. Organisers said the event aims to inspire the next generation while strengthening India's global aviation footprint. As Wings India continues over the coming days, Begumpet Airport stands at the centre of aviation excellence, innovation, and dialogue, underlining India's ambition to play a leading role in shaping the future of global civil aviation.

Lakhs Converge at Medaram for Historic Gaddelu Ceremony

Medaram TPN Bureau | January 28:

State Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Minister Seethakka on Tuesday said that Medaram is fully prepared for the most significant phase of the Sannakka-Saralamma Maha Jatar, as lakhs of devotees continue to throng the sacred site from all directions. She described the arrival of Saralamma, Pagiddida Raju and Govindaraju onto the gaddelu as a "historic and divine moment" filled with devotion and spiritual fervour. Speaking to the media, Minister Seethakka said all roads are leading to Medaram as devotees gather in massive numbers to witness the rare and sacred rituals associated with the world-famous tribal festival. She assured that the state government

has completed all arrangements to ensure that devotees face no inconvenience during the Jatar. The Minister stated that queue lines are being managed systematically to regulate the heavy crowd. Keeping in view the prevailing heat conditions, extensive sheds have been erected across the Jatar area to provide shade to pilgrims. "Adequate drinking water facilities, medical services and security arrangements have been put in place on a large scale," she said, adding that officials from multiple departments are working in coordination round the clock. Providing details of the ceremonial process, Seethakka said Pagiddida Raju departed from Ponugondla on Monday, while Govindaraju has already reached Medaram from Kondai and is presently

receiving traditional honours at the local Saralamma temple. She informed that Saralamma will begin her journey from Kannepalli to Medaram at around 5 pm on Tuesday. "The moment when Saralamma, Pagiddida Raju and Govindaraju ascend the gaddelu amidst the thunderous chants and cheers of lakhs of devotees will be a truly grand and emotional occasion," the Minister said. She noted that this moment marks the end of the two-year 'vanavasam' (forest sojourn) of the mother goddesses and their return to the midst of the people.

Seethakka described the occasion as a rare and divine experience for devotees. "This is an extraordinary opportunity to witness and seek the blessings of the mother goddesses. Such



moments remain etched in the hearts of devotees for a lifetime," she said. Appealing to the public, the Minister urged devotees to visit Medaram with devotion, discipline and responsibility. She requested pilgrims to cooperate with officials, follow queue systems and safety guidelines, and ensure a peaceful darshan. The Medaram Sannakka-Saralamma Maha Jatar, held once every two years, is considered one of the largest tribal congregations in the world. With the arrival of the deities on the gaddelu, the Jatar enters its most sacred and spiritually charged phase, drawing devotees cutting across caste, creed and region.



Revanth Reddy to Launch Statewide Election Campaign from February 3

Medaram TPN Bureau | January 28:

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy is set to launch an intensive statewide election campaign beginning February 3, marking a major political push ahead of the upcoming local body and municipal elections. The campaign is aimed at energising party cadres, reaching out to voters at the grassroots level, and

consolidating public support for the Congress government's agenda. According to party sources, the Chief Minister will embark on a series of public meetings, roadshows, and interactions with local leaders across key districts. The campaign is expected to begin from a strategically significant region and gradually cover urban and semi-urban constituencies, with a special focus on municipalities where

elections are scheduled in the coming weeks.

The Congress leadership believes that Revanth Reddy's direct engagement with the public will play a crucial role in strengthening the party's prospects. Since assuming office, the Chief Minister has positioned himself as a hands-on administrator, frequently touring districts to review development works and address public grievances. The up-

coming campaign is seen as an extension of this outreach-driven governance model.

During the campaign, Revanth Reddy is expected to highlight the government's welfare initiatives, administrative reforms, and steps taken to improve infrastructure, education, and employment opportunities. Party leaders say the Chief Minister will also emphasise transparency in governance and the need for

strong local bodies to effectively implement development programmes at the grassroots level.

Congress leaders at the state level have been instructed to ensure maximum mobilisation of party workers for the campaign events. Special coordination teams are being formed to manage logistics, crowd mobilisation, and media outreach. The leadership is keen on projecting unity and organisational strength.

Harish Rao Alleges Major Irregularities in Excise Department

Hyderabad (Jan 28, 2026) | TPN Bureau

Former Minister and BRS Legislative Party Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao on Tuesday made serious allegations against the Congress-led Telangana government, claiming large-scale irregularities and corruption in the Excise Department, along with negligence towards farmers and traditional toddy workers.

Speaking during an informal interaction at Telangana Bhavan, Harish Rao said several major "excise scam" on Tuesday. He alleged that the state government had facilitated corruption in the allotment of micro-breweries, claiming that 110 applications were received, of which 25 tenders were allegedly earmarked for influential political leaders and ministers.

According to Harish Rao, 21 tenders were reserved under a "key leader's quota" and four under a minister's quota. He alleged the involvement of a person described as a "shadow" to a senior leader, who frequently accompanies the leader and has been seen during high-profile visits, including a recent trip to Tirupati. Harish



Rao claimed that unofficial deals involved payments of 1.8 crore per brewery, with 1.5 crore allegedly going to the senior leader and 30 lakh to the intermediary.

He further alleged irregularities in wine shop allotments, claiming that tenders were granted without conducting lucky draws. Harish Rao also accused the government of withholding payments worth 4,500 crore to liquor supply companies for over 16 months, an unprecedented situation in the state's history. He said this had disrupted beer supply in several shops, with multinational companies repeatedly warning the government of supply stoppages.

Linking excise policies to broader governance failures, Harish Rao alleged that internal disputes among ministers over revenue sharing had harmed state finances. He also referred to an earlier tender controversy, claiming it forced an

IAS officer into voluntary retirement due to political pressure.

Criticising the government's priorities, Harish Rao said while beer companies were ensured uninterrupted water supply, farmers were being neglected. He pointed to crop holidays declared across tens of thousands of acres in Medak and Sangareddy districts, while breweries in Sangareddy allegedly faced no restrictions.

He further accused the Congress government of harassing toddy-tapper communities, claiming hundreds were jailed and 850 Gowda community members died without compensation. He contrasted this with the previous BRS government's 5 lakh insurance scheme, alleging Congress had failed to deliver on its promise of 10 lakh insurance.

Concluding his remarks, Harish Rao accused the Congress of turning Telangana into a "liquor-driven state" by opening wine shops in every locality, alleg-

Konda Surekha Extends Medaram Jatara Greetings

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
 Forest, Environment and Endowments Minister Konda Surekha on Tuesday extended warm greetings to the people of Telangana on the occasion of the world-famous Medaram Sannakka-Saralamma Maha Jatara, describing the tribal festival as a powerful symbol of cultural pride, tradition, and people's faith.

communities. She recalled that Sannakka and Saralamma are revered as embodiments of women's power who fought heroically for the dignity and rights of tribal people. Their legacy, she said, continues to inspire generations and remains deeply rooted in the collective consciousness of Telangana. "Crores of devotees worship Sannakka and Saralamma with immense faith and devotion. The Medaram Maha Jatara, known as the 'Telangana Kumbh Mela,' stands as a global symbol of our rich cul-



ture and age-old traditions," Konda Surekha stated. Highlighting the spiritual and cultural significance of the biennial fes-

tival, the Minister noted that Medaram is not merely a religious gathering but a celebration of tribal identity, unity, and history. She said the Jatara represents harmony between nature, humanity, and faith, reflecting the values that have sustained indigenous communities for centuries. Konda Surekha expressed hope that the blessings of Sannakka and Saralamma would guide Telangana toward prosperity, peace, and sustained development. "With the divine grace of the mother goddesses,

may the state progress on the path of development while remaining peaceful and prosperous," she said. The Minister extended special greetings to devotees, tribal brothers and sisters, and people from across the state and country who participate in the sacred Jatara with unwavering devotion. She also acknowledged the role of tribal communities in preserving and passing on the traditions associated with Medaram, calling them custodians of a unique cultural heritage. The Medaram Sannakka-Saralamma

Maha Jatara, held in Mulugu district, is considered one of the largest tribal congregations in the world, attracting millions of devotees every year. The festival commemorates the sacrifice and courage of Sannakka and Saralamma and continues to draw people cutting across caste, creed, and region. Concluding her message, Konda Surekha wished that the sacred occasion would strengthen social harmony and collective well-being, reinforcing Telangana's cultural pride and spiritual unity.

RTC Makes Elaborate Arrangements for Medaram Jatara: Ponnam Prabhakar

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
 Transport and Backward Classes Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Tuesday extended heartfelt greetings to crores of devotees, especially women devotees, visiting the Medaram Sannakka-Saralamma Maha Jatara, and announced comprehensive arrangements made by the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (RTC) to facilitate safe and smooth travel.



In a statement, the Minister said the state government is committed to ensuring hassle-free transportation for devotees coming from different parts of Telangana to witness the sacred Medaram Jatara. He stated that RTC has deployed around 4,000 special buses from various regions of the state exclusively for the mega tribal festival. Highlighting a key welfare measure, Ponnam Prabhakar announced that women devotees travelling to Medaram in RTC buses will be provided free travel facility. He said this initiative aims to encourage and support women devotees, fondly referred to as "akka-chel-

lalu," who travel in large numbers to seek the blessings of Sannakka and Saralamma. The Minister said RTC buses will transport devotees directly up to the gaddela (sacred platforms) premises, ensuring convenience, especially for elderly devotees and families. After darshan, buses will safely

drop passengers back to their respective destinations, he added. Elaborating on infrastructure arrangements, Ponnam Prabhakar said several passenger-friendly facilities have been set up at RTC bus stations and temporary bus terminals at Medaram. These include drinking water facilities, health

camps, and passenger assistance services to ensure comfort and safety. A massive temporary bus station spread across 50 acres has been established at Medaram to handle the heavy inflow of pilgrims. In addition, 50 queue lines extending over 9 kilometres have been arranged, with the capacity to accommo-

date up to 20,000 passengers at a time, ensuring smooth crowd management. The Minister also noted that rest sheds have been arranged for RTC staff, who are working round the clock to manage operations during the Jatara. A dedicated control room has been set up, with RTC officials

Ponnam Prabhakar Urges Support for Congress in Municipal Elections

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
 Transport and Backward Classes Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Tuesday appealed to voters to support and elect Congress Party candidates in the upcoming municipal elections, stating that urban development and improved civic services can be ensured only with a Congress-led local administration.

Addressing party workers and the public after the municipal election notification was issued, the Minister said polling will be held on February 11. He emphasized that under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the Congress government is moving forward with a planned and people-centric approach to urban development, focusing on civic amenities and basic infrastructure.

Ponnam Prabhakar said several development programmes are currently underway in urban areas across Telangana, aimed at improving roads, sanitation, drinking water supply, housing, and public services. He asserted that municipalities will play a key role in implementing these

initiatives effectively at the grassroots level. Calling upon citizens to bless the Congress Party in the municipal elections, the Minister said the state government is committed to improving the living standards of people. "With people's governance in place, the Congress government has introduced several welfare schemes that directly benefit the common man," he said. Listing major welfare initiatives, Ponnam Prabhakar highlighted the distribution of ration cards, construction of Indiramma houses, supply of fine rice through the public distribution system, and provision of 200 units of free electricity to households. He also underlined women-centric schemes such as free bus travel for women, interest-free loans, and the distribution of Indiramma sarees, stating that these programmes reflect the government's commitment to social justice and inclusive growth. The Minister said these welfare and development measures are designed not only to provide immediate relief but also to create long-term socio-economic stability. He add-

ed that strengthening Congress leadership in urban local bodies will accelerate the pace of development and ensure transparent governance. Ponnam Prabhakar urged voters to stand firmly with the Congress Party to ensure comprehensive development of all towns and cities in the state. "If all urban areas are to witness sustained growth and better civic facilities, people must support Congress candidates in the municipal elections," he said. He concluded by appealing to people from all sections of society to actively participate in the democratic process and cast their votes in favour of Congress candidates. "At a time when development is taking place across sectors, I request the people to bless the Congress Party and ensure a decisive victory for our candidates in the municipal elections," the Minister said. The Congress Party is gearing up for the municipal polls with a focus on governance, welfare, and infrastructure development, positioning the elections as a key step in strengthening grassroots democracy in Telangana.

Telangana Disaster Management to Be a National Role Model: Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
 State Revenue, Housing and Information & Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy on Wednesday said the Telangana Disaster Management system is being strengthened to serve as a national role model, with the primary objective of minimising loss of life and property during natural calamities.



Addressing a high-level review meeting at the Secretariat, the Minister announced that the state government has decided to procure state-of-the-art disaster response equipment worth 100 crore to effectively deal with floods, fires and other emergencies. He held detailed discussions with officials from the Disaster Management Department, Fire Services, SDRF, HYDRA and the Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) on the type of advanced equipment required. The Minister said modern early warning systems, real-time monitoring mechanisms, drones, satellite-based communication tools, advanced rescue equipment, and cutting-edge

fire and search operations during floods, the Minister suggested developing an airlift mechanism and procuring heavy-lift drones capable of carrying 70 to 80 kilograms to rescue people stranded in streams, canals and water bodies. Recalling an incident from 2024, he expressed anguish over not being able to rescue victims trapped in streams in his Palair constituency due to the absence of an effective airlift system. He directed officials to expand the SIM-based VHF radio communication system—already linked to the ICCC in Hyderabad—up to the field level, ensuring uninterrupted communication even in remote areas. He also instruct-

ed the HYDRA Commissioner to procure specialised equipment to tackle fire accidents in high-rise buildings in Hyderabad and proposed the purchase of 77 high-speed rescue boats. The Minister said the state currently has 12 SDRF teams, each with nearly 1,000 personnel, and stressed the need for regular and intensive training for all teams. Senior officials, including Special Chief Secretary for Disaster Management Arvind Kumar, Fire Services Director Vikraman Singh, HYDRA Commissioner Ranganath, and ICCC Director Kamal Hassan Reddy, attended the meeting. Meanwhile, the Min-

ister reviewed arrangements for the Medaram Sannakka-Saralamma Maha Jatara, directing all departments to work in close coordination to ensure smooth management for lakhs of devotees. From the Secretariat, he interacted with field staff in Medaram through high-frequency walkie-talkies, monitoring traffic, crowd movement and facilities. He instructed officials to ensure robust policing, effective traffic regulation, adequate drinking water supply and seamless transport facilities, stressing that devotees should not face any inconvenience during the prestigious tribal festival being organised by the Praja Government.

Madhu Yashki Goud Targets BRS, Defends Congress Governance and Rule of Law

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
 Former MP and Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) Campaign Committee Chairman Madhu Yashki Goud on Tuesday launched a sharp attack on the BRS leadership, while strongly defending the Congress government's functioning and commitment to constitutional governance.

Addressing an informal media interaction at Gandhi Bhavan, Madhu Yashki alleged that while the people of Telangana were making sacrifices for the statehood movement, key BRS leaders such as K.T. Rama Rao, T. Harish Rao and Kalvakuntla Kavitha were setting up companies in the United States as early as 2010. He claimed Kavitha amassed wealth both during the Telangana movement and later after entering politics, and even appointed personal assistants district-wise at an early stage. Asserting that the Congress party is currently in a strong position, Madhu Yashki said both the BRS and

BJP were weak opposition forces. He accused several police officials who served during the BRS regime of functioning like party workers and indulging in illegal activities. Referring to the term "friendly police" used during the BRS rule, he alleged it effectively meant being friendly towards drug peddlers. Madhu Yashki expressed concern over certain police officers allegedly misusing their authority to gain publicity by resorting to midnight arrests, similar to practices during the BRS tenure. He said some officials were prioritising land settlements over maintaining law and order, and warned that arrests must strictly follow due legal procedure. He alleged that the city police commissioner was showing undue aggression against innocent citizens. He clarified that Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has clearly instructed officials to act strictly as per law and democratic principles, but a few officers were tarnishing the government's image by violating procedures. He strongly condemned such actions and warned that continuing BRS-era practices would not be tolerated, emphasising that governance and leadership have changed. Responding to corruption allegations, Madhu Yashki dismissed claims related to Naini coal tenders, stating that no contract allocation or coal extraction took place, making the allegation of a scam baseless. He also questioned the credibility of past allegations like the 2G scam, asking why no proof had emerged even after 11 years of BJP rule. Similarly, he challenged the BJP to show evidence of even one rupee being transferred to Rahul Gandhi or Sonia Gandhi in the National Herald case. On internal party matters, Madhu Yashki called for the early formation of a coordination committee to manage issues arising from BRS MLAs joining Congress, urging in-charge ministers to ensure coordination between new entrants

BRS Slams State Election Commission Over 'Hasty' Municipal Poll Schedule

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) on Wednesday strongly criticised the State Election Commission (SEC) for what it described as an arbitrary and unprecedented approach in issuing the notification for the upcoming municipal elections, alleging that the compressed schedule undermines democratic norms and denies political parties a fair opportunity to participate in the electoral process.

Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan, BRS Principal General Secretary Soma Bharat Kumar said the SEC issued the

municipal election notification on Tuesday and allowed nominations only till January 30. He pointed out that the final voter list and appointment of returning officers are scheduled to be announced on January 28, leaving parties with barely three days to complete the nomination process. Soma Bharat Kumar said the timing of the notification is particularly objectionable as it coincides with the world-famous Sankranti-Saralamma Maha Jatar, being held from January 28 to 31. "This is a major state festival that attracts nearly one crore devotees. People from every municipal

division travel to Medaram during this period. Issuing the election notification at such a time is insensitive and impractical," he said. He asserted that elections are not a mere formality and require adequate preparation. Political parties need sufficient time to identify candidates, hold consultations, gather mandatory documents and complete statutory procedures. "Providing just three days for nominations is not a convention. This is unfortunate and objectionable," he said, adding that the limited timeframe affects all political parties except those in power. The BRS leader ques-



tioned the urgency behind the rushed schedule and accused the ruling Congress of remaining silent on the issue. "Why this undue

haste? As per the Constitution, elections must provide equal opportunity to all citizens and political parties to participate. The present no-

tification defeats that purpose," he alleged. Soma Bharat Kumar said established electoral practice requires the announcement of an

election schedule first, followed by a gazette notification, and a reasonable nomination period of at least a week. "By deviating from these long-standing traditions, the Election Commission has disrupted democratic procedures," he charged. Clarifying that BRS is not demanding postponement of the municipal elections, he urged the SEC to reconsider its approach and rectify the schedule. "Authority does not mean arbitrariness. Even now, the Election Commission should correct its method," he said, adding that such a flawed schedule has never been issued anywhere in the coun-

try. The BRS leader also raised concerns over the handling of MLA defection cases, alleging that the Speaker is following different standards for different parties. He recalled that the Supreme Court has issued directions twice in this regard and noted that MLA D. Nagender has been summoned by the Speaker on January 30. "Despite sufficient evidence, action is being delayed. As tribunal chairman, the Speaker must act constitutionally," he said. Former Corporation Chairman K. Vasudeva Reddy and BRS Legal Cell representative Lalitha Reddy were present at the press meet.



Congress Confident of Sweeping Municipal Polls, Says Bhatti Vikramarka

Madira (Khammam district), January 28 | TPN Bureau

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu on Wednesday expressed strong confidence that the Congress party will secure the maximum number of seats in the upcoming municipal elections and continue to steer Telangana on the path of all-round development.

Speaking to the media at the Madira Assembly constituency headquarters, the Deputy CM said all MLAs must take the municipal elections seriously, work in close coordination with party leaders, and adopt a clear, result-oriented strategy. He asserted that the Praja Government has accorded top priority to urban development and is implementing welfare schemes unmatched anywhere else in the country.

Bhatti Vikramarka said ministers, MLAs, senior leaders, and urban in-charges must collectively deliberate and give preference to candidates who have strong winning prospects, understand the Congress ideology, and can effectively take government welfare programmes to the people. He urged MLAs to coordinate closely with party in-charges in their respective

municipalities. Highlighting governance under Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the Deputy CM said the entire cabinet is functioning as a "joint family" with the common objective of Telangana's future and public welfare. He noted that the cabinet is working as a true Praja Government, with special focus on urban infrastructure, health, and education.

He reiterated that nearly 90 percent of the promises made before the elections have already been implemented. Key initiatives include the supply of fine rice through ration shops, free RTC bus travel for women by recognising them as "Mahalakshmis," and interest-free support measures that have boosted confidence among the poor.

On welfare and development, Bhatti Vikramarka said 5 lakh is being spent per house under the Indiramma Housing scheme, while the Aarogyasri health insurance coverage has been enhanced from 5 lakh to 10 lakh. He also pointed out that the Praja Government successfully conducted Group-I and Group-II examinations, declared results, and completed recruit-

ment of do for years.

Stressing that Telangana's destiny depends on education, he said Young India International Schools of global standards are being constructed—one in each constituency—over 25 acres with an investment of 200 crore per school.

The Deputy CM said the government has released the Vision 2047 document for Telangana's long-term development, based on the integrated PURE-CURE-RARE framework, which has received appreciation from global leaders. On alliances in municipal elections, he clarified that decisions will be taken after due deliberation under the leadership of TPCC President Mahesh Kumar Goud. Responding to criticism over Singareni tenders, Bhatti Vikramarka said he has already provided complete clarity with evidence, and those continuing to raise the issue are doing so at their own discretion.

He concluded by recalling Congress' success in recent sarpanch elections and expressed confidence that the party would replicate the performance in municipal polls, further strengthening Telangana's development trajectory.

Leaders Express Shock Over Ajit Pawar's Demise

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau

The Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) on Tuesday expressed deep shock and sorrow over the tragic demise of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar in a reported aircraft accident in Maharashtra. TPCC President and MLC Mahesh Kumar Goud described the incident as deeply disturbing and said the sudden loss has sent shockwaves across political circles.

In a condolence message, Mahesh Kumar Goud said Ajit Pawar had emerged as a towering political figure in Maharashtra politics and had recently assumed the responsibility of Deputy Chief Minister. "His untimely demise is an irreparable loss to Maharashtra's political landscape," he stated. Goud added that Pawar's political journey and public life left a lasting impact, and his absence would be deeply felt.

Expressing his personal grief, the TPCC chief conveyed profound condolences to the bereaved family members, supporters, and well-wishers of Ajit Pawar. He prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and strength to the family to bear the immense loss during this difficult time. Meanwhile, Forest



and Environment Minister Seethakka (Sitakka) also expressed deep anguish over the sud-

den death of the Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister. In her message, the Minister said

she was deeply saddened by the tragic news and termed Ajit Pawar's death a severe

setback not only to Maharashtra politics but also to public life at large.

"Ajit Pawar's contribution to public service will always be remembered. His commitment to governance and public welfare has left a lasting impression," Seethakka said. She noted that Pawar played a significant role in shaping political discourse and administration in Maharashtra.

The Minister extended her heartfelt sympathies to Ajit Pawar's family members, admirers, and supporters. She said the void created by his demise would be difficult to fill and prayed that God grant peace to his soul. Seethakka also wished strength and courage to the grieving family to overcome the sorrow.

The tragic incident has triggered widespread condolences from political leaders across party lines, reflecting Ajit Pawar's influence and stature in public life. Leaders described his passing as a major loss to democratic politics and governance in the country.

As messages of condolence continue to pour in, the focus remains on supporting the bereaved family and honoring the legacy of a leader who played a prominent role in Maharashtra's political journey.

Congress Leader Sampath Kumar Files Complaint Against BRS Leaders

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau

Senior Congress leader and former MLA Sampath Kumar on Tuesday lodged a formal complaint with the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) at the Narsing police station, seeking strict legal action against BRS leaders K.T. Rama Rao (KTR), Harish Rao, Krishank, and certain media outlets, alleging a deliberate and conspiratorial campaign of false propaganda and character assassination. Speaking to the media after filing the complaint, Sampath Kumar said a minor dispute between two JCB owners was allegedly misused and distorted to spread "outright lies" against him. He alleged that the BRS-affiliated daily Namaste Telangana, along with certain paid media platforms and YouTube channels, published

and amplified false reports with malicious intent.

According to Sampath Kumar, a financial dispute involving 8 lakh was falsely exaggerated and misrepresented as 8 crore, and the narrative was deliberately twisted to portray him as having demanded money. He categorically denied the allegations, stating that even the original complaint cited by the media does not mention his name or any demand for money.

He alleged that based on this "fabricated story," KTR issued a tweet, Harish Rao addressed a press conference, and BRS spokesperson Krishank also made public statements, further spreading misinformation. "This is a clear attempt to present lies as truth and truth as lies," he said, accusing the BRS leadership and certain media platforms of



acting in tandem to defame him and the Congress party.

Sampath Kumar said that despite repeatedly clarifying the facts and urging the media not to distort information, the false campaign continued, severely damaging his reputation. "I have spent 35 years in politics with an unblem-

ished record, serving as an AICC secretary in various states and as an MLA. My dignity and personal integrity have been deliberately attacked," he stated.

He said the complaint was filed against KTR, Harish Rao, Krishank, Namaste Telangana, Telugu Scribe, and associated platforms,

seeking action for defamation and mental harassment. He asserted that he would pursue the matter legally at every level, including courts, until the truth is established.

Sampath Kumar further alleged that this was not an isolated incident, claiming that Congress leaders across the state are being systematically targeted through paid media and false narratives. "This conspiracy to malign Congress leaders and suppress our voice will not succeed. We will expose the truth and ensure accountability," he said. He concluded by reiterating that he would not be intimidated and would continue to raise his voice for the people and the Congress party, while demanding stringent action against those indulging in false and defamatory propaganda.

Congress Targets Clean Sweep in Husnabad Municipal Elections: Ponnam Prabhakar



Husnabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
Transport and Backward Classes Welfare Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Wednesday called upon party leaders and cadres to work in unity to ensure a complete victory for the Congress Party in the upcoming Husnabad Municipal elections, asserting that all 20 wards must be won to accelerate the town's development.

Addressing a municipal election preparatory meeting in Husnabad, the Minister welcomed several senior leaders into the Congress Party, including former Husnabad Municipal Chairman Akula Rajitha Venkanna, former Vice-Chairperson Aileni Anitha Reddy, former MPP Venkanna, and other prominent leaders. He said their induction would further strengthen the party ahead of the elections.

Ponnam Prabhakar noted that the municipal election notification has been issued and polling will be held on February 11. He stressed that ticket allocation would be done strictly based on surveys and winnability. "Everyone must work in coordination to ensure the victory of Congress candidates in all 20 wards of Husnabad municipality," he said. The Minister said that with public support and a decisive victory in municipal elections, development works in Husnabad can be taken to the next level. He re-

called that after being elected, there was no discrimination in governance and all efforts were focused on the overall development of the town. Referring to his long association with former MPP Venkanna, Ponnam Prabhakar said they have shared nearly three decades of friendship and worked together in the party, which reflects the strength of unity within Congress. Outlining key development plans, the Minister said the Gouravelli Project would be completed to make Husnabad lush and agriculturally prosperous. He announced plans for establishing an industrial corridor to generate employment opportunities for local youth. He said that just as rural Telangana is witnessing rapid development, urban areas like Husnabad will also see major improvements in civic infrastructure, including roads, drainage systems, and employment-oriented projects. Ponnam Prabhakar said senior Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao has been appointed as the in-charge for coor-

inating Husnabad municipal elections on behalf of the Congress government led by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy. He added that under the Praja Palana government, Husnabad constituency will witness all-round development in education, healthcare, irrigation, and employment. Highlighting ongoing and proposed projects, the Minister said canal land acquisition works under the Gouravelli Project are being expedited. He also announced the construction of four-lane roads in all four directions of Husnabad, a 250-bed hospital, Satavahana University Engineering College, and a Young India Integrated Residential School, among several other development initiatives. Stating that greater public encouragement would lead to faster growth, Ponnam Prabhakar appealed to people to stand firmly with the Congress Party. "Support us and elect Congress candidates in the municipal elections to ensure sustained and inclusive development of Husnabad," he said.

Congress Leaders Strategize for Clean Sweep in Karimnagar Municipal Corporation

Karimnagar, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau
In a key preparatory meeting at the Karimnagar DCC office, Congress ministers and senior leaders convened to finalise strategies for the upcoming Karimnagar Municipal Corporation elections. The meeting saw the participation of Ministers Tummala Nageswara Rao and Ponnam Prabhakar, along with DCC President and MLA Medipally Satyam, MLA Kavva Malli Satyanarayana, Karimnagar Congress in-charge Velichal Rajender Rao, Karimnagar Town President Anjan Kumar, SUDA Chairman Komatireddy Narendar Reddy, Library Chairman Sattu Mallesh, and other prominent party leaders. Addressing the meeting, Minister Ponnam Prabhakar emphasised that under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy, the Praja Palana government has implemented a comprehensive development plan for urban areas, mirroring the

progress seen in rural regions. "Development works are already underway across cities. Our goal is to ensure that the Congress flag flies high in the Karimnagar Municipal Corporation," he said. Prabhakar outlined the selection process for candidates, noting that surveys will be conducted across all 66 wards to assess the strongest prospects. He urged party workers and aspirants to actively engage with citizens, understand local issues, and mobilise support for Congress candidates. "Everyone must work in coordination once tickets are allocated. The victory of Congress depends on collective effort," he added. Highlighting the government's achievements, the Minister reminded attendees that within 48 hours of taking office, free bus travel for women was introduced, with over 9,000 crore already released to RTC. He also cited schemes including 200 units of free electricity, distribution of fine rice, issuance of new ration cards, Rythu Bharosa

support for farmers, farm loan waivers, employment initiatives, Sanna Vaddalu bonuses, interest-free loans for women's organisations, and 3,500 Indiramma houses sanctioned for the constituency. Minister Prabhakar encouraged all party workers and aspirants to visit wards actively, strengthen grassroots engagement, and ensure voter awareness of the Congress government's welfare measures. He also pointed out that Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao, with significant political experience, will act as the in-charge for Karimnagar, overseeing candidate coordination and election strategy. He urged aspirants to follow a "select and elect" process, allowing wards to determine the strongest candidates through local consultations. Concluding the meeting, leaders reiterated the need for collective effort to secure a Congress majority in Karimnagar Municipal Corporation, with coordinated campaigning and effective voter outreach as the key to victory.

MGNREGA Remains Lifeline for Hill Communities, Says Congress Leader



Adilabad, January 28, 2026 | TPN Bureau
Congress District Official Representative Pasula Chanti has emphasised that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) continues to be a vital lifeline for hill-area communities, protecting livelihoods and preventing seasonal migration. Speaking at a Manrega "Bachavo Sangram" meeting held with wage workers in Nagapur and Jainuru villages of Both Mandal, Chanti underlined the importance of

sustaining employment opportunities in remote regions during the lean summer months. He said that without MGNREGA, families in the hilly areas would be forced to migrate in search of work, disrupting community life and local economies. Chanti also raised concerns about the implementation of the new technical procedures under MGNREGA. He noted that digital processes, such as repeated photo verification of workers and the use of digital masters, create confu-

sion for ordinary wage laborers and do not reliably reflect attendance or participation. He called for reverting to the previous, simpler methods to ensure smooth operations on the ground. "MGNREGA must continue uninterrupted, and programmatic name changes for political reasons are counterproductive," Chanti said. "Funds should be released by both the central and state governments as per the earlier system to safeguard livelihoods and maintain continuity of work in rural and

hilly areas." During the meeting, local leaders, including Nagapur Sarpanch Sidam Devarao, Danner B Village Sarpanch Elma Rohini Vinay Reddy, Upa-Sarpanch Prabhakar, village patels, youth representatives, and MGNREGA workers actively participated, sharing their experiences and concerns regarding the employment guarantee program. Chanti emphasised that the scheme is not just a source of income but also a tool to sustain local economies, prevent distress migra-

tion, and provide dignity to workers in remote regions. He urged authorities to pay attention to the challenges faced by ordinary laborers and ensure timely and transparent disbursement of wages. The Congress leader reaffirmed the party's commitment to protecting and strengthening rural employment programs, especially in hill regions, and called for a collaborative approach between government authorities and workers to maintain the effectiveness of MGNREGA.

ED Files Charge Sheet in Nayeem Money Laundering Case

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
In a major step forward in the high-profile gangster Nayeem case, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday filed a charge sheet in a special court in Hyderabad, strengthening the legal proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The charge sheet was submitted before the special PMLA court in Rangareddy district. The court has taken cognisance of the prosecution complaint and is expected to proceed with further hearings in the coming days. This development marks a significant milestone in the prolonged investigation into the alleged illegal financial activities of Khaja Nayeemuddin, popularly known as gangster Nayeem, and his network of associates. According to officials, the ED's investigation focused on tracing the proceeds of crime generated through a range of criminal activities allegedly carried out by Nayeem prior to his death in a police en-

counter. The agency probed how large sums of money were generated and channelled into the acquisition of properties and assets, many of which were allegedly registered in the names of associates, relatives, and benami holders. Investigators identified dozens of movable and immovable properties suspected to have been acquired using illegal funds. These assets, spread across Telangana, are believed to have been amassed through extortion, land grabbing, and other unlawful activities. The ED had earlier attached several of these properties as part of its enforcement action, and the latest charge sheet seeks their eventual confiscation following due legal process. Officials stated that the case involves complex financial transactions and patterns designed to conceal the origin of illicit money. The charge sheet reportedly details how funds were layered and integrated into the formal economy, a key element in establishing offences under

the money-laundering law. The Nayeem case has drawn sustained public and political attention over the years due to the scale of alleged criminality and the influence wielded by the gangster during his lifetime. Multiple agencies, including the police, Income Tax Department, and the ED, have investigated different aspects of the case, ranging from criminal offences to financial irregularities. With the filing of the charge sheet, the ED has moved the case into the trial phase, where evidence will be examined and arguments heard from both the prosecution and the defence. Legal experts say the proceedings will be closely watched, as the outcome could set important precedents in dealing with organised crime and money laundering cases in the state. The ED reiterated that its action is part of its mandate to curb money laundering and ensure that proceeds of crime are identified, attached, and brought back under the rule of law.

BJP Chief Ramchander Rao's Media Interaction Ahead of Municipal Polls

Hyderabad, January 28 | TPN Bureau
Telangana BJP state president N. Ramchander Rao addressed the media on Tuesday, outlining his party's strategy and raising sharp criticisms against the ruling Congress government as the state gears up for the upcoming municipal elections. In his remarks, Ramchander Rao reiterated the BJP's confidence in making significant gains in the local body polls, stating that the party aims to secure a substantial share of municipal seats across Telangana. He said the BJP's organisational strength has grown steadily, citing recent

successes in local and rural elections as evidence of increased support and momentum. The state BJP chief accused the Congress government of failing to fulfil key promises and neglecting important public welfare concerns. He criticised delays in payment of retirement benefits to government employees and alleged that prolonged pendency of dues had caused undue stress among retirees, claiming that around 40 former employees had even died due to unresolved financial issues. Rao reiterated the party's demand for the immediate release of pending retirement funds, arguing that

the government's insensitivity towards the elderly and pensioners was unacceptable. On the municipal polls front, Ramchander Rao emphasised the BJP's commitment to grassroots mobilisation, urging party workers to intensify outreach to urban voters and new demographics such as youth and women. He said the BJP's campaign will highlight governance failures at the state level and present the party as a credible alternative focused on disciplined administration and development. In his media interaction, Rao also criticised the Congress for what he described as political

posturing over caste and community issues, asserting that true empowerment lies in tangible development outcomes rather than symbolic gestures. He maintained that the BJP's rise in Telangana reflects growing public trust in its policies and its emphasis on inclusive progress. As Telangana prepares for municipal polls scheduled for February, Ramchander Rao's comments reflect the BJP's broader electoral strategy of positioning itself as a viable contender against both the ruling Congress and the BRS in local urban contests. His critique of state governance and call for proactive action



on public grievances signal the party's intent to leverage civic issues to build voter support. With the election date approaching, Ramchander Rao's statements are expected to resonate with the BJP's cadre and supporters, reinforcing the party's focus on strengthening its presence in urban local bodies and challenging the political status quo in Telangana.



The Shashi Tharoor the Congress and Rahul Gandhi Struggle to Understand

Shashi Tharoor occupies a curious and often uncomfortable space within the Indian National Congress. He is admired by a wide audience outside the party, respected for his intellect, articulation, and global stature, yet viewed with a mix of suspicion and ambivalence by the organisation he has served for decades. The Congress, particularly under the leadership style that has evolved around Rahul Gandhi, has never quite known how to place Tharoor — or what to do with him.

At first glance, Tharoor appears to be an ideal Congress leader. He is urbane, multilingual, internationally recognised, and capable of communicating complex ideas with clarity and elegance. He represents a modern, liberal, constitutional vision of India that aligns closely with the Congress's declared ideological foundations. Yet despite these credentials, he remains peripheral to the party's real power structure.

This disconnect stems from a fundamental mismatch between Tharoor's political instincts and the Congress's internal culture. Tharoor is comfortable with debate, dissent, and intellectual disagreement. He believes political parties should accommodate multiple viewpoints and allow leaders the freedom to express nuanced positions. The contemporary Congress, however, has grown increasingly uncomfortable with ambiguity and internal divergence, preferring uniform messaging and centralised control.

Rahul Gandhi's leadership style, shaped by years of political attacks and electoral setbacks, has leaned toward moral clarity and ideological rigidity. He frames politics as a battle between right and wrong, truth and falsehood. While this approach energises a core support base, it leaves little room for leaders like Tharoor, who operate in shades of grey and believe persuasion often works better than confrontation.



This tension became particularly visible when Tharoor chose to contest the Congress presidential election. His decision was framed by supporters as a healthy assertion of internal democracy. Within the party, however, it was widely perceived as disruptive — an act that challenged an already fragile equilibrium. Though Tharoor lost decisively, his candidacy exposed the Congress's discomfort with genuine contestation.

Tharoor's appeal lies not in mass mobilisation but in credibility. He speaks to professionals, urban voters, and politically engaged citizens

who may not attend rallies but shape public opinion. In a party struggling to remain relevant in a rapidly changing political environment, such voices should be assets. Instead, they are often treated as liabilities.

One reason is that Tharoor does not fit the traditional mould of Congress leadership. He did not rise through the party's youth wings, nor is he rooted in dynastic politics. His authority comes from personal achievement rather than organisational loyalty. This independence, while admirable, makes party managers uneasy. Loyalty, in the Congress ecosystem,

often matters more than competence.

Another issue is Tharoor's willingness to acknowledge complexity — even when it involves political rivals. His occasional praise for effective governance by opponents is seen as ideological softness. In an era of sharp political polarisation, nuance is frequently mistaken for weakness, and balance is viewed as betrayal. Tharoor's refusal to reduce politics to slogans places him at odds with a party increasingly dependent on emotive narratives.

Rahul Gandhi, for his part, seems unsure how to engage

with such a figure. He recognises Tharoor's value but does not fully trust his instincts. Their political languages are different. Gandhi speaks in moral absolutes, drawing strength from personal conviction and lived experience. Tharoor relies on reasoned argument, historical context, and institutional faith. These approaches do not naturally converge.

The result is a pattern where Tharoor is used selectively — invited to speak when articulation is needed, sidelined when decisions are made. He is visible but not influential, prominent but not powerful. This marginalisation

reflects a broader problem within the Congress: an inability to integrate talent that does not conform neatly to its internal hierarchies.

Ironically, Tharoor embodies precisely the kind of leadership many Congress supporters claim to want — confident, articulate, and globally credible. Yet the party struggles to trust leaders who do not derive legitimacy from proximity to the central family or unquestioned obedience to the leadership line. The fear of fragmentation has led to an intolerance of individuality.

Tharoor's predicament also highlights the Con-

gress's unresolved identity crisis. Is it a party that values diversity of thought, or one that prioritises discipline above all else? Can it accommodate leaders who think aloud, or must every voice echo the central narrative? Until these questions are answered, figures like Tharoor will remain awkward fits.

What makes this situation particularly striking is that Tharoor has shown remarkable restraint. He has not rebelled, formed factions, or publicly undermined leadership. He continues to campaign, speak for the party, and defend its values. Yet his loyalty has not translated into trust, suggesting that the issue lies less with his actions and more with what he represents.

In a political climate where opposition unity and credibility are crucial, sidelining voices like Tharoor is a strategic mistake. The Congress does not suffer from an excess of leaders who can command respect beyond partisan boundaries. By failing to fully integrate him, the party limits its own intellectual and electoral reach.

Ultimately, the Tharoor question is not about one individual but about the Congress's future. A party that cannot accommodate internal diversity risks stagnation. A leadership that fears independent thinking weakens its own authority. If the Congress wishes to revive itself as a national alternative, it must learn to embrace leaders who challenge it — not just those who reassure it.

Shashi Tharoor remains a mirror the Congress is uncomfortable looking into. He reflects what the party could be — confident, plural, intellectually agile — and also what it fears becoming: decentralised, unpredictable, and harder to control. Until the Congress resolves this contradiction, it will continue to misunderstand Tharoor, and in doing so, misunderstand itself.

The Many Dreams of Ajit Pawar: Ambition, Power and the Politics of Maharashtra

Ajit Pawar has never been a politician who hid his ambition. From early in his political career, he made it clear that he aspired to become the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. While many leaders cloak their personal goals in the language of sacrifice and public duty, Pawar chose blunt honesty. He spoke openly about power, leadership, and his desire to occupy the highest office in the state. That candour became one of his most defining traits — admired by some, criticised by others.

An early encounter with Ajit Pawar reveals much about the man. He was energetic, impatient, and visibly restless, constantly in motion. Unlike senior politicians who project calm detachment, Pawar appeared eager to act, to move faster than those around him. This impatience would later become both a strength and a liability — driving his political rise while also creating friction within alliances.

Ajit Pawar's political journey is inseparable from his lineage. As the nephew of Sharad Pawar, one of Maharashtra's most influential and experienced leaders, he grew up in the shadow of a towering political figure. Yet he was never content to remain a supporting act. He absorbed his uncle's mastery of political strategy but combined it with a far more aggressive and direct style. Where Sharad Pawar was subtle and patient, Ajit Pa-

war was outspoken and urgent.

Unlike politicians who carefully craft narratives about destiny or service, Ajit Pawar spoke of leadership as something he deserved through effort and experience. He believed that years of managing the state's finances, overseeing key departments, and delivering results at the grassroots level entitled him to the top job. His confidence often bordered on certainty — he spoke not of if he would become Chief Minister, but when.

Throughout his career, Ajit Pawar proved himself an effective administrator. As Deputy Chief Minister on multiple occasions, he handled critical portfolios, particularly finance and planning. He developed a reputation as a tough manager who understood numbers, budgets, and execution. In his home turf of Baramati, visible development — from agriculture-linked industries to infrastructure — strengthened his image as a leader who delivered tangible results.

Yet ambition alone does not guarantee success in Indian politics. Maharashtra's political landscape is complex, shaped by coalitions, caste equations, and shifting alliances. Despite holding power repeatedly as Deputy Chief Minister, Pawar found himself blocked from the top post time and again. Each time the possibility arose, political arithmetic intervened — senior



leaders, coalition partners, or internal party dynamics stood in the way.

What set Ajit Pawar apart was that he never pretended to be content with second place. At public meetings and private conversations alike, he acknowledged his frustration. He joked about his unfulfilled dream, sometimes laughing it off, sometimes expressing clear disappointment. His honesty made him relatable to sup-

porters, but it also unsettled allies who preferred carefully controlled messaging.

His relationship with Sharad Pawar reflected this tension between loyalty and rivalry. Deep familial bonds coexisted with political disagreements. While Ajit remained respectful of his uncle's stature, he was also impatient with what he saw as delayed succession and missed opportunities. Over time, this tension culminated

in a dramatic political split, reshaping the Nationalist Congress Party and altering Maharashtra's political balance.

The split was widely seen as Ajit Pawar's boldest gamble — a decisive break driven by ambition and the belief that aligning with new allies would finally bring him closer to the Chief Minister's chair. The move secured him continued relevance and power, but even then, the ultimate prize re-

mained elusive. Once again, he found himself holding high office, but not the highest.

Ajit Pawar's interactions with allies reveal a leader who expects recognition for his experience and contribution. He does not shy away from asserting himself, even when it risks discomfort. At the same time, he is pragmatic enough to accept compromise when necessary. This combination of assertiveness and adaptability has allowed him to survive political storms that might have ended lesser careers.

Behind the public image lies a man of contradictions. Ajit Pawar can be warm and engaging in personal conversations, quick with humour and informal charm. Yet he is also known for sudden flashes of anger and blunt remarks that spark controversy. These moments, while damaging in the short term, reinforce the perception of authenticity — a leader who does not script every word.

His story is ultimately one of persistence. Few politicians return repeatedly from setbacks with the same intensity of ambition intact. Each time circumstances denied him the Chief Minister's post, Pawar recalibrated rather than retreated. He remained firmly in the power structure, ensuring that his influence endured even when his dream did not materialise.

The phrase he often repeated — "I will be Chief Minister,

you'll see" — came to symbolise both his confidence and his struggle. For supporters, it represented belief and determination. For critics, it became a reminder of unfulfilled ambition. Over time, it evolved into a defining motif of his career, capturing the tension between aspiration and reality.

Ajit Pawar's political life mirrors Maharashtra itself — dynamic, competitive, and rarely straightforward. It is a landscape where power is negotiated constantly, where alliances shift, and where ambition must contend with tradition and timing. His journey shows that even the most capable and determined leaders are constrained by forces larger than themselves.

Whether or not Ajit Pawar ever achieves his ultimate dream, his legacy is already secure. He is remembered as a politician who spoke plainly about power, who governed with competence, and who refused to surrender ambition to convention. In a political culture that often values ambiguity, his directness stands out.

In the end, Ajit Pawar's story is not merely about a post he never attained, but about a mindset — the refusal to stop dreaming, even when the odds remain uncertain. It is a reminder that in politics, ambition is both a driving force and a burden, and that the journey toward power can define a leader as much as the destination itself.

Ajit Pawar's Death in Plane Crash Joins Long List of Indian Leaders Lost in Aviation Accidents



The tragic death of Ajit Pawar, Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, in a plane crash near Baramati on January 28, 2026, has drawn national shock and reflections on a sombre pattern in Indian political history — prominent leaders dying in aviation accidents. Pawar, 66, was killed along with four others aboard a chartered Learjet 45XR that crashed while attempting to land at Baramati Airport. All five on board lost their lives when the aircraft burst into flames after impact.

Pawar had departed Mumbai early that morning and was en route to Baramati for a series of political engagements ahead of local elections. The crash occurred as the aircraft made a second approach, and poor visibility in the early morning hours may have contributed to the accident, though an official investigation is underway.

A Legacy of Aviation

Tragedies Involving Indian Leaders

Ajit Pawar's death adds to a long, tragic list of Indian political figures whose lives were cut short by air accidents over the decades:

- Sanjay Gandhi (1980): The son of then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Sanjay Gandhi died at 33 when the small aircraft he was piloting crashed during a test flight in Delhi.
- Madhavrao Scindia (2001): A senior Congress leader, Scindia was killed along with others when his plane went down in Uttar Pradesh while he was travelling to a public meeting.
- GMC Balayogi (2002): The Lok Sabha Speaker died in a helicopter crash in Andhra Pradesh.
- YS Rajasekhara Reddy (2009): Then Chief

Minister of Andhra Pradesh, popularly known as YSR, died when the helicopter he was travelling in crashed in hilly terrain.

- Dorjee Khandu (2011): The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh was killed in a helicopter crash in remote terrain.
- OP Jindal and Surender Singh (2005): Both were killed in a helicopter crash in Uttar Pradesh.
- Gurnam Singh (1973): The former Punjab Chief Minister died in an aircraft accident.

More recently, Vijay Rupani, the former Chief Minister of Gujarat, died in a high-profile aviation accident in 2025, where all passengers and crew perished shortly after take-off.

These incidents reflect the risks associated with political air travel in India, where lead-

ers often use private and charter flights for official duties across vast distances. While aviation safety has improved over the years, unpredictable weather, challenging terrain, and operational challenges have all contributed to past tragedies involving public figures.

National Reaction and Investigation

The news of Ajit Pawar's death has triggered widespread mourning and calls for accountability. Leaders from across the spectrum have expressed condolences, and there are demands for a thorough investigation into the Baramati crash to understand the causes and prevent similar future accidents.

As India reflects on Pawar's legacy and the legacy of other leaders lost in the skies, the event underscores the enduring impact of aviation tragedies on the political landscape and national psyche.

Ajit Pawar Dies in Plane Crash Near Baramati



Ajit Pawar, the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra and a prominent political leader, was killed in a plane crash early on January 28, 2026, when a private aircraft carrying him crashed during an attempted landing at Baramati Airport in Pune district. He was 66 years old and a key figure in state and national politics. The aircraft, a Learjet 45, burst into flames after the crash, and all on board were killed.

Pawar had been flying from Mumbai to Baramati to attend a series of political meetings ahead of local elections when the incident occurred. The plane crashed as it was trying to land — reportedly during a second approach — and rescue efforts were hindered by the intensity of the fire.

The crash took the lives of five people in total: Ajit Pawar himself, two pilots, and two of his security personnel. Among the crew

was pilot Shambhavi Pathak, along with the pilot-in-command and security staff.

Witnesses described hearing a loud explosion as the plane hit the ground and erupted into flames just before the runway. Emergency services and local officials rushed to the scene amid fire and smoke, but there were no survivors.

Political and Public Reaction

The news shocked Maharashtra and the country. Leaders from across the political spectrum expressed grief and condolences, and the state government declared three days of mourning. Baramati, Pawar's home turf and political stronghold — the place that had long witnessed his rise in Maharashtra politics — also saw an outpouring of grief and reflection as residents grappled with the irony of his tragic death in the

same town.

Ajit Pawar's Legacy and Career

Ajit Pawar was a towering figure in Maharashtra politics, known for his long tenure as Deputy Chief Minister and his influence in the cooperative sector and regional governance. He led a significant faction of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and had played a major role in state politics for decades. His sudden death leaves a vacuum in leadership both in his party and in Maharashtra's coalition government.

Investigation Underway

Officials have indicated that a transparent, accountable investigation into the crash will be conducted to determine the exact cause. Preliminary information suggests poor visibility at the time may have contributed to the emergency landing challenges.

Parliament Erupts in Protest Over 'G RAM G' Law Mention in President's Address

The Budget Session of Parliament 2026 opened on January 28 with President Droupadi Murmu's address to a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. Her speech set out the government's agenda for the year ahead, including economic and social priorities for the fiscal session. However, a major political flashpoint occurred when the President referenced the recently enacted VB G RAM G Act — a new rural employment law meant to replace the earlier MGNREGA framework.

The mention of the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin), widely referred to as G RAM G, immediately triggered sloganeering and protests by Opposition MPs within the Parliament chambers. Members of opposition parties stood up and chanted slogans demanding that the law be withdrawn and that the older MGNREGA rights based scheme be restored. This



forced the President to briefly pause her address while the uproar unfolded.

Opposition lawmakers objected to the new law on multiple grounds, arguing that it dilutes the guarantees of employment and oversight that MGNREGA provided and that the change was pushed through without sufficient consultation. The issue has become a focal point of political

tension at the start of the Budget Session, overshadowing other parts of the President's remarks.

By contrast, members of the ruling NDA and BJP benches responded enthusiastically to the President's remarks, thumping desks in approval when the G RAM G law was hailed as a reform that would provide 125 days of guaranteed rural employment and

curb corruption and leakages in implementation. Proponents argue it will give new momentum to rural development and social security in villages.

The clash in Parliament underscores deep political divisions over welfare policy and the direction of rural employment guarantees in India's evolving economic framework. While the government frames the new law as a step forward, the Opposition views it as a rollback of citizens' employment rights and a matter significant enough to disrupt the parliamentary proceedings on the very first day of the session.

As the Budget Session progresses toward the presentation of the Union Budget on February 1, the debate over the G RAM G law is expected to remain a central theme in discussions, reflecting broader political fault lines over development, social policy, and rural livelihoods.

NCP Plunges into Mourning as Party Members Break Down After Ajit Pawar's Death



The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) has been overcome with grief following the sudden death of its chief and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar in a tragic plane crash near Baramati on the morning of January 28, 2026. The shock of losing a towering political figure has visibly shaken party members, with many breaking down in emotional scenes as news of the accident spread.

Pawar was flying from Mumbai to Baramati when the private chartered aircraft he was aboard crashed while attempting to land at Baramati Airport. All five people on board — including Pawar, the two pilots, and his security personnel — died in the crash. Visuals from the site showed fire and smoke rising from the wreckage as emergency services rushed in, though no survivors were found.

As word of the tragedy

reached the NCP's party offices, party workers, leaders, and staff were seen struggling to come to terms with the news. Many were visibly distraught, trying to control their emotions while comforting one another. The atmosphere was one of deep shock and sorrow, reflecting both personal and political loss.

Senior party figures, including key MPs, spoke of being in shock and struggling to find words to express their grief. Members of Sharad Pawar's extended political family and loyalists were also seen gathering to mourn, many consoling one another as the enormity of the loss set in.

Condolences poured in from across the political spectrum as leaders expressed their sorrow and paid tribute to Pawar's long career. Several political figures travelled to Baramati or to Sharad Pawar's residence to offer support to the

grieving family and party members.

Ajit Pawar's death has sent shockwaves through Maharashtra's political landscape. Known for his decades-long influence and leadership — particularly after assuming control of NCP following a split with the party founder — Pawar was a central figure in state politics. His sudden passing not only leaves a leadership vacuum within his party but also has a profound emotional impact on those who worked closely with him.

The scenes of party members in mourning highlight the personal bonds and loyalty Pawar inspired among his colleagues and supporters. For many within the NCP, the loss of their leader is as much a personal heartbreak as it is a political upheaval, underscoring his stature and the deep respect he commanded within the party.

Mamata Banerjee Demands Probe After Ajit Pawar's Tragic Death

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee expressed deep shock and grief over the plane crash in Baramati that claimed the life of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar along with four others. In a post on social media, she referred to his death as a "deep sense of loss" and extended her condolences to Pawar's family, supporters, and followers, highlighting the emotional impact of the sudden tragedy.

Banerjee called for a thorough investigation into the circumstances of the crash, emphasising that the incident "needs proper investigation." She said she was "deeply shocked and stunned" by the news and underlined the importance of understanding exactly what happened as the aircraft crashed while attempting to land near Baramati, taking off from Mumbai earlier that morning.

In addition to expressing



grief, Banerjee has publicly demanded a probe into the crash to bring clarity and accountability. Her comments reflect broader unease in political circles about the sudden loss of a senior leader and the need for transparency in the investigation process. Other leaders have also echoed calls

for a detailed inquiry into the accident.

Opposition figures, including Congress MPs and other party leaders, have supported the call for a comprehensive investigation, stressing the need for answers beyond initial reports. Some have suggested that independent over-

sight, potentially monitored by the Supreme Court of India, may be necessary to ensure credibility and public trust in the findings.

The crash has triggered strong reactions across the political spectrum. Leaders including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and others have voiced their condolences and acknowledged Pawar's long service in public life. Meanwhile, Banerjee's insistence on a probe reflects both concern over aviation safety and anxiety within political ranks about the implications of such a high profile death.

As the nation mourns, the focus on investigation underscores the scale of the event and the demand from various quarters for clarity on causes, whether technical, procedural, or otherwise, as authorities work to piece together the factors that led to this tragic accident.

India Emerges Strong in EU Trade Deal, Says U.S. Official



India has emerged as a key beneficiary in its recently finalized free trade agreement (FTA) with the European Union, marking a significant milestone after nearly two decades of negotiations. The pact, one of the largest trade deals in recent times, is designed to reduce tariffs, expand market access, and strengthen economic ties between India and Europe. It covers a broad range of goods, including textiles, pharmaceuticals, automobiles, and beverages, signalling potential growth opportunities for several Indian industries. Experts see this as a strategic win for New Delhi, especially given the current global trade landscape marked by shifting alliances and tensions with the United States.

The deal is expected to provide India with substantial advantages in the European market. According to trade analysts, Indian exporters could gain a competitive edge through reduced tariffs, simplified regulations, and smoother access to the EU, which is one of the largest consumer markets globally.

Sectors such as textiles, which form a substantial portion of India's export basket, are likely to benefit immediately. Similarly, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, and automotive components may see improved demand and better pricing, enhancing overall export revenues.

In comments reflecting U.S. perspectives on the agreement, U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer stated that India "comes out on top" in the deal, noting that New Delhi could experience a significant economic boost from the enhanced market access. He highlighted that the European Union's pursuit of alternative trading partners—partly due to U.S. tariffs and trade policies—made India an attractive partner for a comprehensive agreement. The deal's potential to increase economic flows and create employment opportunities, including possible mobility benefits for skilled workers, underscores its strategic significance for India.

The agreement also comes against the backdrop of strained trade relations with the United States, including tariffs previously imposed on Indian goods. While some progress has been made to reduce trade frictions with the U.S., the EU deal offers India an opportunity to diversify its export markets and reduce dependence on any single partner. By strengthening ties with the European bloc, India can mitigate external risks and enhance its global trade resilience.

Overall, the India EU FTA represents both an economic and strategic milestone. It not only promises to boost exports and enhance competitiveness across key sectors but also positions India as a pivotal player in global trade. By securing favorable terms with the European Union, India is set to capitalize on new opportunities, strengthen its international trade footprint, and reduce reliance on markets where geopolitical or policy risks may constrain growth. The deal underscores India's growing influence in global commerce and its ability to negotiate terms that favor its long-term economic interests.

New Terror Nexus Emerging Between Lashkar e Taiba and Hamas



A senior commander linked to the Pakistan based militant group Lashkar e Taiba (LeT) has publicly acknowledged ties with Hamas, signalling a possible emerging terror alliance. The commander, Faisal Nadeem, stated that he met with top Hamas leaders in Doha, Qatar, in 2024, confirming direct contact between the two groups. Security analysts are closely monitoring this development due to its regional and global implications.

According to Nadeem, the meeting involved discussions with Khaled Mashal, a senior Hamas leader, alongside Saifulah Kasuri, a Lashkar linked operative. Both Hamas and Lashkar are designated terrorist organisations by the United States and several other countries. Analysts view this admission as significant, highlighting the potential for deepening collaboration between extremist networks in South Asia and the Middle East.

This revelation follows earlier reports of interaction between the groups. In January, a video surfaced showing

senior Hamas commander Naji Zaheer alongside a Lashkar leader at a public event in Gujranwala, Pakistan, hosted by the Pakistan Markazi Muslim League (PMML), widely seen as Lashkar's political front. Analysts interpret such public appearances as a sign of growing confidence and closer ties between the groups.

Concerns Over Tactical Collaboration

Security specialists warn that if these ties move beyond symbolic meetings, they could evolve into operational cooperation, potentially involving training, logistical support, propaganda exchange, mobilisation, and fundraising across regions. Such collaboration could make extremist networks more resilient and capable of coordinated activities across different theatres, including conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia.

India and other regional actors view such coordination with alarm because it expands the threat landscape. Intelligence agencies are as-

sessing whether these contacts could translate into practical support mechanisms, which would impact national security and counter terrorism strategies.

Wider Security Implications

The potential nexus emerges at a time when global counter terrorism efforts are already stretched. Analysts warn that shared ideology and tactical cooperation between established terror groups can complicate tracking and disruption operations by international security agencies. The situation also raises concerns about terror financing and cross border cooperation, prompting debate on the need for stronger monitoring and international action.

In summary, confirmation of links between a Lashkar associated commander and Hamas leadership, along with publicised joint appearances by senior figures, has intensified fears of a broader terror alliance, one that could pose heightened challenges for regional and global security.

North Korea to Reveal "Next Stage" Nuclear Plans, Kim Jong Un Announces

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has announced that his government will soon unveil a new phase of its nuclear weapons strategy at an upcoming Workers' Party congress, a key political event expected to outline Pyongyang's strategic priorities and military direction. This announcement follows a recent weapons test that the regime says demonstrates enhanced deterrent capabilities.

Kim made the comments while observing a test firing of a large caliber multiple rocket launcher system, describing it as significant to strengthening the country's strategic deterrent. Photographs released by state media showed Kim, accompanied by senior officials and his daughter, watching the launch. The test involved four missiles, which North Korea claims hit targets over 350 kilometres away.

The upcoming party congress — the first in about five years — is expected to clarify "next stage plans" for further bolstering North Korea's nuclear war deterrent, indicating a push to expand and modernise its nuclear and missile capabilities. The emphasis on nuclear force development is being positioned as a core policy of the ruling Workers' Party.

State media did not provide detailed specifics of the planned nuclear expansion, but analysts believe Pyongyang may use the congress to announce ambitious upgrades — potentially including efforts to enhance missile accuracy, production, survivability of nuclear warheads, and possibly steps toward multiple warhead capabilities on strategic delivery systems.



The regime portrays these moves as defensive, intended to deter perceived threats and military provocations. Kim stated the recent test results would cause "excruciating mental agony" to adversaries and serve as a serious strategic challenge to any force attempting confrontation with North Korea.

The announcement comes amid a broader pattern of weapons tests, including ballistic missiles and other advanced delivery systems, signalling Pyongyang's intent to strengthen its defensive posture. Regional neighbours such as South Korea and Japan have condemned recent missile launches as violations of United Nations resolutions and a threat to stability.

These developments highlight North Korea's continued prioritisation of its nuclear and missile programs at a time when diplomatic engagement remains largely stalled. By focusing attention on its deterrent capabilities at a major political gathering, the regime aims to solidify internal support and reinforce its strategic position amid ongoing geopolitical tensions.

Taliban's New Criminal Code Legalises Slavery and Grants Immunity to Clerics



Afghanistan's Taliban authorities have introduced a controversial new Criminal Procedure Code that embeds class-based discrimination, legalises slavery-like concepts, and provides near-total immunity to religious leaders. The code, issued in early January, has been circulated to courts across the

country, fundamentally altering the justice system under Taliban rule. At the heart of the new legal framework is a stratified system that divides Afghan society into four hierarchical classes: religious scholars (mullahs), the elite, the middle class, and the lower class. Under this system, punishments

for the same crime vary dramatically depending on a person's social category, rather than the severity of the offence. Clerics and religious figures at the top tier face only informal reprimand for wrongdoing, while individuals in lower strata risk imprisonment and corporal punishment for

identical actions. Critics argue this effectively places religious elites above the law.

One of the most alarming aspects of the code is its repeated reference to individuals as "free" or "slave." By distinguishing between these categories in legal provisions, the code is seen as normalising slavery-like status, a practice prohibited under modern international law. Observers note that such classification contradicts basic principles of justice and equality before the law.

The code also dismantles fundamental legal safeguards. It removes the right to legal defence, the right to remain silent, and the right to compensation for wrongful punishment, relying instead on confession and testimony for proving guilt. Judges are given broad discretion to impose corporal punishment, including flogging, and vaguely defined of-

fences could criminalise ordinary cultural or social behaviour.

Human rights organisations describe the code as a legally sanctioned system of privilege that entrenches inequality and exposes marginalised groups to harsher treatment. Critics warn that it dramatically increases the risk of torture, forced confessions, and arbitrary punishment in a judicial environment already lacking oversight and accountability.

The introduction of this code signals a deepening of the Taliban's approach to law and governance, reflecting a move away from universal legal norms toward a system that privileges clerical and social elites. It has sparked calls from international bodies and rights groups for suspension of the code's implementation and for diplomatic and legal interventions to address its human rights implications.

Russian Strikes in Ukraine Kill at Least 12, Target Passenger Train

Russian military forces carried out a series of overnight attacks across Ukraine, killing at least 12 civilians and hitting a passenger train in the north-eastern Kharkiv region. The strikes come as diplomatic efforts continue to end nearly four years of war, but fighting has intensified despite ongoing negotiations.

In Kharkiv Oblast, a drone strike hit a carriage of a passenger train transporting nearly 200 people. At least five civilians were killed when the drone struck the train, igniting a fire in the carriage. Emergency services later extinguished the blaze. Ukrainian leaders condemned the attack as an unjustified assault on civilians.

Alongside the train attack, Russian drone barages hit other parts of Ukraine. In the southern port city of Odesa, more than 50 drones struck overnight, killing three people and injuring many others while damaging

residential buildings and energy infrastructure. Among the injured were women and children, and several buildings—including homes, a church, a kindergarten, and schools—were left damaged.

Ukrainian authorities have decried the attacks, saying they undermine peace efforts and strain diplomatic talks meant to end the conflict. Ukraine's president stressed that such strikes weaken international attempts to push for a ceasefire and urged stronger global pressure on Moscow.

The strikes also damaged critical infrastructure. Energy facilities in the Odesa region were hit, leaving many residents without power amid harsh winter conditions. Russian forces continued to launch a high number of drones and missiles across the country, contributing to widespread disruptions in power, heat, and transportation services.



Additional casualties were reported in other regions: a married couple died in the Donetsk area, while individuals were killed in Zaporizhzhia and Kherson as a result of separate drone and shelling attacks. These continued assaults have compounded the human toll and infrastructural damage

across Ukraine. Despite ongoing U.S.-brokered peace talks that concluded with negotiators meeting recently in the United Arab Emirates, violence has persisted. Ukraine's leaders have announced that the next round of talks is expected soon, but critics warn that continued hostilities

may derail diplomatic momentum.

The unfolding situation highlights the intense challenges Ukraine faces as it balances diplomatic engagement with persistent military pressure from Russian forces, particularly against civilian infrastructure and transport networks.

Gold & Silver ETF Surge: What Analysts Say About Shifting Money from Equities to Precious Metals

Gold and silver exchange traded funds (ETFs) have seen a sharp rally recently, with many hitting fresh highs and recording strong inflows as investors seek safe haven assets amid global uncertainty and market volatility. Both metals have attracted renewed interest, reflecting broader shifts in investor behavior and portfolio strategy.

The surge in precious metals prices — driven by geopolitical tensions, inflation concerns, and expectations around interest rates — has pushed many gold and silver ETFs higher, and total assets under management in these funds have crossed significant milestones, highlighting growing investor participation.

Why Precious Metals Are Gaining Attention

- **Safe haven demand:** Continued geopolitical tensions and currency volatility have made gold and silver attractive as defensive assets compared with riskier equities, especially during periods of uncertainty.

- **Industrial demand (for silver):** Silver benefits not only from safe haven appeal but also from industrial uses in sectors such as electronics, solar energy and electric vehicles, adding structural support for long term demand.

- **ETFs ease access:** These funds let investors gain exposure to precious metals without the hassles of physical storage, making them appealing for portfolio diversification.

Analyst Views on Shifting from Equities to Metals

- **Diversification, not wholesale shifting:** Many experts caution against completely selling equities to buy only gold and silver. Precious metals are often



recommended as hedges or portfolio diversifiers rather than primary drivers of long term growth.

- **Timing risks:** Buying heavily after a sharp rally can expose investors to short term volatility or price corrections. Rather than moving all money out of equities, analysts suggest strategic rebalancing and gradual allocation increases.

- **Portfolio balance:** A modest allocation (e.g., 5-10% in precious metals ETFs) within a diversified portfolio can provide downside protection during turbulent times while maintaining exposure to equities for growth.

Equities vs. Precious Metals Performance

Recent returns in gold and silver ETFs have outpaced many equity segments over certain pe-

riods, leading some investors to re-evaluate traditional asset mixes. However, this performance is tied closely to specific macroeconomic conditions and sentiment, and may not be sustained indefinitely.

Risk and Volatility Considerations

- **Metals can be volatile:** Silver, in particular, tends to have wider price swings than gold due to its smaller market and heavier industrial component.

- **Short term drawdowns:** ETFs can show exaggerated price moves when markets swing, which means that reactive selling or buying based on short term price action can backfire.

Investment Strategy Guidance

Rather than making large, tac-

tical shifts from equities to precious metals, many analysts recommend a disciplined approach focused on long term goals. Using precious metals as part of a broader diversification strategy — with measured allocations instead of replacement of equity exposure — helps manage risk while potentially benefiting from metals' role as portfolio stabilizers.

In essence, while gold and silver ETFs are attracting interest and can serve as effective hedges, a complete exit from equities is generally not advised; balanced allocation and phased investing remain key principles for most long term investors.

If you want, I can summarize recommended allocation strategies or provide example ETF tickers and risk profiles.

Sensex Rallies Nearly 500 Points as Metal, Oil & Gas Stocks Power Market Higher



Indian equity markets closed firmly in the green, with benchmark indices posting strong gains as buying interest intensified across cyclical sectors. The BSE Sensex jumped nearly 487 points, while the NSE Nifty50 moved decisively above the 25,300 level, supported by strength in metal, oil & gas, and energy stocks.

The Sensex ended the session at around 82,345, marking a gain of about 0.6 percent, while the Nifty settled near 25,343, up roughly 0.66 percent. Market breadth remained positive throughout the day, with advancing stocks significantly outnumbering decliners, indicating broad-based participation in the rally.

A major driver of the market's upward move was strong performance in commodity-linked sectors. Metal stocks gained traction amid optimism over global demand and stable commodity prices. Oil & gas counters also saw notable buying, aided by firm crude prices and expectations of improved earnings visibility. Heavyweight stocks such as ONGC, Coal India, Hindalco Industries and Bharat Electronics emerged as key contributors to the benchmark gains.

Sectorally, metals, oil & gas, energy and media stocks outperformed the broader market. PSU banks and realty stocks also recorded healthy gains, reflecting improving sentiment toward economically sensitive sectors. In contrast, defensive segments such as FMCG, pharmaceuticals and consumer durables lagged the benchmarks, as investors rotated capital toward higher-

risk, higher-reward opportunities.

The rally was not limited to large-cap stocks alone. Broader markets outperformed, with midcap and smallcap indices ending the day with stronger percentage gains than frontline indices. This trend suggests growing confidence among investors and increased participation from retail and domestic institutional players.

Positive global cues further supported sentiment. Asian markets traded with a mixed to positive bias, while stability in global equities helped reassure investors. Domestically, expectations of steady macroeconomic conditions, resilient corporate earnings and supportive policy measures added to the upbeat mood.

Market participants also appeared to be positioning themselves ahead of upcoming economic data releases and policy-related developments, which could influence market direction in the near term. Analysts noted that the continued strength in cyclical stocks reflects confidence in India's growth outlook, despite intermittent global uncertainties.

Looking ahead, experts cautioned that short-term volatility cannot be ruled out, especially after recent gains. However, sustained buying in metals, energy and banking stocks points to underlying strength in the market. As long as earnings momentum and macro indicators remain supportive, the overall market trend is expected to stay positive, with sector rotation continuing to shape near-term movements.

Budget 2026 Could Influence Speed of RBI Rate Cuts

The upcoming Union Budget 2026 is being closely watched by economists and markets because it may impact the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) future interest rate decisions. With inflation relatively under control and the central bank having already eased policy significantly over the past year, the fiscal stance adopted in the Budget could either support or slow the pace of further rate cuts.

Over the last year, the RBI has reduced the repo rate—the rate at which it lends to banks—by around 125 basis points. This shift from a restrictive to a more accommodative stance reflects easing price pressures and a desire to stimulate growth. However, monetary policy now depends on broader economic conditions, and a key factor in how quickly the RBI moves next will be the fiscal discipline signaled by the Budget.

Analysts argue that if the Budget maintains a credible fiscal-deficit path and keeps government borrowing manageable, it would reinforce the RBI's ability to support growth with-



out triggering inflation or stress in bond markets. A balanced Budget that avoids large deficits and lays out a sustainable borrowing programme would give the central bank greater comfort to consider further rate reductions. Conversely, if fiscal slippage occurs or borrowing needs rise significantly, the RBI might adopt a more cautious approach, potentially delaying cuts to ensure price stability and market confidence.

Experts note that the RBI's current stance, which is neutral with a dovish bias, suggests the central bank is keeping the door open for future cuts but will remain data-dependent, closely monitoring inflation and growth indicators. The Budget, therefore, acts as a fiscal anchor that could complement monetary easing by reinforcing confidence in macroeconomic stability.

Globally, major central banks,

such as the U.S. Federal Reserve, have also shifted toward easing in recent months, influencing market expectations about future policy direction. India, however, retains more room for rate cuts due to resilient growth and lower inflation. A disciplined fiscal framework in Budget 2026 could help translate that room into faster action.

Financial markets and banking stocks are highly sensitive to interest rate expectations. Faster rate cuts can reduce borrowing costs for consumers and businesses, stimulating credit growth and investment. Yet, any rapid easing must be balanced against the risks of inflationary pressure and capital market volatility.

In summary, while the RBI retains flexibility to adjust rates based on evolving conditions, the Union Budget 2026's fiscal stance may play a pivotal role in determining the speed at which the central bank can cut rates further, making it a critical factor for markets and policymakers alike.

India EU Trade Deal Boosts Stocks Previously Hurt by U.S. Tariffs

Indian markets have rebounded, particularly in export-oriented stocks, following the finalization of the India-European Union free trade agreement (FTA). This move has revived investor optimism for companies that had faced pressure from U.S. tariffs over the past year.

Sectors such as textiles and export-focused manufacturing have been the biggest beneficiaries. These companies had struggled due to steep U.S. tariffs that affected competitiveness and weighed on profits. With the EU trade pact now in place, investors expect improved market access and tariff relief to drive higher demand and profitability.

The textile segment has seen particularly strong gains, as the EU is a key destination for Indian textile exports. Companies like KPR Mills and Welspun Living have benefited from expectations of tariff-free access, with stock prices rising significantly in response to the anticipated boost in exports.

Analysts highlight that the European market is more critical for certain Indian goods than the U.S., especially textiles and apparel. The U.S. tariffs had prompted buyers to shift orders to other countries, but the new



EU arrangement is expected to help India regain market share and expand exports.

Beyond textiles, the broader FTA offers tariff relief and market access for a wide range of Indian goods. Duties on most traded items are either eliminated or reduced, providing structural support for export sectors and helping offset the impact of previous U.S. tariffs.

The deal also reflects a strate-

gic shift in India's trade policy, aimed at diversifying export destinations and reducing dependence on any single market. Strengthened ties with the European bloc are expected to create a more predictable trading environment, encourage investment, and support long-term growth opportunities.

However, some caution remains. While export-oriented companies have rallied, sectors

that could face increased competition from European imports, such as certain automotive segments, may experience pressure due to tariff reductions on EU-made goods.

Overall, the India EU trade deal has acted as a catalyst for renewed investor confidence, particularly in export-focused stocks, and provides a clearer path for growth in India's export markets in the coming years.

Investors Bet on Strong U.S. Economy Ahead of Mid Term Elections



Global investors are increasingly positioning themselves for a robust U.S. economic environment as the 2026 mid term elections approach. Strong growth data, fiscal stimulus measures, and expectations of supportive monetary policy have fueled optimism across financial markets, even as concerns linger about inflation, interest rates, and political influence on economic policy.

A key driver of this positive sentiment is the solid pace of economic expansion recorded in late 2025. The U.S. economy grew at an annualized rate well above trend in the third quarter, with forecasts suggesting even stronger performance in subsequent quarters. This has encouraged investors to bet on continued growth, particularly in sectors tied to technological innovation and productivity gains. The expansive economic momentum has pushed major U.S. stock indices to elevated levels, with broad participation across industries.

Fiscal policy has played a central role in shaping expectations. Tax cuts, deregulation efforts, and increased government spending are seen as stimulative forces that can sustain demand and corporate profitability, bolstering investor confidence. Many market participants also anticipate further stimulus measures ahead of the elections, aimed at reinforcing the perception of a "hot" economy and supporting incumbents politically.

Expectations regarding interest rate policy have also supported the bullish outlook. Investors foresee the Federal Reserve potentially easing monetary conditions later in the year to encour-

age growth. Lower interest rates could support equity valuations, encourage borrowing and investment, and reinforce the expansion narrative.

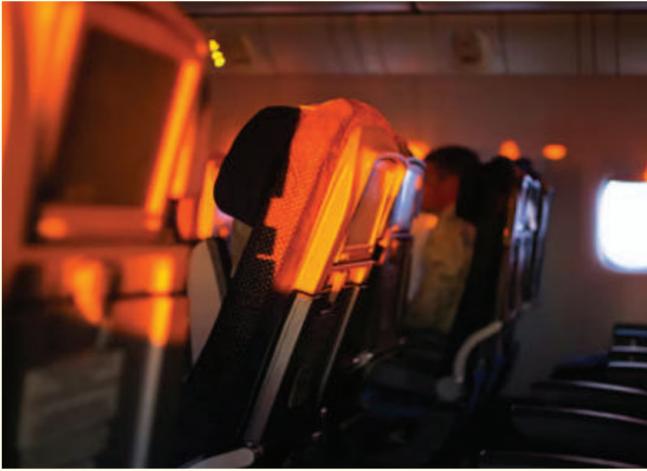
At the same time, rising inflation expectations are evident, and some strategists warn that maintaining the economy at high output levels could generate price pressures. Concerns about inflation, political influence on monetary policy, and large fiscal deficits have led some investors to approach long term government bonds and the dollar with caution.

Technological innovation, particularly in artificial intelligence and related sectors, has emerged as a structural catalyst for expansion. Increased investment in AI and productivity-enhancing technologies has contributed to stronger corporate earnings and elevated market valuations, reinforcing confidence that the U.S. economy can sustain above-trend growth into 2026.

Nevertheless, uncertainties remain. Political dynamics surrounding the mid term elections could affect policy direction, and questions about the sustainability of fiscal stimulus and monetary policy complicate the outlook. While many investors are embracing the current bullish economic sentiment, others caution that risks, including inflationary pressures and potential policy missteps, could temper future gains.

In summary, the combination of strong growth data, fiscal support, and expectations of monetary easing has fueled belief in a "hot" U.S. economy ahead of the mid term elections, influencing market behavior and strategic positioning globally.

“Discomfort Class”: Passenger’s Headrest Feet Spark Mid-Air Uproar



A mid-air conflict unfolded on a Qatar Airways flight from Doha to Moscow after a woman sparked chaos by resting her feet on the seat in front of her, creating an uncomfortable situation for fellow travellers and cabin crew.

The disturbance began shortly after take-off when a female passenger, believed to be Russian, placed her feet on the back of the economy-class seat ahead. What might have seemed like a minor breach of etiquette quickly escalated into a tense scene. The passenger in front — trying to work on her laptop — reclined her seat, which triggered a sharp reaction from the woman behind. Instead of lowering her feet, the woman began shaking the headrest with her feet and even clapped her shoes together right above the head of the annoyed passenger. This forced the person in front to lean forward uncomfortably just to continue using her laptop.

Other passengers and flight attendants repeatedly asked the woman to remove her feet from the seatback, but she refused to comply. Those around her grew increasingly frustrated as the situation dragged on. In a video that later went viral, the woman at the centre of the incident is heard saying defiantly that it

was “freedom” and that others simply did not understand it. A nearby traveller joked sarcastically that they were now in “business class,” highlighting the clear breach of in-flight social norms. Another passenger remarked that such an incident “could only happen in Russia,” reflecting the disbelief of those witnessing the scene.

Some fellow Russian passengers reportedly complained about being in what they called “Discomfort Class,” mocking the experience they were forced to endure. One passenger observed that despite repeated persuasion, the woman remained stubborn and showed no willingness to move her feet. There was speculation that she might have been upset after being denied an upgrade and was protesting by acting as if she were in a more spacious class.

After several tense minutes and intervention by cabin crew — including a crew member crouching down to speak with her — the woman eventually lowered her legs, allowing normalcy to return on the flight. The bizarre episode adds to a growing list of unusual in-flight behaviour captured on video, highlighting how quickly tensions can flare when passengers disregard basic courtesy in confined spaces.

Udaipur Tailor’s Claim: Judi Dench Came Home for a Custom Jacket



An unusual claim by a tailor from Udaipur, Rajasthan, has drawn widespread attention online after he said that celebrated British actress Judi Dench once visited his home to have a custom jacket made during a film shoot in the city.

The tailor, who runs a fashion and tailoring business in Udaipur, shared his story while speaking to a foreign travel vlogger. According to him, Dench was in the city during the filming of *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and was looking for a tailor who could replicate a jacket design she liked. After failing to find the right fit elsewhere, she was allegedly directed to him.

He claimed that instead of visiting his shop, the actress came to his home to get the jacket stitched. To support his account, he displayed an old, faded photograph which he said shows Dench inside his house. The image, though unclear, quickly became a point of discussion among viewers after the video was shared on social media.

In the video, the tailor appeared visibly proud and excited as he narrated the incident, recalling how surprised he was by the visit. He also mentioned that he met other cast members from the same film during that period, though he did not provide detailed accounts of those interactions. The vlogger listening to the story seemed intrigued by the claim, adding to the curiosity surrounding the video.

The story soon began circulating online, prompting mixed reactions from users. While some expressed amazement at the possibility of an international film star seeking local craftsmanship, others questioned the authenticity of the claim and the photograph. Many viewers, however, appreciated the charm of the story, calling it a reminder of the unexpected connections that can emerge when global film productions arrive in smaller cities.

The *Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* was filmed in several parts of India and featured an ensemble cast of well-known British actors. Over the years, locals from filming locations have occasionally shared personal anecdotes about encounters with cast and crew, some of which later resurface online as viral stories.

Judi Dench is one of Britain’s most respected actors, known for her long career across theatre, television, and cinema. She gained worldwide recognition for her role as “M” in the James Bond films and has won multiple awards for her performances.

While there is no independent confirmation of the tailor’s claim, the photograph and his animated recollection have captured the imagination of social media users. Whether entirely accurate or simply a cherished memory, the story has added an off-beat touch to discussions about celebrity encounters and local craftsmanship in India.

Kindergarten Kids Adorn Police Dog With Star Stickers and Tiara, Photo Goes Viral



An adorable photo of a police dog covered in star stickers and wearing a tiny tiara has recently melted hearts online, capturing widespread attention for its cuteness and charm. The picture shows K9 Sergeant Blitz after a visit to a kindergarten, where children enthusiastically decorated him with stickers on his vest, legs, and even his ears, along with the glittery tiara on his head.

Blitz isn’t just any dog

— he is a trained police dog used to performing serious and demanding tasks such as tracking down suspects and detecting explosives. But during a special school visit, he faced a different kind of challenge: winning over a room full of excited young children.

According to the account shared online by a page dedicated to K-9 duty dogs, the moment Blitz stepped into the classroom, he was sur-

rounded by tiny hands reaching out to him. Instead of standing tall and intimidating like a typical working dog might, Blitz calmly lowered himself to the floor, showing patience and ease as the children clustered around him.

What followed was an impromptu “makeover,” in which dozens of star stickers were carefully placed on different parts of Blitz’s uniform and body. One particularly en-

thusiastic child crowned him with a sparkly pink tiara, turning the usually battle-ready dog into a picture of gentle charm.

As the kindergarten visit came to a close, Blitz reportedly left the room looking every bit the proud recipient of his new decorations. With his head held high and tail wagging, he carried the stickers and tiara like badges of honour as he walked out — a moment that delighted many who

later saw the photo online.

The image, shared widely on social media by supporters of police dog units, quickly drew thousands of likes and hundreds of comments. Viewers reacted with humour and affection, with some imagining how amusing it would be to see Blitz return to duty with his tiara and stickers still on. Others simply praised the dog for his calm temperament and ability to connect with children so comfortably.

Many commenters said the photo offered a heartwarming contrast to Blitz’s usual role in law enforcement, showing a softer side of the disciplined training these working dogs undergo. Some joked about the unlikely combination of a trained police dog and kindergarten decorations, while others expressed admiration for both the children’s enthusiasm and Blitz’s composure.

The viral photo serves as a reminder of how animals — even those trained for serious work — can bring joy and laughter in unexpected ways when they interact with people, especially children.

Mumbai Taxi Driver Overcharges Passenger, Then Offers Advice on Avoiding It

A brief but unusual exchange between a taxi driver and a passenger in Mumbai has gone viral after the driver openly admitted to overcharging the fare — and then went on to offer advice on how the passenger could avoid such situations in the future.

The incident took place when a woman hired a taxi for a short journey from Crawford Market to Churchgate, a distance that typically takes only a few minutes. Instead of using the meter, the driver quoted a flat fare. After a short discussion, the passenger agreed to the amount and completed the ride without incident.

However, after reaching the destination and accepting payment, the driver surprised the passenger by pointing to the taxi meter. The displayed fare was significantly lower than the amount he had charged. He then candidly acknowledged that he had taken extra money and

explained that the passenger could have avoided the overcharge by insisting on travelling strictly by the meter.

The passenger later shared the experience on social media, describing it as both amusing and unexpected. While being overcharged is a concern many commuters face, the driver’s honesty after the fact — and his willingness to offer guidance — struck her as unusual. She described the encounter as a uniquely “Mumbai” moment, blending hustle with straightforwardness.

The post quickly gained traction online, prompting a flood of reactions. Many users found humour in the driver’s frankness, noting that while overcharging does occur, it is rare for someone to admit it so openly. Others pointed out that the incident served as a reminder for commuters to remain vigilant and insist on transparent pricing, especially when trav-



elling short distances.

Some commenters praised the driver for at least being upfront, while others argued that honesty after overcharging does not excuse the act itself. Still, most agreed that the interaction captured the everyday quirks of urban travel and the unexpected conversations

that often arise in city taxis.

The driver’s advice was simple: always ask for the meter to be used rather than agreeing to a fixed fare. He suggested that relying on the meter helps ensure fairness and avoids misunderstandings over pricing.

What began as a rou-

tine taxi ride ultimately became a viral moment, resonating with many city commuters who have experienced similar situations. The incident has since sparked light-hearted discussion about honesty, street smarts, and the small but memorable encounters that make up daily life in Mumbai.

Late Starts and FIFA Breaks: Zepto Intern’s Video Divides the Internet



A short video showing a day in the life of an intern at quick-commerce company Zepto has taken social media by storm, sparking a wide-ranging discussion about startup culture and what work life looks like for young employees.

Shared by an intern on Instagram, the video presents a seemingly relaxed and glamorous version of working at Zepto. It begins with the intern logging in for work around midday, underscoring a delayed

start compared with traditional office hours. The clip opens with footage of a luxury car parked outside the office, helping set a polished and aspirational tone for what follows.

Throughout the video, the intern captures snippets of his day. Around midday he attends a meeting with a co-founder, suggesting that even as an intern he is part of conversations with senior leadership. Shortly after, he is shown visiting a Zepto store to “check a few

things,” implying some on-ground involvement beyond desk work.

As the day progresses, the video veers into more laid-back territory. At about 5 pm, the intern is shown playing FIFA with colleagues, illustrating a casual break during work hours. Later in the evening, the video highlights what is described humorously as an “international break,” again reinforcing a relaxed vibe. The intern wraps up his work around 8 pm and logs out, a sched-

ule that viewers saw as light compared to the long hours typically associated with startup jobs.

At the end of the clip, the intern mentions that Zepto is hiring, suggesting the video may also have served as a recruitment-style post. The casual nature of the day, combined with clips of meetings and perks, drew a range of reactions from people online.

Some social media users praised the video as an attractive sneak peek into

modern startup life, where flexibility, informal culture, and enjoyable breaks appear to balance work demands. Others criticised it as an overly idealised portrayal, questioning whether such a day accurately represents typical intern expectations or if it glosses over challenges and pressures that young professionals might face in fast-paced companies.

The clip has also added fuel to ongoing conversations about work culture in startups, especially around hours, expectations, and the balance between fun and responsibility. It comes amid broader discussions on how emerging companies define workplace norms and how young workers navigate roles that may differ significantly from traditional corporate structures.

Overall, the viral video has sparked curiosity and debate, offering a snapshot that many find intriguing — whether as a genuine depiction of startup life or a polished highlight reel created for social media.

Pakistan Cricket Legends Push Back Against Mohsin Naqvi's T20 World Cup Pull Out Threat

A growing chorus of former Pakistani cricket greats and senior officials has voiced strong opposition to Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi's suggestion that Pakistan might withdraw from the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 — a stance that has stirred controversy at home and abroad as the tournament approaches. The global event is scheduled to begin on February 7, co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka, and Pakistan's participation has been thrown into uncertainty amid a dispute over the exclusion of Bangladesh.

The controversy began after the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) refused to play its scheduled World Cup matches in India, citing security concerns. The International Cricket Council (ICC) subsequently replaced Bangladesh with Scotland in the tournament lineup. Naqvi, who also serves as Pakistan's Interior Minister, framed Pakistan's continued involvement as contingent on government advice and hinted that the team might pull out in solidarity with Bangladesh, labelling the ICC's decision unfair and indicative of double standards.

However, several respected former players and administrators have publicly urged the PCB to rethink this extreme



course. Muhammad Hafeez, a former Test captain, stressed that the board should prioritise Pakistani cricket's interests by sending the national team to the World Cup rather than sacrificing participation for a political stance. Former PCB Chairman Khalid Mahmood and former board secretary Arif Ali Abbasi echoed this sentiment, arguing that a boycott would damage relations with the ICC and member boards while offering little tan-



gible benefit. They also highlighted that Pakistan's matches will largely be played in Sri Lanka, where there are no direct security concerns, making withdrawal appear strategically unsound.

Veteran batsmen Inzamam ul Haq and Muhammad Yousuf have urged careful consideration before any final decision, pointing out that the T20 World Cup presents a crucial platform for Pakistan's players to compete at the highest level and build momentum. Another former

player, Haroon Rasheed, said that while Pakistan's support for Bangladesh was commendable, the board must also safeguard the future of the nation's cricket by ensuring its team competes.

Critics of Naqvi's stance argue that a withdrawal could lead to damaging consequences for Pakistan cricket, including potential sanctions, loss of revenue, and long term isolation from elite competition. They also note that no other cricket board supported Bangladesh's demand to move matches out of India, leaving Pakistan isolated in its position.

Suryakumar Yadav Climbs to Seventh in Latest ICC T20I Rankings After Strong Run



India captain Suryakumar Yadav has jumped five places to seventh in the latest ICC Men's T20I batting rankings, a major confidence boost for the right-handed batter and the Indian team as they prepare for the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026.

His rise reflects a rich vein of form during India's ongoing five-match T20I series against New Zealand, which India currently leads 3-0.

This ranking surge comes on the back of a productive run with the bat in the first three matches of

the series. Suryakumar's scores of 32, 82 not out, and 57 not out have been key to India's dominance, underlining his ability to anchor the innings while maintaining an aggressive strike rate in crucial phases of play. These performances have been instru-

mental in India's victories and have boosted his rating points significantly.

His unbeaten 82 in the second T20I was particularly impactful, coming in a strong chase where India reached their target with more than 28 deliveries to spare. In the third T20I, his fluent 57 not out helped India complete an eight-wicket win and cement their unassailable 3-0 lead in the series. These innings not only contributed to team success but also dramatically improved Suryakumar's individual standing in international rankings just days before the World Cup.

India's top order has been in excellent form, with Abhishek Sharma continuing to hold the No. 1 position in the T20I batting rankings and Tilak Varma placed third, signalling depth and consistency in India's batting lineup. Other Indian players have also seen movement in the rankings: Is-

han Kishan re-entered the batting rankings after an explosive 76 in the second T20I, while teammates like Shivam Dubey and Rinku Singh have also climbed higher slots.

The latest rankings provide a clear snapshot of India's dominance in the shortest format ahead of the T20 World Cup. Not only has Suryakumar's rise been a personal milestone after a lean patch, but it also highlights India's current strength across multiple positions — valuable momentum with the global tournament just around the corner.

With the fourth T20I still to come and the World Cup looming, Suryakumar's surge into the top 10 underscores his resurgence as a key contributor and leader in India's lineup, offering both form and confidence as the team builds toward what promises to be a fiercely contested event.

Arijit Singh's Retirement Announcement Sends MS Dhoni Trending on Social Media

The music and social media worlds collided this week as acclaimed Indian singer Arijit Singh's sudden announcement of retirement from playback singing sparked a surprising trend online — former India and Chennai Super Kings (CSK) captain MS Dhoni began trending on X (formerly Twitter), albeit for an unexpected reason. Fans and netizens drew playful and emotional parallels between Singh's departure from Bollywood music and Dhoni's ongoing cricketing legacy, turning the cricket legend into a focal point of online chatter.

Arijit Singh, widely regarded as one of the most popular playback vocalists of his generation, shared that he will no longer take on new assignments as a playback singer. Posting a heartfelt message to his fans, he described his journey in film music as "wonderful" and expressed gratitude for the support he has enjoyed over the years. While he clarified that he isn't quitting mu-

sic entirely, his decision to step back from Bollywood work — at the height of his career — left fans stunned and reflective.

Almost immediately after the announcement went public, social media users began reacting with a mix of nostalgia, humour, and admiration. One notable aspect of the reaction was how MS Dhoni's name began trending alongside Arijit's retirement news. Users joked that they hadn't expected Arijit to "retire before Dhoni," poking fun at the legendary cricketer's famously long career in the Indian Premier League. Dhoni, 44, continues to play in the IPL, defying expectations for many seasons now, and this longevity became a playful benchmark against which fans measured Arijit's exit from playback singing.

The trend was further fuelled by nostalgic moments shared online, including viral clips and photos capturing Arijit Singh's affection for Dho-



ni. One such moment recalled from the IPL 2023 opening ceremony showed Arijit touching Dhoni's feet in respect on stage — a gesture that became iconic and widely shared again in light of the singer's retirement announcement. Fans used that shared memory to underscore the cultural connection between the worlds of cricket and music, celebrating

both icons in their respective fields.

While the initial shock around Arijit's retirement dominated headlines, the reaction underscored how deeply both figures resonate with the public — in sports and entertainment alike. The online celebration, filled with humour and respect, highlighted how personalities from different domains can be-

come intertwined in the collective imagination, especially in moments of change or transition.

In short, what began as a major announcement in the music industry quickly became a social media phenomenon, with MS Dhoni trending as fans reflected on careers, legacies, and the unexpected intersections between cricket and cultural icons.

Novak Djokovic Reaches Australian Open 2026 Semis After Musetti Retires While Leading



Novak Djokovic advanced to the semi-finals of the Australian Open 2026 in dramatic fashion after his quarter-final opponent, Lorenzo Musetti, was forced to retire due to injury despite holding a two-set lead in their match at Melbourne Park. Djokovic's progression keeps alive his bid for a record-breaking 25th Grand Slam title, but the manner of his victory — through an opponent's withdrawal — has generated widespread attention across the tennis world.

Musetti, the fifth seed, began the match with an excellent display of aggressive yet composed tennis, taking the opening sets 6-4 and 6-3 while Djokovic struggled with errors and difficulty finding rhythm. The 23-year-old Italian appeared poised for a breakthrough performance — potentially his first hard-court Grand Slam semi-final — as he established clear control over the contest early on.

However, in the third set, Musetti began showing signs of physical distress, prompting a medical timeout for what was later identified as a high injury. Although he returned to the court and continued play, Musetti's movement was visibly hampered. With Djokovic trailing 1-3 in the third set, Musetti ultimately concluded that he could not continue and opted to retire, end-

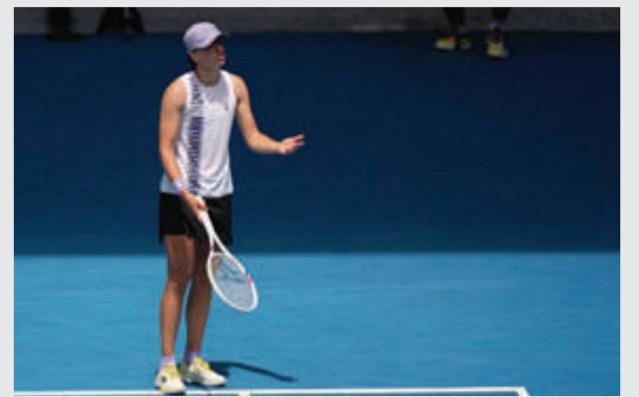
ing his remarkable run and unexpectedly handing Djokovic the victory.

Djokovic, 38, acknowledged the unusual and bittersweet nature of his advancement in his on-court interview. He expressed sympathy for Musetti, describing the young Italian as the better player on the day and saying he felt "extremely lucky" to have progressed into the last four. This marks Djokovic's 13th semi-final appearance at the Australian Open, extending his own record for Grand Slam appearances in the penultimate round.

Until this match, Djokovic had not faced extended time on court in the week, having received a walkover in the fourth round when Jakub Menšik withdrew from their scheduled encounter. This fortunate sequence — back-to-back retirements — has sparked conversations among fans, pundits, and fellow players about the role of luck and fitness in deep tournament runs.

With Djokovic now set to face either Jannik Sinner or Ben Shelton in the semi-finals, attention will turn to whether the Serb can translate his survival into further success. His path to a potential 25th Grand Slam remains challenging — but still very much alive — despite the unusual circumstances of this quarter-final result.

Iga Swiatek Slams Australian Open Broadcasters, Says Players Feel Like "Animals in a Zoo"



Polish tennis star Iga Swiatek has publicly criticised the extensive behind-the-scenes coverage at the Australian Open 2026, suggesting that players are being treated like "animals in a zoo" due to the pervasive presence of cameras throughout the tournament. The comments came after Swiatek's own quarter-final exit and follow similar remarks made by fellow players about the lack of privacy at the Grand Slam event.

Swiatek's remarks were prompted in part by an incident involving American Coco Gauff, who was captured on camera smashing her racket in a backstage area following her quarter-final defeat. Gauff had tried to find a private spot to vent her frustrations, believing she was out of sight of cameras, only to have the footage broadcast globally. That incident sparked a broader discussion among players about how and when cameras should be used during tournaments.

After her own loss in the quarter-finals, Swiatek was asked about the constant presence of cameras and the limited off-court privacy for players. She responded with a pointed analogy, asking whether tennis professionals are there to play or to be observed like zoo animals, even in moments when they are off the court and out of the public spotlight. While she acknowledged her wording was an exaggeration, she underscored the need for

personal space where athletes can process emotions or prepare without an audience.

Swiatek also referenced her earlier appearance in a widely shared clip after she momentarily forgot her accreditation and was stopped by security — another example, she suggested, of how off-court moments can go viral, not always to the players' benefit. She emphasised that while players expect and accept scrutiny during matches and official media interactions, there should be boundaries when it comes to capturing and broadcasting private or emotional moments.

Several other players have echoed these concerns. Amanda Anisimova acknowledged that areas outside main courts offer little privacy and said incidents like the Gauff footage can be tough for athletes because they did not choose to share those moments publicly. Jessica Pegula also supported the call for greater respect for player boundaries at the tournament.

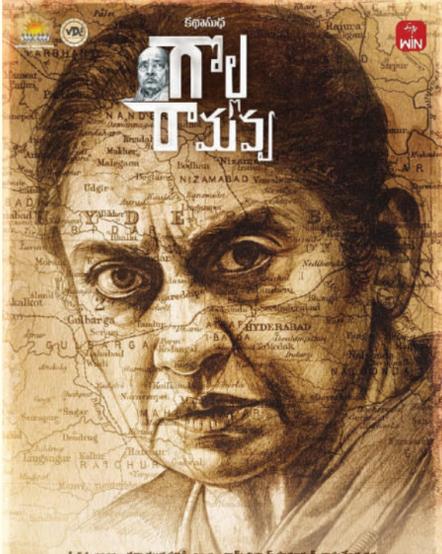
The debate highlights a growing tension in modern sport between fan engagement and player well-being. With behind-the-scenes content becoming increasingly popular, events like the Australian Open are grappling with how to balance broadcasters' desire for access with athletes' calls for respect and privacy in vulnerable off-court situations.

“Golla Ramavva” Wins Hearts on ETV Win

“Golla Ramavva,” a powerful and emotionally resonant cinematic adaptation of the Telangana Armed Struggle, is emerging as one of the most talked-about releases on the ETV Win platform. Directed by acclaimed filmmaker Mullapudi Vara, the film is based on a literary work penned by former Prime Minister of India, late P. V. Narasimha Rao, and has been streaming on ETV Win since January 25. Within days of its digital premiere, the film has received an extraordinary response from audiences, winning praise for its gripping narrative and rooted storytelling.

Produced jointly by Ram Vishwas Hanurkar and Raghavendra Varma (Bujji) under the banners of Sucheta Dream Works Production and Varma Dream Creations, “Golla Ramavva” stands out for its authenticity, emotional depth, and strong performances. The film’s success marks another milestone for the makers, who previously delivered the well-received “Mouname Nee Bhasha” for ETV Win. However, trade circles and platform sources suggest that the response to “Golla Ramavva” has nearly doubled, surpassing expectations and reinforcing the team’s creative credibility.

Veteran actress Talluri Rameshwari, fondly remembered by audiences as the “Telugu Sita Malakshmi,” headlines the film in the titular role. Her nuanced and heartfelt performance



has been widely appreciated, with viewers applauding her ability to bring dignity, strength, and emotional intensity to the character. The film also features Allu Geetha, Anvith, and Mani Manthena in pivotal roles, all of whom contribute meaningfully to the narrative.

Expressing his joy over the film’s warm reception, director Mullapudi Vara thanked the producers for their unwavering support and dedication to meaningful cinema. He also conveyed special gratitude to P. V. Prabhakar Rao and Surabhi Vanidevi, the son and daughter of late P. V. Narasimha Rao, for their encouragement and blessings.

The technical and crea-

tive team has played a crucial role in elevating the film’s impact. Sai Madhukar’s music adds emotional gravitas, while Gangamoni Shekhar’s cinematography captures the rustic milieu with authenticity. Editing by Raghavendra Varma ensures a tight narrative flow, and Bayyavarapu Ravi’s adaptation faithfully translates the original work to screen. Azhar Shaikh, who served as Executive Producer and lyricist, also made a significant contribution to the project. With strong word-of-mouth and growing viewership, “Golla Ramavva” is being hailed as a landmark content success for ETV Win and a triumph for socially relevant storytelling.

“Shabara” Cast and Crew Celebrate Heartbeat of Shabara Event, Promise a Success Meet Soon



Hyderabad, Jan 28: The anticipation for Shabara, directed by Prem Chand Kilaru, is building as the makers hosted the Heartbeat of Shabara event, giving audiences an immersive glimpse into the world of the film. Headlined by Dheekshith Shetty and Kritika Singh, the movie is produced by Harshita Chadalavada, Durga Chunchu, and Ramadevi Kilara under the Visramm Film Fraternity banner. Music is composed by Mithun Mukundan, while Ajay Abraham George handles cinematography.

Speaking at the event, lead actor Dheekshith Shetty expressed his gratitude and excitement. “Thanks to everyone who came for Shabara. The media gave great support to my previous film The Girlfriend, and I hope they extend the same to Shabara. Prem Chand has created an entire world in this film, set in the forest. A success meet for this film will definitely happen. I’ve done eight films so far, but for the first time, I trusted one person completely, and I’m happy I did this for Prem Chand. Mithun’s

music has worked magic. If you liked the Heartbeat of Shabara, please share and support it so it reaches everyone,” he said.

Director Prem Chand Kilaru thanked the audience for the positive response to the event and shared his personal journey. “The shooting isn’t yet complete, but we’ll be with the audience soon. My father is more than God to me, and making this film in his memory has been an emotional experience. Mithun’s music is excellent, and Ajay Abraham George’s cinematography will be recognized widely. Doing what you love is life, and this film reflects that,” he added.

Kritika Singh also praised the director, saying, “Without Prem Chand, Shabara would not have turned out this great. Heartbeat of Shabara is just the beginning, and we’ll bring more content for the audience soon.”

Other cast members, including Misha Narang, Rajeev Pillai, and Bhushan Kalyan, highlighted the uniqueness of the story and the two-year-long dedication of the team. Production design-

er Shiva Kamesh, costume designer Sumaya, and music director Mithun Mukundan also shared their excitement and confidence that Shabara will resonate strongly with audiences. Set in a forested world with a story revolving around Nidhi, Shabara promises visually stunning locations, tight action sequences, and a compelling narrative. The full cast includes Dheekshith Shetty, Misha Narang, Mohan Bhat, Rajeev Govind Pillai, Kritika Singh Yadav, Bhushan Kalyan, Aarush, Pramodini, Shubham Tomar, Srikanth, Anirudh Arun, and others.

The technical team features Prem Chand Kilaru as writer and director, Mithun Mukundan on music, Ajay Abraham George on cinematography, and Bhuvanesh Manivannan as editor, supported by a talented ensemble handling action, production design, sound, choreography, and more. Fans can expect a success meet soon, ahead of the film’s release, as the team continues promotional activities.

Gandhi Talks Trailer Unveiled: When Silence Speaks Louder Than Words

Zee Studios, in association with Kyoorius Digital Pvt Ltd, Pincmoon Meta Studios and Movie Mill Entertainment, has unveiled the trailer of Gandhi Talks, a film that boldly reinforces the makers’ belief in courageous, content-led cinema. Breaking away from convention, the trailer arrives not with loud dialogues or dramatic monologues, but with silence—measured, evocative, and deeply affecting.

In an industry often dominated by spectacle and noise, Gandhi Talks stands apart with restraint and confidence. The trailer communicates its intent through striking visuals, charged pauses, and raw emotional undercurrents. With no spoken dialogue, it trusts the audience to engage instinctively, allowing imagery and atmosphere to do the storytelling. The result is a powerful cinematic statement that proves silence can be as compelling as words, if not more.

The film boasts a stellar ensemble cast featuring Vijay Sethupathi, Arvind Swami, Aditi Rao Hydari, and Siddharth Jadhav. The trailer offers brief yet impactful glimpses of performances built on nuance and internal conflict. Expressions, body language, and screen presence take centre stage, underscoring the actors’ ability to convey layered emotions without uttering a single line.

Sharing his experience, Vijay



Sethupathi said the film challenged him in a unique way. “Gandhi Talks pushed me to express emotion without words. It’s rare to find a film where silence becomes the strongest dialogue,” he remarked. Arvind Swami echoed the sentiment, stating, “In a world drowning in noise, Gandhi Talks reminds us that silence can still shake a conscience. This is a film where words step aside and truth walks in quietly. Rahman’s genius music becomes its language.”

Aditi Rao Hydari highlighted the film’s emotional core, not-

ing that what moved her most was how emotions were felt rather than spoken. “The film allows vulnerability and silence to coexist beautifully,” she said. For Siddharth Jadhav, the project reaffirmed cinema’s universal language. “Being part of a film that communicates so powerfully without dialogue was truly special. It reminds you why cinema speaks beyond words,” he shared.

Directed by Kishore Pandurang Belekar, Gandhi Talks is further elevated by the evocative music and background score of A R Rahman. His com-

positions breathe life into the silences, becoming the emotional voice of the narrative and adding depth to its unspoken moments.

In a distinctive promotional move, the makers released the trailer three days ahead of its musical culmination—an A R Rahman concert—marking a rare convergence of cinema and live music. With Gandhi Talks, Zee Studios once again reaffirms its commitment to films that challenge norms and push the boundaries of Indian cinema. The film is set to release in theatres on January 30, 2026.

“Sri Chidambaram Garu” Trailer Out Ahead of February 6 Global Release



The trailer of the much-anticipated Telugu film Sri Chidambaram Garu has been officially unveiled by acclaimed director Bucchibabu Sana. Produced under the Sri

Chakras Entertainment banner, the film is scheduled for a worldwide release on February 6. The trailer release event saw Sana congratulating the film’s cast and crew, add-

ing to the excitement surrounding the upcoming romantic drama.

Directed by Vinay Ratnam and presented by Chinta Varalakshmi, the film is produced by Chinta Vaneesh Reddy and Chinta Gopal Krishna Reddy, with Chinta Rajasekhar Reddy serving as co-producer. The lead roles are essayed by Vamsi Tummala and Sandhya Vasishtha, supported by Gopinath, Shivakumar Matta, Kalpalatha Garlapati, Arun Kumar, Tulasi, Nayudu Moram, and Shankar Rao.

The trailer positions Sri Chidambaram Garu as an emotional, feel-good love story with a deeper, inspirational message. According to the producers, the film is aimed at today’s youth, particularly those facing personal challenges.

“Many young people take extreme steps over minor setbacks. This film delivers a message that your flaws can become your strength and inspires viewers to overcome ad-

versity,” they said. The story is described as fresh, matured, and socially relevant, making it both entertaining and meaningful.

The music of the film is composed by veteran M.M. Keeravani, with the recently released song Velledaarilo already receiving widespread appreciation. The technical team has contributed significantly to the film’s immersive storytelling. Cinematography by Akshay Ram Podishetty captures the narrative’s naturalistic tone, while editing by Anwar Ali ensures a smooth and engaging flow. Vishnu Vardhan Pulla’s art direction enhances the visual appeal, and the overall production design, costumes, and choreography complement the emotional depth of the story.

Director Vinay Ratnam, who also wrote the script, expressed his excitement about the trailer’s response. “Sri Chidambaram Garu is a story that touches hearts. Each

scene is crafted to feel natural and relatable. The trailer gives just a glimpse of the emotion and essence of the film,” he said.

With its blend of romance, emotional depth, and an inspirational narrative, Sri Chidambaram Garu aims to resonate strongly with Telugu audiences. The global release on February 6 is expected to offer a cinematic experience that balances entertainment with a socially relevant message, making it a must-watch for viewers of all ages.

Technical Credits: Director & Writer: Vinay Ratnam | Producers: Chinta Vaneesh Reddy, Chinta Gopal Krishna Reddy | Co-Producer: Chinta Rajasekhar Reddy | DOP: Akshay Ram Podishetty | Editor: Anwar Ali | Music: M.M. Keeravani | Art Director: Vishnu Vardhan Pulla | Executive Producers: Shake Rajak, T. Karthik Reddy | Line Producer: Akhilesh Relangi | PROs: Eluru Sheenu, Maduri Madhu.

“Hey Bhagavan” Teaser Out Ahead of February 20 Global Release

The much-anticipated teaser of Hey Bhagavan, starring hero Suhas, has been officially released, marking the first look at what promises to be a complete entertainer. The film, directed by Gopi Acharya and produced by B. Narendra Reddy under Trishul Visionary Studios, is set for a worldwide theatrical release on February 20.

After delivering hits like Little Hearts, Raju Weds Rambai, and Isha, the successful duo Bunny Vaas and Vamsi Nandipati return with this full-length entertainer, presented under Nandipati Entertainments and Bunny Vaas Works. The teaser launch generated an enthusiastic response from audiences, further elevating the excitement for the film’s release.

Hey Bhagavan features Suhas in a role that is reportedly different from his previous projects, offering a complete entertainment package.

The film also stars Shivani Nagaram, known for Little Hearts, as the heroine, with senior actor Nareesh and anchor-turned-actor Sravanthi Chokkarapu in key roles. Supporting actors include Vennela Kishore, Sudarshan, Annapurna, and Ajay Ghosh.

Speaking at the teaser launch event, Suhas said, “I received numerous messages after the teaser release. This role is very different from my earlier films. It’s a pure entertainer with strong content, and I am confident it will be one of the best films of my career. Working with Vamsi Nandipati and Bunny Vaas gave the project strong momentum, and producer Narendra Reddy ensured there were no compromises.”

Producer B. Narendra Reddy, making his debut, expressed gratitude to the team and said, “This is a significant project for me. The team worked

hard, and I am confident audiences will support this film.” Vamsi Nandipati added that the project had strong potential and praised the quick turnaround from shooting to post-production. He hinted at a business-related element teased in the trailer and praised Suhas and Shivani Nagaram for their performances.

Shivani Nagaram described the film as a “full-power entertainer” and highlighted the fun-filled shooting atmosphere. Director Gopi Acharya lauded the cast and crew, saying the film would deliver both laughter and strong content. Sravanthi Chokkarapu expressed excitement about her silver screen debut and confidence in the film’s success.

The film’s technical team includes Mahi Reddy as cinematographer and Vivek Sagar as music director. With its



blend of comedy, emotion, and action, Hey Bhagavan is shaping up to be a highly entertain-

ing cinematic experience, promising to draw audiences to theatres on its February 20 release.